

Slovakia

VET in Europe - Country Report

2011

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Slovakia. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
3. VET to support recovery from the crisis
4. Historical background, legislative and institutional framework
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and its reference year is 2010. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/vet-in-europe-country-reports.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/detailed-thematic-analyses.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Slovakia

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1. GENERAL CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Slovakia was established on 1st January 1993 after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. It is a parliamentary democracy with a one-chamber parliament (National Council of the Slovak Republic, *Národná rada Slovenskej republiky*) of 150 members elected for four-year terms. Political parties are allotted seats according to the percentage of votes they receive in direct elections. Only parties winning at least 5 % of votes get seats in the parliament. The president, elected for a five-year term in a two-round popular vote, is the head of state with no substantial executive powers. Slovakia joined the OECD in 2000, and NATO and EU in 2004. The country is divided into 8 state administration regions identical with 8 self-governing regions. Transfer of executive competences from public administration bodies to self-governing regions and municipalities started in the 1990s, with substantial changes in the education sector only in 2002, followed by fiscal decentralization effective since 2005. Income of self-governing regions and municipalities however substantially depends on centrally collected inhabitants' income tax composing substantial part of their budgets (see part 10.2).

1.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

As of 31st December 2009, the country had an area of 49,037 km² with 5,424,925 inhabitants, of which 54.87 % living in urban areas, and a population density of 110.6 inhabitants per km², according to the estimation of the Statistical Office (ŠÚ, *Štatistický úrad*).¹ Slovakia is a multicultural country, as can be seen from the 2001 Census data indicating 14.2 % inhabitants belonging to minorities and from the estimations of ethnic Roma² inhabitants - far more than 300,000³.

TABLE 1: POPULATION LIVING IN SLOVAKIA BY NATIONALITY IN 2001								
	TOTAL	SLOVAK	HUNGARIAN	ROMA	CZECH	RUTHENIAN	UKRAINIAN	OTHER*
2001	5 379 455	4 614 854	520 528	89 920	44 620	24 201	10 814	74 518
%	100	85.8	9.7	1.7	0.8	0.4	0.2	1.4

Source: Statistical Office, Census 2001. Note: * Other + unknown.

¹ The latest available census data are from Census of 26th May 2001 indicating 5,379,455 inhabitants. 2011 Census already conducted will bring the newest data as of 21st May 2011 (Census day).

² Collecting statistical data based on ethnicity is forbidden; every inhabitant is free to indicate his/her nationality. Thus, within census many ethnic Roma announced nationality other than Roma, considering themselves belonging to Slovaks or Hungarians or other nationalities rather than to Roma.

³ There were 379,200 ethnic Roma living in Slovakia in 2000, according to demographic estimations. The 2004 sociological research mapping Roma communities (*Atlas of Roma Communities*) indicated 320,000 Roma, out of which 60 % living integrated and 40 % in settlements with weak infrastructure.

Estimation of population changes is visible from the table below indicating a tiny increase, however hiding serious problems.

TABLE 2: TOTAL POPULATION IN 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010*				
GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010
SK	5 379 161	5 389 180	5 412 254	5 424 925

Source: Eurostat [tps00001]; last update: 16-05-2011.

Note: * Data as of 1st January.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Slovakia has experienced a huge decrease in the live births declining from 80,116 in 1989 to 50,841 in 2002, followed by a gradual year-on-year increase. Live births data amounted to 61,217 in 2009, but it fell to 60,410 in 2010.

No replacement can be expected from migrants due to the traditionally very low numbers of asylum seekers and low labour immigration, as Slovakia is not particularly attractive for migrants. There were only 822 asylum seekers in 2009, and only 14 people were granted asylum and only one of them was granted the citizenship in that year. There were 6,346 immigrants registered, but 1,979 inhabitants left the country, thus, net migration was only 4,367 people in 2009, according to the Statistical Office data. There are in total 62,882 foreigners with legal (registered) residence, of which 38,717 citizens from EU27 countries (61.6 %) and 24,165 (38.4 %) from other countries. According to the Statistical Office, the highest number of foreigners came from neighbouring or close countries, such as the Czech Republic (8,346), Romania (5,424) Poland (5,369), Hungary (4,602), Germany (4,038) and Austria (2,064). The highest number of other countries citizens is from Ukraine (5,907), Serbia (3,335), Vietnam (2,344), Russian Federation (2,042) China (1,718), the Republic of Korea (1,689), the USA (1,007), Macedonia (421), Croatia (412) and Norway (356).

Gradual population ageing is visible from the following age group data.

TABLE 3: POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS IN 1989, 2009 AND 2010*				
	Total	0-24	25-64	65+
1989	5 287 663	2 145 137	2 599 611	542 915
1989 (%)	100	40.57	49.16	10.27
2009	5 424 925	1 619 365	3 140 426	665 134
2009 (%)	100	29.85	57.89	12.26
2010	5 435 273	1 590 764	3 171 785	672 724
2010 (%)	100	29.27	58.36	12.38

Source: Statistical Office of the SR.

Note: * Data as of 31. 12., thus 2009 Statistical Office data are equal to 2010 Eurostat data.

In 2010, there were over 550,000 young people aged 0-24 less in comparison to 1989, creating strong pressure on restructuring networks of educational facilities. Unfavourable trend continues. In 2015, about 200,000 less young people aged 0-24 less is forecasted in comparison to 2010, as visible from the latest national projection data.

TABLE 4: AGE-SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS BY AGE GROUPS UNTIL 2025										
	TOTAL	0-24			25-64			65+		
		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
1989	5287663	2145137	1094119	1051018	2362473	1168836	1193637	780053	323540	456513
1989 (%)	100	40.6	20.7	19.9	44.7	22.1	22.6	14.8	6.1	8.6
2010	5423703	1579076	807547	771529	3168744	1574793	1593951	675883	253500	422383
2010 (%)	100	29.1	14.9	14.2	58.4	29.0	29.4	12.5	4.7	7.8
2015	5471653	1464107	748638	715469	3232074	1615398	1616676	775472	300052	475420
2015 (%)	100	26.8	13.7	13.1	59.1	29.5	29.6	14.2	5.5	8.7
2025	5521745	1381445	705247	676198	3092830	1564758	1528072	1047470	429349	618121
2025 (%)	100	25.0	12.8	12.3	56.0	28.3	27.7	19.0	7.8	11.2

Source: Statistical Office (1989 data) and INFOSTAT 2007 update of Demographic Prognosis 2002.

Further worsening can be also seen in 25 % of young population aged 0-24 in 2025 compared to 40.6 % in 1989 presented in the table above and from the unfavourable trend in old-age dependency ratio presented in the following table.

TABLE 5: PROJECTED OLD-AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO, 2010-2060							
GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU27	25.92	28.48	31.37	38.33	45.52	50.16	52.55
SK	16.93	19.14	23.59	31.36	37.99	51.38	61.80

Source: Eurostat, [tsdde511], last update 26-07-2011.

Although old-age-dependency ratio raised from 15.8 % in 1989, to 16.7 % in 2009, Slovakia currently still enjoys favourable old-age-dependency ratio far below EU27 average as visible from 2010 data (16.93 % and 25.92 %, respectively), presented in the table above. However gradual deteriorating follows with a huge jump in 2050, when old-age dependency ratio is expected to be over the EU27 average. The fourth worst result among current EU27 countries (after Latvia, Romania and Poland) is expected in 2060 according to Eurostat projection data.

The demographic decline resulted in a surplus of places at schools and in a shift in enrolment to higher status secondary education programmes: a shift from ISCED 3C VET to ISCED 3A VET studies and increasing enrolment in ISCED 3A general education study branches. Changes in preferences were also stimulated by turbulences at the labour market accompanying the restructuring of the national economy in the 1990s, within which workers in traditional blue-collar professions in industry suffered from dismissals and were highly at risk of unemployment. Not surprisingly, the enrolment in training for blue-collar professions and entering labour market with secondary qualification decreased, while the enrolment in higher education increased strongly. Till now, many VET schools are still endangered by lower attractiveness of IVET, despite significant changes in the labour market in the 2000s in favour of IVET: jobs for ISCED 3C graduates rather than ISCED 3A and higher education graduates were created in dominant sectors of economy (see part 1.3 for further details).

The current severe demand supply mismatch at the labour market is a consequence of a collateral damage caused by per capita financing. Per capita financing introduced in 2004 was aimed at stimulation of local and regional authorities to restructuring of school

networks - to merging and closing schools with low enrolments. But it also stimulated schools at risk of low enrolment to attract students regardless of any other circumstances and to disregard labour market needs and the quality check in enrolment, and to soften quality standards of graduates.

A demographic trend still indicates the need for further restructuring of school networks, (except kindergartens with insufficient amount of available places) as there is surplus of supply over demand at VET schools. Thus, rectification of policy failures accompanying inappropriately introduced per capita financing is urgent because of two reasons: in order to address the already existing severe labour market discrepancies and in order to counterbalance the negative impact of fighting for survival of education providers. The following are the two policy failures - missing policies to counterbalance the negative impact of per capita funding:

- no strong quality assurance instrument was introduced to prevent from insufficient graduates' quality check by education providers and educational authorities that would prevent from enrolment of as much as possible students regardless of the quality;
- no benefits were suggested to be offered to schools able to meet labour market needs and to adjust accordingly their graduates supply that would prevent from enrolment of as much as possible students regardless of their employability.

1.3 ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

ECONOMIC COMPOSITION OF THE COUNTRY

Slovakia is an extremely open economy with total annual export and import over 200 % of GDP. Since its independence Slovakia has been all the time characterised by a strong share of employed in industry, regardless changes in other sectors, e.g. a growth in the service sector and dramatic decrease of employed people in agriculture (from 256,489 as of 31st December 1992 to 84,900 in 2009 (LFS), according to the Statistical Office). A strong emphasis on manufacturing and construction in national economy can also be seen from the comparison with EU27 below.

	PRIMARY SECTOR AND UTILITIES		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORT		BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES		NON MARKETED SERVICES	
	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%
EU27-2010	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
SK-2010	146.8	6.3	529.9	22.9	258.2	11.1	611.1	26.4	259.1	11.2	511.0	22.0

Source: Eurostat, *lfsa_egan2*, extracted: 19-05-2011; last update: 12-05-2011.

Note: * NACE rev.2, in thousands and as % of total employment.

The key industries able to attract foreign investors and create new jobs in the 2000s were the automotive and electronics industries, followed by metallurgy, chemical, and plastics

production. Significantly, after the crisis Slovakia managed to attract one of the world's biggest steel companies, ThyssenKrup, to open a new plant employing 1,200 people. However, it failed to win the competition to make the IBM company to place in Slovakia the already announced investment creating 3,000 new jobs within three years in a sector attractive for better trained people, and complementary to manual work intensive sectors dominating the country. Despite this, the IT sector sees an increasing employment representing a positive development in the national economy. Volkswagen, PSA Peugeot Citroen and Kia Motors and their suppliers from the automotive industry, Samsung, FoxConn and AU Optronics from the electronic industry and US Steel are however crucial players in the labour market in Slovakia.

While the decrease in employment in agriculture is on a firm downward path, development in other sectors will heavily depend on future economic policies. It is not possible to count on a long-term high share of employment in manufacturing and construction, provided governments will take their political declarations on moving towards the knowledge economy seriously, as ISCED 3C graduates were dominantly required for new jobs created in the 2000s.

Attracting investments in the eastern part of Slovakia and into higher added value sectors of the economy has been declared a priority of the current government, welcomed by analysts. Nevertheless, 1 % GDP investment in research and development by 2020, indicated as a 2020 goal within the National Reform Programme, and insufficient support of R&D institutions give a signal to smart young people to continue their tertiary studies abroad with better chances to get employed outside Slovakia. Furthermore, small and medium-sized enterprises currently employing almost 70 % of the total labour force and creating 55 % of GDP air increasing dissatisfaction in the view of recent policies aimed at provision of huge amounts of state aid to large strategic investors, with no comparably massive support to them.

Slovakia faces a serious mismatch in the qualification structure in demand and supply due to a trendy shift in enrolment from ISCED 3C to ISCED 3A and subsequently higher studies, disregarding current labour market needs, but also due to a severe brain drain abroad among people not interested in the positions offered in Slovakia because of non-competitive wages and opportunities not fitting to their qualifications. In addition, manufacturing in Slovakia, focusing on luxury goods, is very sensitive to crisis, as the demand for cars and TV sets decreases disproportionally compared to the population income decrease. A high income elasticity of demand caused a harsh decrease in employment in industry (as documented later in the next section) with a slow revival due to increased productivity. Quite significantly, Slovakia ranked 10th among 139 countries assessed within the Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011 in the category of pay and productivity⁴, while with regard to the nature of competitive advantage⁵ Slovakia's ranked

⁴ Item 7.06 Pay and productivity of the Global Competitiveness Index. Slovakia scored 4.9 (weighted average) in response to question: To what extent is pay in your country related to productivity? [1 = not related to worker productivity; 7 = strongly related to worker productivity].

⁵ Item 11.04 Nature of competitive advantage of the Global Competitiveness Index. Slovakia scored 2.9 (weighted average) in response to the question: What is the nature of competitive advantage of your country's companies in international markets based upon? [1 = low-cost or natural resources; 7 = unique products and processes]

97th, far beyond its neighbouring EU countries, indicating that Slovakia's competitiveness is related to strong worker productivity and low-cost labour force, but not to unique production.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The table below presents comparison of data for EU 27 and Slovakia in selected years. Trends in employment of males and females are also offered to indicate gender differences and a specific vulnerability of employment of males in Slovakia.

	1998	1999	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU27 - TOTAL	65.5	66.2	66.6	67	67.4	68.1	69.1	70	70.4	69.1	68.6
EU27 - MALE	75.5	75.8	76.0	75.5	75.6	76.0	76.9	77.8	78.0	75.8	75.5
EU27 - FEMALE	55.6	56.6	57.	58.7	59.4	60.2	61.3	62.2	63.0	62.5	62.1
SK - TOTAL	67.4	65	63.5	64.8	63.7	64.5	66	67.2	68.8	66.4	64.6
SK - MALE	75.9	72.4	70	71.4	70.9	72.5	74.6	76	77.4	74.6	71.9
SK - FEMALE	59.2	57.8	57.2	58.4	56.7	56.7	57.5	58.7	60.3	58.2	57.4

Source: Eurostat; [t2020_10]; last update: 26-07-11; date of extraction: 19-08-11.

Slovakia managed to reduce the gap between employment rates in Slovakia and EU27 since 2004 to 2008. A stable pace of increase in employment peaking in 2008 is replaced by a severe decline lasting till 2010 - stronger in comparison to EU27, in particular as regards males. Substantial improvement was expected in 2011 with new jobs in industry, however, again endangered by turbulences at financial markets. Slovakia is lagging substantially behind the Europe 2020 indicator of employment (75 %), thus meeting the 2020 benchmark is unlikely.

The following table offers a detailed picture on three selected years indicating differences in employment of low, medium and high educated with some alarming results.

		2003			2006			2010		
		15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU27	ISCED 0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	21.5	62.8	43.1
	ISCED 3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	45.0	79.7	59.6
	ISCED 5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	57.1	87.4	74.5
	NO ANSWER	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.2	72.8	62.2
	TOTAL	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	34.1	78.1	56.7
SK	ISCED 0-2	1.9	38.3	20.8	2.1	34.1	24.3	2.0	32.1	27.7
	ISCED 3-4	46.0	78.9	48.7	44.9	79.8	52.8	36.4	77.4	54.7
	ISCED 5-6	66.5	92.0	75.5	65.8	89.6	73.9	30.8	84.6	75.5

	TOTAL	27.3	77.0	44.4	25.9	77.7	50.5	20.6	76.0	53.5
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Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); extracted on 19-05-2011; last update: 12-05-2011.

Notes: (i) - see explanatory notes http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/lfsq_esms.htm.

Ineffectiveness of policies aimed at education and employment of Roma results in long-term, extremely low employment rates (about 2 % only) of low-skilled (ISCED 0-2) young population aged 15-24. The best results of low-skilled are achieved in the age category 25-49, but they are still in sharp contrast with EU27, e.g. 32.1 % compared to 62.8 % in 2010).

Low employment rates can also be seen concerning elderly population (aged 50-64) below ISCED 5. Employment rates of low and medium level educated people aged 50-64 are strongly influenced by an earlier retirement age in Slovakia compared to a dominant share of EU citizens, but also by insufficient effectiveness of employment services in assistance to elderly people to reintegrate into labour market.

Analogously to employment rates, vivid improvement is also visible in unemployment rates from 2004 till 2008, with later disproportionate deterioration.

TABLE 9: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY GENDER, AGE GROUP 20-64											
	1998	1999	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU27 - TOTAL	:	:	9.0 (i)	8.8 (i)	8.9 (i)	8.6	7.9	6.8	6.7	8.6	9.3
EU27 - MALE	:	:	7.9 (i)	8.2 (i)	8.4 (i)	8.0	7.2	6.2	6.2	8.6	9.3
EU27 - FEMALE	:	:	10.3 (i)	9.5 (i)	9.7 (i)	9.4	8.6	7.5	7.2	8.5	9.2
SK - TOTAL	11.1	14.5	17.6	16.3	18.0	15.7	12.8	10.7	9.2	11.7	14.0
SK - MALE	10.6	14.6	18.2	16.1	17.1	14.9	11.6	9.5	8.0	11.0	13.8
SK - FEMALE	11.7	14.3	17.0	16.5	19.2	16.6	14.2	12.3	10.6	12.5	14.2

Source: Eurostat, [lfsa_urgaed]; last update: 09-08-2011.

Note: (i) - see explanatory notes.

Strong growth in the economy as well as opening labour markets in EU countries gradually reduced numbers of the unemployed, but this trend has been reversed since 2008 due to the crisis. An increase of unemployment rate by 5.8 percentage points from 8.0 % in 2008 up to 13.8 % in 2010 again indicates structural sensitivity of Slovak economy.

A decrease of disposable means of inhabitants in large EU economies, as well as slowing down in the EU, in particular Germany, have translated in low demand for slow moving goods produced in Slovakia. Furthermore, regardless of crisis, three groups in Slovakia are permanently at risk: low educated, elderly and Roma. The following unemployment data confirms the vulnerability of low-skilled people.

TABLE 10: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%)										
		2003			2006			2010		
		15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU27	ISCED 0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	27.4	16.3	10.2
	ISCED 3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	18.1	8.2	6.7
	ISCED 5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	16.2	5.3	3.6
	NO ANSWER	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	:	8.2	:
	TOTAL	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	20.8	8.9	6.9
SK	ISCED 0-2	69.6	50.5	30.0	74.0	51.4	31.0	67.3	50.4	27.5
	ISCED 3-4	30.6	13.3	12.6	21.4	10.6	10.1	30.6	12.8	10.7
	ISCED 5-6	23.6	3.2	:	16.2 (u)	2.7	2.8 (u)	27.5	5.0	4.6
	TOTAL	32.9	14.8	13.7	26.6	11.9	11.2	33.6	13.0	11.2

Source: Eurostat (LFS); extracted on: 19-05-2011; last update: 12-05-2011.

Notes: (u) - unreliable or uncertain data, :- not available, (i) - see explanatory notes http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/lfsa_esms.htm.

67.3 % of ISCED 0-2 educated unemployed young people aged 15-24 compared to 27.4 % in EU27 in 2010 indicates the need for urgent intervention. Receiving the qualification for manual works in Slovakia is linked to comparably high level of general education. A certificate of apprenticeship (ISCED 3C) can be obtained after at least 3 years of upper secondary education. There is no “fool-blood” scheme allowing for certification of vocational skills for simple works (crafts) only. Thus, many low achievers from primary and secondary schools, in particular Roma, failing to achieve ISCED 3C level of education are hampered to obtain at least some confirmation of related skills payable at labour market. ISCED 2C programmes are not offered in a full possible variety of fields, currently in 9 areas. Thus, provision of ISCED 2 level IVET should be rethought to be added to the current offer of training instead of relying on labour market training of low-educated adults with low effects. High unemployment rates of ISCED 0-2 educated indicate a serious long-term problem as it contains many low educated Roma with low employability.

In 2010, also ISCED 3-4 educated aged 20-24 feature extremely high unemployment rate with 30.6 % - the sixth highest in the EU far over the EU 27 average (18.1 %).

Unemployment hits elderly and young people extraordinarily hard as their employability is perceived as lower compared to other age groups by employers. Employers prefer experienced middle age workers who are again available at the market due the crisis and therefore young and elderly people are even more disadvantaged since 2008

Long term unemployment is a very serious challenge for Slovakia being highest in EU 27, with no signal of improvement for years. Slight decrease in 2008 and 2009 is caused by the increase of absolute numbers of unemployed during the crisis.

TABLE 11: LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT - ANNUAL AVERAGE (%)											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU27	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.7	3.1	2.6	3.0	3.9
SK	10.3	11.3	12.2	11.4	11.8	11.7	10.2	8.3	6.6	6.5	9.2

Source: Eurostat (LFS); [une_ltu_a]; extracted on: 23-10-2011; last update: 12-05-2011.

A limited effectiveness of employment services is visible from this table suggesting that low-skilled (and predominantly Roma) need a different treatment than currently offered by labour market tools.

TABLE 12: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES OF 20-64 AGED WITH ISCED 0-2 LEVEL OF EDUCATION (%)											
	1999	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
EU27	4.0	11.6 (I)	11.1 (I)	11.6 (I)	11.4	10.9	10.1	10.8	14.1	15.4	
SK	31.9	39.0	45.8	50.8	51.5	46.8	43.5	38.2	40.1	43.0	

Source: Eurostat; [lfsa_urgaed]; last update: 09-08-2011.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

The total public expenditure on education in Slovakia declined from 6 % GDP in 1992 to 5.01 % in 1995 and to 3.59 % in 2008 (Eurostat; tsdsc510). The public expenditure on education in Slovakia became very low in the hard times of economy in the 1990s, but it also remained low in a period of growing economy in the 2000s being all the time deeply below the EU average. As can be seen from the table below, it affected all levels of education in Slovakia, except elementary education (ISCED 1).

TABLE 13: THE TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP IN 1999 TO 2008 IN SLOVAKIA AND EU27										
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27 ALL LEVELS	4.86	4.88	4.99	5.10	5.14	5.06	5.04	5.04	4.96	5.07
SK ALL LEVELS	4.18	3.93	4.00	4.30	4.30	4.20	3.85	3.80	3.62	3.59
EU27 ISCED 5-6	:	:	1.08	1.15	1.14	1.13	1.15	1.13	1.12	1.14
SK ISCED 5-6	:	:	0.82	0.87	0.85	0.98	0.81	0.90	0.79	0.77
EU27 ISCED 2-4	:	:	2.27	2.32	2.35	2.29	2.25	2.23	2.20	2.24
SK ISCED 2-4	:	:	2.05	2.29	2.18	2.11	1.88	1.76	1.69	1.64
EU27 ISCED 1	:	:	1.16	1.14	1.17	1.16	1.15	1.18	1.16	1.18
SK ISCED 1	:	:	0.60	0.59	0.64	0.56	0.66	0.67	0.67	0.65

Source: Eurostat; [educ_figdp]; Last update: 14-06-2011.

Notes: All EU 27 data estimations of Eurostat, for Slovakia see explanatory text in metadata to Eurostat data.

Worth stressing is the dramatic decline in secondary education with one of the EU strongest VET streams. This immediately raises doubts about the quality of equipment of school based secondary VET in Slovakia. Comparison of EU27 and Slovakia confirms that

the gap between EU27 and Slovakia in expenditures on education in the 2000s did not narrow. A decreasing share of expenditure in education is however not only due to the decline of population in formal education and the growth of GDP. (See part 10.1 for further details.)

1.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

The youth education attainment level is very high compared to EU average, with 93.2 % of the population aged 20-24 having completed at least upper secondary education (in contrast to EU27 79.0 %) in 2010. Females' figures are even better than those of males.

TABLE 14: YOUTH EDUCATION ATTAINMENT LEVEL* BY SEX (%), 2002, 2005, 2009									
	2002			2005			2009		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
EU27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.6	81.4	75.9
SK	94.5	95.4	93.5	91.8	92.6	91.0	93.3	94.0	92.6

Source: Eurostat (LFS; [lfsi_edu_a]; extracted: 19-05-2011; last update: 01-04-2011.

Notes: * Percentage of the population aged 20-24 having completed at least upper secondary education.

Favourable early school leavers' data also confirm high education level, as visible below. Slovakia already meets EU 2020 benchmark (10 %) as well as 2020 National benchmark (6 %).

TABLE 15: EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS* IN 2002 TO 2009 (%)								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU27	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4
SK	6.7	5.3 (b)	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.0	4.9

Source: Eurostat (LFS); lfsi_edu_a, extracted: 19-05-2011; last update 01-04-2011.

Notes: * Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training; (b) - break in series (change in methodology).

The following table brings comparison of years 2007 and 2009, nevertheless indicating continuity in a long-term trend: a decrease in enrolment in VET and an increase in enrolment in general secondary education.

TABLE 16: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME ORIENTATION AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009									
YEAR		2007				2009			
GEO	SEX	3 GEN	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 VOC
EU27*	TOTAL	2 393 291	2 595 569	49 493	424 537	2 319 746	2 480 373	71 044	394 682
	MALE	1 022 202	1 400 317	23 958	194 372	995 733	1 344 532	37 514	188 195
	FEMALE	1 371 089	1 195 251	25 535	230 165	1 324 013	1 135 842	33 530	206 487
SK	TOTAL	19 404	59 198	:	2 438	19 619	51 835	:	2 716
	MALE	7 816	31 471	:	1 421	7 902	27 428	:	1 761
	FEMALE	11 588	27 727	:	1 017	11 717	24 407	:	955

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); [educ_grad2]; extracted: 19-05-2011; last update: 29-04-2011.

Notes: * Available total - calculated by Cedefop and recalculated by authors; There is no ISCED 3 and ISCED 4 prevocational and ISCED 4 general education indicated for Slovakia. GEN=general; VOC=vocational.

Lower attractiveness of secondary VET also translates in increase of higher education students demonstrated in particular by the huge increase of ISCED 5A graduates in the table below.

TABLE 17: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 5 AND LEVEL 6 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME DESTINATION, 1ST/2ND STAGE AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009													
YEAR		2007						2009					
GEO	S	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5-6	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5-6
EU27*	T	2348435	916150	691661	10355	109512	4076113	2465221	915360	706581	10850	100723	4198735
	M	971270	357768	280571	2703	59335	1671647	1020740	365808	278346	2568	54413	1721875
	F	1377165	558382	411090	7652	50177	2404466	1444481	549552	428235	8282	46310	2476860
SK	T	34019	10191	798	:	1371	46379	53742	19073	612	:	1937	75364
	M	12288	4503	218	:	735	17744	19035	6704	240	:	1005	26984
	F	21731	5688	580	:	636	28635	34707	12369	372	:	932	48380

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); [educ_grad4]; extracted: 19-05-2011; last update: 29-04-2011.

Notes: * Available total; There is no ISCED 5 B2 indicated for Slovakia; S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; 5A1= 5a all first degrees; 5A2=5a second degree; 5B1= 5b first qualification; 5B2= 5b second qualification, 6=level 6, 5-6= level 5-6.

Although Slovakia is among the EU leaders in the share of ISCED 3+ educated, the high share of ISCED 3C and the low share of ISCED 4+ levels identified by the 2001 census (see Diagram 1 in the Annex) indicated future risks for the implementation of a knowledge economy.

Meanwhile a strong increase in enrolment in higher education can be observed as already mentioned. The following table however also indicates reversed trend as a consequence of

the decline of population and huge brain drain. Share of Slovak students studying abroad (about 10 %) is among highest in EU.

ACADEMIC YEAR	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	NEWLY ENROLLED TOTAL
2000/2001	24 648	9 678	34 326
2005/2006	36 196	21 295	57 491
2006/2007	37 753	24 510	62 263
2007/2008	37 503	21 306	58 809
2008/2009	34 673	20 662	55 335
2009/2010	36 038	15 176	51 214
2010/2011	32 428	14 703	47 131

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva).

With a decreasing population number, the share of enrolment in tertiary education increased dramatically. The share of secondary school graduates continuing in higher education studies amounted to almost 50 % (49.6 % in 2009/2010, according to ÚIPŠ) due to anti-crisis intervention of the government asking schools to enrol additional 5,000 students. Thus a substantial improvement concerning ISCED 4+ levels is expected within the 2011 census. At the same time however a dramatic decrease in secondary VET graduates leads to mismatch at the labour market. The following table documents a decrease of ISCED 3 graduates from vocational studies from 78,604 to 51,835, i.e. down to 66 % in 2009 compared to 1998.

	1998 BY ISCED LEVEL			2006 BY ISCED LEVEL			2007 BY ISCED LEVEL			2009 BY ISCED LEVEL		
	3VET	4VET	5+6	3VET	4VET	5+6	3VET	4VET	5+6	3VET	4VET	5+6
ALL	78 604	1 591	17 442	60 329	2 792	40 190	59 198	2 438	46 379	51 835	2 716	75 364
M	41 673	467	7 555	32 535	1 710	16 278	31 471	1 421	17 744	27 428	1 761	26 984
F	36 931	1 124	9 887	27 794	1 082	23 912	27 727	1 017	28 635	24 407	955	48 380

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); 1998 - national data.

In contrast to initial education with predominantly positive structural indicators, the LLL benchmark indicates a serious problem. Adult participation in education and training is far from EU 27 average and the EU2020 benchmark (15 %), that is identical with national 2020 benchmark originally set for 2015 by the national lifelong learning strategy. There are no fiscal incentives offered to adults to boost LLL and the national economy seems not to need additional in-company training due to character of working positions offered for labour force.

TABLE 20: LIFELONG LEARNING-ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING* BY SEX (%), 2002, 2005, 2009									
	2002			2005			2009		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
EU27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.3 (p)	10.2 (p)	8.5 (p)
SK	8.5(b)	8.8(b)	8.2(b)	4.6	5.0	4.3	2.8	3.3	2.2

Source: Eurostat (LFS); [lfsi_edu_a]; extracted on: 19-05-2011; last update: 01-04-2011.

Notes: * Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey; (b) - break in series, (p) - provisional value, (u) - unreliable/uncertain data.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

National definitions and short explanations for respective terms titled in English and Slovak are offered here.

GENERAL EDUCATION - VŠEOBECNÉ VZDELÁVANIE

There are many scholar definitions of general education, different in details, however typically stressing forming of personality, its relations to the world - nature, society and to him/herself; and focusing dominantly on preparation for further study. Knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes are traditional outcomes related categories, gradually complemented by “key competences” under the influence of European discourse.

In the Slovak language, it is necessary to distinguish between two very similar expressions. While “všeobecné vzdelávanie” refers to the process of education/learning, “všeobecné vzdelanie” refers to the results of the former. These results can be specified by respective formal levels. Levels of general education are specified by § 16 of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. (Zákon č. 245/2008 Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní). No legislation specifies (defines) two aforementioned terms corresponding to the term general education. It must be stressed that general education is also offered within vocational studies, however in a lesser extent. Thus, it is not possible to see general and vocational education as disjunctive. Of course, there are ISCED 3A study branches that are classified as general education programmes and a grammar school is explicitly indicated by § 41 of the Education Act as a school offering general education.

VOCATIONAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - ODBORNÉ A PREDODBORNÉ VZDELÁVANIE

Slovak equivalents to terms vocational education/vocational education and training are “odborné vzdelávanie/odborné vzdelávanie a príprava”. Similarly to the case of general education, as explained in the previous paragraph, a difference between “vzdelávanie” a “vzdelanie” must be taken into account.

Scholar definitions are equivalent in content to Cedefop’s glossary formulation “to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations/labour market” with slight differences in particular with regard to using terms of outcomes related categories. Knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes are traditional outcomes related categories. (For further development see explanations concerning the term “competence” below.)

No legislation defines vocational education explicitly. Secondary vocational schools are explicitly indicated by § 42 of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. as schools offering education programmes lasting 2-5 years providing “knowledge, skills and abilities” necessary for carrying out respective occupations and vocational activities. Levels of vocational education are also specified by § 16 of the Education Act. More explanations are offered by state educational programmes (corresponding to ISCED 2A, 2C, 3A, 3C, 4A, 5B vocational education) to set requirements of state that are obligatory for schools while preparing their specific school educational programmes and by the “Manual for Creation of School Educational Programmes” (*Metodika tvorby školských vzdelávacích programov pre stredné odborné školy*).

Nevertheless, it must be stressed that secondary vocational studies are offered together with at least partly provided general education. There are no formal VET studies shorter than 3 years in Slovakia except some rarely attended ISCED 2C studies aimed at low achievers. They offer so-called lower secondary vocational education (*nižšie stredné odborné vzdelanie*) preparing for very simple activities performed usually under supervision of other professionals. These studies lasting at least two years are classified and related data submitted for international use within UOE statistics as pre-vocational. There is however no widely used equivalent of the term pre-vocational education and there is no pre-vocational education legislatively set.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION - TECHNICKÉ VZDELÁVANIE

Technical education is considered a specific case of vocational education related to diverse areas of technology (e.g. machinery, electrical engineering, etc. in contrast to others (e.g. services, business administration, etc.).

TERTIARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION - TERCIÁRNE A VYSOKOŠKOLSKÉ VZDELÁVANIE

There are no explicit definitions of these terms commonly accepted or wider used. Higher education is pragmatically understood as education offered by higher education institutions.

Higher education is usually translated as “vysokoškolské vzdelávanie” or “vysokoškolské vzdelanie” (see explanation to twin words “vzdelávanie/vzdelanie” above), as visible e.g. in the translation of the term European Higher Education Area as “Európsky priestor vysokoškolského vzdelávania” within Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll. These terms are however not exact equivalents as “vysokoškolské” relates explicitly to the higher education institutions and the aforementioned act, if more precisely translated, should read as an Act on Higher Education Institutions. “Institutional” approach is strictly required by higher education institutions negatively perceiving the power of Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV, *Slovenská akadémia vied*), for the long time privileged by state in funding research and which was originally independent in offering PhD studies. Now, PhD titles are exclusively awarded by universities, however “non higher education institutions”, e.g. the Slovak Academy of Sciences, if accredited for this and their experts approved by a respective university, can participate in preparation of PhD students in cooperation with a respective university. A “non-institutional” equivalent of the term “higher education” is not used due to the aforementioned “institutional clash” and additional explanations are used if misunderstanding occurs.

Furthermore, as a consequence of the reluctance of university lobby to accept emergence of expansion of secondary schools into tertiary education, there is an additional irregularity in terms necessary to be explained. Some secondary schools offer ISCED 5B

studies classified as providing “higher professional education” according to § 16 of the Education Act which even speaks about “post-secondary or tertiary education” as a consequence of lobbying of secondary schools that developed experimental studies within the PHARE programme originally aimed at provision of higher than secondary education and which was perceived by students and also teachers as a sort of higher education, e.g. as a consequence of organisation of studies similar to universities. They were named higher professional schools (*vyššie odborné školy*) in common language, however legislatively not recognised as schools offering tertiary education. Currently this kind of institutions does not exist any more, however programmes of higher professional studies offering post-secondary education at secondary schools are recognised, while Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. even opens the door to offering tertiary education in the future.

Although originally terms higher education and tertiary education were used interchangeably and considered equivalent, aforementioned irregularities contributed to understanding of “tertiary education” as a wider term and “higher education” as a specific case of tertiary education. However, no legislation defines tertiary education and this term is even not used in the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. As already indicated, the term tertiary education is used in the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. (focusing on primary and secondary education) setting a compromise for secondary schools offering ISCED 5B higher professional education that can award students with a newly introduced “Diploma Specialist” titles “DiS” and “DiS.art” that are however not higher education titles.

FURTHER EDUCATION - *ĎALŠIE VZDELÁVANIE*

Further education was traditionally seen as education after finishing formal education or even after a break usually caused by employment. According to the Act on Further Education No. 386/1997 Coll. it is seen as “education, which makes it possible for each individual to supplement, widen and deepen their education, to be retrained or to satisfy their interests”. Further education was seen as provided by institutions of further education offering also short-term programmes and programmes in various organisational forms and also as education offered by regular schools including universities preparing participants (usually part-time students) to obtain respective education level certificate (see also explanations concerning continuing education).

CONTINUING EDUCATION - *ĎALŠIE VZDELÁVANIE, KONTINUÁLNE VZDELÁVANIE*

Originally two terms - further education and continuing education were used interchangeably, usually referring to “German or English” approach dominantly influencing the speaker or translator. The first Slovak term “ďalšie” was dominant in common language and also in legislation, while the second term is occurring more frequently in coincidence with recognition of importance of permanent learning and lifelong learning. Gradually, continuing education is considered as general term and further education/training is more often used to describe just specific cases, predominantly meaning follow-up courses aimed at expanding/deepening professional skills. The term “kontinuálne vzdelávanie” is recently applied to indicate changes in in-service training introduced by the new act on pedagogical staff.

POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION - *POSTSEKUNDÁRNE NETERCIÁRNE VZDELÁVANIE*

Two forms of post-secondary non-tertiary education are recognised by the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll.:

- follow-up studies aimed at offering ISCED 3C graduates programmes to achieve ISCED 3A level in the same or similar branch of study;
- “post-maturita” studies are aimed at enhancing or deepening qualification and specified in types by the legislation: developing or innovative (refreshing) studies; qualifying studies in order to obtain vocational qualification in addition to the previous one.

It must be stated that there are also two additional types of “post-maturita” studies (higher professional study and specialising study offering knowledge and skills for specific working positions) which are seen as tertiary and corresponding to ISCED 5B, according to Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll.

TRAINING - ODBORNÁ PRÍPRAVA, VÝCVIK

In Slovakia, training is seen as aimed at practical skills development. Significantly a Slovak equivalent “tréning” of that word is dominantly used with regard to preparation in sports. Gradually with opening to the world and practice from abroad it is together with a Slavic equivalent “výcvik” (and even substituting it) also used in wider sense, however still in cases dominantly focusing on improvement of already acquired skills (and not related to knowledge), i.a. in diverse in-company trainings. Furthermore, the word “training” is seen as stressing pragmatic English/American approach in contrast to theoretically based one. Therefore, in a Slovak context, “training” is often considered equivalent to “education” and translated as “vzdelávanie”. On the other hand, in a phrase “vocational education and training” it is translated as “príprava” and “odborné vzdelávanie a príprava” in full, in line with translation of “vocational training” in the sense of training aimed at preparation for working as “odborná príprava”.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - POČIATOČNÉ ODBORNÉ VZDELÁVANIE A PRÍPRAVA

In Slovakia IVET is seen institutionally as initial education and training offered by secondary VET schools. As a consequence of width in coverage and volume of stream of secondary VET schools, the term is not widely used and it is also not defined by legislation.

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - KONTINUÁLNE ODBORNÉ VZDELÁVANIE A PRÍPRAVA

Continuing vocational education and training is seen as continuing education within VET. Gradually it is dominantly mentioned with regard to continuing professional development, e.g. in-service training of highly regulated professions such as teachers, or medical staff and with stress on training within retraining to meet job requirements. For some additional explanations see the paragraph above on “Continuing education”.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES, ALTERNANCE TRAINING, APPRENTICESHIP

Initial vocational education and training is school based in Slovakia. Therefore there are just school-based programmes and therefore there is also no equivalent widely used in Slovak. Similarly it is with the alternance training and therefore no Slovak equivalent was set. Furthermore, there is no traditional apprenticeship scheme in use anymore, and all participants are seen as pupils (students) according to legislation. The term apprentice is not recognised by legislation and the Slovak equivalent “učeň” is used in common language

only or with regard the former status in history. There is a possibility for companies to pay for VET at secondary specialised (vocational) schools and also partly participate at training of students who they are interested in as future employees. To distinguish between them and students not in preparation for respective company the former are sometimes called “apprentices”, regardless the fact that legislation does not make such a difference.

CURRICULUM - KURIKULUM

This term was very rarely used in discourse till 1990s, and if, then with regard to description of situation in other countries. Instead of this, two crucial terms “učebné osnovy” (syllabi describing the content, which was set by the Ministry of Education to be obligatory taught in all subjects) and “učebný plán” (education plan setting a number of weekly hours for respective studies) were used with regard to the programming phase of education and a traditional term “vyučovanie” (classroom teaching - instruction) was used to refer to the delivery of education and learning provisions in class itself. Recently, after the curriculum decentralisation reform introduced by the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. all aforementioned notions have remained in use, however syllabi are not centrally set, but by respective schools, and education plan is centrally set less detailed as a so-called framework education plan, leaving its finalisation up to school. The term “kurikulum” is not introduced by legislation and it is dominantly used in academic discourse usually referring to educational programming. In the same sense it is also used within the “Manual for Creation of School Educational Programmes” offered for schools to help them develop their own curriculum (school educational programme). Nevertheless, legislatively set terms “state educational programme” and “school educational programme” are used instead of “curriculum”, when meaning “curricular documents”.

QUALIFICATION - KVALIFIKÁCIA

There is no explicit definition of the term “qualification” in the Slovak legislation. It is usually used in a common sense as “ability to perform” relevant activities or it is formally described as “a sum of requirements according to relevant legislative norms”. Within respective legislative norms the following pattern is used: Qualification is presented as the conjunction of

- achieved education (level);
- specific qualifying conditions, sometimes described as specific vocational capabilities;
- experience already gained in respective field; and
- of which only the first one, or the first two, or in some cases all three are required and must be justified in a way stipulated by law.

In an academic world qualification is considered a set of abilities represented by knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits resulting in capability (sometimes specified as competence) to perform respective occupation. There is a difference between using the term “qualification” within science and legislation. Social science experts sometimes consider qualification as automatic consequence of completed education and training. In the “Manual for Creation of School Educational Programmes” for the first time a difference is recognised by stating that graduates from VET schools receive their “first qualification” leaving the space for further specification of requirements according to respective sectoral legislation or specific requirements targeted for working positions.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCES - ZRUČNOSTI A KOMPETENCIE

There is no appropriate Slovak word equivalent for “skills” encompassing both mental skills and manual skills. The most used Slovak term “zručnosti” correspond etymologically to manual skills as it is derived from the word “hand” (“ruka”). As a consequence, there is a risk of misunderstanding of the term “zručnosti”. There are three ways visible in the academic discourse to overcome this.

- Some use the term “zručnosti” as the general term and add explanatory adjective “mental” (“mentálne”) when it is important to indicate that not manual skills are meant. At the same time however, the term “mentálne zručnosti” is subjected to criticism due to inner inconsistency between “mentálne” and “zručnosti”, as the second word refers to the word “hand”.
- Some use the term “spôsobilosti” as the general equivalent to “skills” and “zručnosti” strictly in the sense of manual skills.
- Recently the term “spôsobilosti” (precisely identified, however ancient and forgotten in modern Slovak) was promoted as the general equivalent to “skills” by the terminological commission of the Ministry of Education, since 2010 renamed to Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*).
- In traditional as well as recent official curricular documents and also in the mainstream discourse the term “zručnosti” was used as the equivalent of the term “skills”. In newly elaborated state curricular documents, “zručnosť” is seen as general term equivalent to “skill” and explained as “ability to apply knowledge or use know-how”. In statements describing graduates’ profiles and standards skills (“what pupil can do”) are contrasted to the knowledge (“what pupil knows”).

The term “kompetencia” has two interrelated connotations: the first one being “entitlement to act” (e.g. with “competent officer” one means the “officer who is appointed to deal with respective agenda”, while the quality of his/her skills to run agenda is not discussed); the second one is related to “ability to perform”, which was already demonstrated or in which it is believed in by the speaker. The first connotation is much more used, but this term is also gradually adopting new connotations due to international influence.

The following is the definition of “kompetencia” according to the “Manual for Creation of School Educational Programmes”: Competence is a proved ability to use knowledge, skills, attitudes, value orientation and other capabilities in demonstrating and performing functions following the respective standards at work, at study in personal and professional development of individual and in his/her active involvement in society, in his/her future assertion in work and non-work life and for his/her further education.

Schools were advised to identify knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits (values) graduate should possess and express them in terms of performance structured into three categories of competences. Thus a graduate’s profile within each of the state curricula and consequently each school educational programme is composed of key competences (6

overarching competences), general competences (reflecting results of general education) and vocational competences (reflecting occupational requirements).⁶

2. MODERNIZING VET TO SUPPORT LLL, INTERNATIONALIZATION, AND MOBILITY

2.1 VET POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PRIORITIES IN SUPPORTING LLL

POLICY DOCUMENTS AND STRATEGIES ON LLL

The ESF project “Creation, Development and Implementation of an Open System of Lifelong Learning in the SR for the Labour Market” (*Tvorba, rozvoj a implementácia otvoreného systému celoživotného vzdelávania v SR pre potreby trhu práce*) led to elaboration of background documents for the policy paper aimed at the further development of lifelong learning and lifelong guidance measures till 2015. Subsequently, the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*) was adopted by the government on 25th April 2007, followed by the Action Plan for LLL Strategy Implementation, adopted by the Ministry of Education (MŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva*) on 13th November 2007. The policy declared four explicit components:

- System of monitoring and survey of the education needs with the aim of elaboration of their prognoses and information system on LLL;
- System of quality of lifelong learning with an emphasis on the quality on non-formal education and informal learning;
- System of recognition of learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning for obtaining qualification - permeability;
- Supporting tools of financing of LLL.

In addition, the Modernisation Programme Slovakia 21 (*Modernizačný program Slovensko 21*) was adopted by the government on 4th June 2008, complemented by Action Plans added in October 2008. Creating a system of lifelong learning is listed among measures introduced in this paper within the priority area Education. Modernisation Programme Slovakia 21 is linked to the National Reform Programme of the SR for 2008-2010 (*Národný program reforiem SR na roky 2008-2010*), approved by the Government Resolution No. 707/2008 on 8th October 2008, within which the implementation of the LLL strategy is considered an instrument in the development of the knowledge society. Nevertheless, within action plans adopted together with the National Reform Programme and valid also for Modernisation Programme Slovakia 21, the most relevant support for LLL is visible within the Action Plan Employment with regard the development of the national system of

⁶ For further explanation see *Skills and Competences Development and Innovative Pedagogy: Slovakia, Detailed Thematic Analysis Theme 7, chapter 0701*.

flexicurity only. Regardless of all policy papers stressing the importance of LLL, submission of the new Act on Lifelong Learning to the government originally expected in 2007 was for a long time postponed.

Finally Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong Learning (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*) was adopted by the parliament in December 2009, however with reduced focus. In contrast to the “Strategy”, non-formal and informal learning settings were not explicitly addressed by this act and respective terms were not used in its final wording. The same applies for subsequent legislative provisions already elaborated. Furthermore, three of four aforementioned components of the “Strategy” were not substantially addressed. No incentives in support of CVET/LLL were set by this act due to the disagreement of employers, the National Bank and the Ministry of Finance; the system of monitoring education needs as well as the system of recognition of learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning are still pending.

This act made a crucial step by stipulating creation of the National System of Qualifications (NSQ) composed of qualifications and for the first time in the legislation also partial qualifications. In contrast to the earlier Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education that stipulated issuing certificates of attendance, Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong Learning opens the door for issuing certificates on partial qualifications and even (full) qualifications as the composition of partial qualifications. Nevertheless, the development of the NSQ is a precondition for this. Validation of “outcomes”, while only outcomes related to education (and not learning) are explicitly mentioned, should stick to “qualification standards” and “assessment standards” to be set together with the newly established NSQ.

In 2010, however, no further progress is seen. Very likely, the economic crisis focused the attention of politicians on other issues. Contribution of LLL to fighting the crisis seems to remain unnoticed. Ultimately, the fundamental reform document, the National Reform Programme (NRP) of the Slovak Republic for 2011-2014, also pays just a little attention to LLL, and again rhetorical support is offered without clearly set goals and measures. The following is the full wording of the chapter 6.1.3 on LLL, extracted from the NRP: “As societal development is becoming more dynamic, lifelong learning - and further training in particular - is gaining in importance. An effective system of further training will give citizens easy access to flexible extension and deepening of their qualifications, which in turn will improve their chances of employment in the labour market, as well as their personal growth and quality of life. The lifelong learning strategy will be reviewed and updated; it will mainly include measures to systemically reduce information asymmetry in further training. Creating freely accessible educational content will raise the level of citizens’ key competencies, facilitating their opportunities in the labour market. Support will be given to further training activities that target personal development and an improved quality of life.”

There is a risk that the announced revision of the national LLL strategy envisaged for autumn 2011 will not go beyond general declarations.

CURRENT NATIONAL POLICY DEBATES

Typically the hottest debates refer to already adopted policies. In contrast to the period between 2002 and 2006, when secondary VET was not among legislative priorities, since 2006 hasty development took place and reforming laws were speedily adopted. Typically, a public debate was short continuing the tradition to debate more after than before taking the action. The Ministry of Education itself highlighted in 2009 that it is time to slow down,

to settle reforms and rethink corrections if needed. Here, some major topics of dispute and criticism are wrapped up:

- The curriculum decentralisation reform does not create conditions for a real reform of curricula; it just shifts responsibility for curriculum development to schools without creating the material conditions for the change.
- The VET governing reform does not make it clear enough how to achieve the declared goals of linking VET and the labour market. Creation of advisory bodies (VET councils) and inviting employers to influence VET is positive, however without know-how in anticipation of future skills needs and real expertise in policy making it might be useless or result in other forms of malpractice. Absence of relevant research does not allow for evidence based policy making.
- The new continuing professional development model introduced by Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff created a market for training providers rather than for satisfaction of the learning needs of pedagogical staff.
- The further erosion of a formal IVET system might be caused by introducing the recognition of prior learning in non-formal and informal settings without appropriate know-how for assessment.
- The quality assurance system to prevent from the deterioration of the quality of graduates induced by a current model of financing should be elaborated. Current one-sided pressure of per capita financing making schools not interested in the labour market and in fact irresponsible for graduates' future in the labour market should be corrected.
- Support labour market research in order to anticipate labour demand and skills needs is the fundamental precondition for evidence based policy making; identification of the appropriate know-how is a crucial problem.
- There are pressures signalling the risk of subordination of learners' individual development to employers' short-term workers demand, thus more sophisticated career guidance and counselling services are needed; making the difference between provision of these services in relation to school input, school output, and labour market needs is inevitable.
- Interlinking IVET and CVET must be newly rethought with CVET and labour market training being substantially more relevant for aligning training to employers' needs; the efficiency of labour market training must be examined.
- Financing CVET and labour market training must be interlinked with financing IVET, allowing IVET schools to benefit from CVET and labour market financial schemes provided they are able to provide CVET/LMT more efficiently.

The following are topics debated for a long time with no solution yet, despite urgency:

- prevent from the massive early school leaving of Roma, or compensate it by adjusting VET to their cultural specificity and dominant learning styles, stressing vocational skills over general education related knowledge and skills;
- strengthen in-service training of VET staff as an instrument to compensate at least partly the ageing of teachers and trainers and the low attractiveness of working positions at schools as the first choice career option;

- reduce IVET schools equipment modernisation debt, as one of the instruments to make VET more attractive for all students, teachers and trainers, and in order to prevent at least partly from the brain drain of IVET tertiary students abroad.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN TOOLS AND PRINCIPLES

NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK (NQF)

A proposal to implement EQF in the Slovak Republic (*Návrh implementácie Európskeho kvalifikačného rámca pre celoživotné vzdelávanie v podmienkach Slovenskej republiky*) was approved by Government Resolution No. 105/2009 of 4th February 2009. According to this proposal a National System of Qualifications (NSQ) is defined as a publicly accessible registry of all full and partial qualifications validated and recognised in the territory of the Slovak Republic. This registry should be aligned to the National Qualification Framework compatible with EQF. This decision has been confirmed by Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong Learning, approved on 1st December 2009, stipulating the legislative background for elaboration of NSQ. NSQ will be aligned to the National System of Occupations (NSO) already in preparation under the surveillance of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family based on the stipulation of Act No. 139/2008 Coll. amending Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services. A Memorandum on Cooperation between the education and labour ministries, signed on 27th October 2009, should facilitate the coordination of the elaboration of NSO and NSQ.

Descriptions of IVET graduates' profiles should comply with NQF descriptors by the end of 2011, and subsequently, also educational activities of CVET and adult education should be linked to respective levels of NQF by the end of 2011. Final versions of descriptors of respective NQF levels had to be agreed in 2009. Until now, however, it has only been agreed that levels 6-8 will correspond to three tertiary education cycles and reflect the Dublin descriptors, but there has been no agreement yet about other levels and even on a total number of levels. Nine levels are seen as better corresponding to existing qualification systems and education levels set by the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. An inter-sectoral steering group chaired by the Director General of the Section of Lifelong Learning of the Ministry of Education has been established to prepare a draft proposal of NQF. A final version of NQF should be prepared in 2011 and the national referencing report by March 2013, according to the Ministry of Education (since 2010 renamed to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*). Nevertheless, the preparation process slowed down again. There are no steps visible going beyond formal education and the education sector. A reduced focus of the framework and lacking over-sectoral cooperation indicate a long way to completed referencing.

To co-finance respective policies two ESF national projects were envisaged. An ESF Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion project the "National System of Occupations" should develop descriptions of occupations adjusted to labour market needs and labour market intelligence data know-how to facilitate the updating of NSO and facilitate the adjustment of VET to employers' requirements. A revision of national statistical classification is envisaged, resulting in the alignment of NSO with ISCO 08. An ESF Operational Programme Education project, the "National System of Qualifications in the Context of Continuing Education Supported by Guidance and Counselling System" has been announced by the MŠVVaŠ. The project is however still pending, and the final decision on the institution to be responsible for the development of the know-how to map, assess and forecast qualification requirements and to create NSQ encompassing competence based qualification standards and respective assessment standards has been postponed.

IMPLEMENTING A UNIT-BASED CREDIT SYSTEM

Implementing a unit-based credit system in VET is typical for continuing professional development systems, rather than for learning aimed at obtaining an initial qualification. In addition to the health sector where credit systems are widely used, a credit system is in the process of introduction by the Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*) regulating in-service training of pedagogical staff.

In draft versions of the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. credit systems were proposed as an option for obtaining qualification as a consequence of recognition of competences acquired within non-formal and informal learning. Nevertheless, credit systems were not included in the final version of this act, apparently due to the doubts in successful implementation of respective policies under current conditions of insufficiently developed relevant know-how.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The introduction of the national quality assurance system is still pending, although the enhanced involvement of employers in monitoring quality, stipulated by the Act on VET, is a positive step. Nevertheless, there has been no national quality assurance scheme developed so far. European activities related to CQAF and EQARF are insufficiently reflected due to the lack of institutional support and also the lack of specialists. Slovakia did not even manage to fully participate in ENQA-VET and subsequent networking activities.

It is worth stressing that in contrast to the earlier ESF programming period, the quality management is addressed extensively in 2007-2013 ESF Operational Programme Education. The non-existence of national quality management system was expressed a weak point and the introduction of QMS in all segments of VET, regional schooling, higher education and CVET/LLL indicated an explicit goal to be achieved.

A new national project No. 1/2009 “External Evaluation of School Quality Facilitating Self-Evaluation Processes and School Development” (*Externé hodnotenie kvality školy podporujúce sebahodnotiace procesy a rozvoj školy*) has been launched under the Operational Programme Education to develop instruments of quality evaluation and self-evaluation of schools and school establishments including their implementation. Fundamentals for a substantial progress in introduction of self-evaluation have been already created within this project. Based on an international experience, in particular the Scottish one, a national model of self-evaluation has been elaborated.

No progress is however visible concerning external evaluation and concerning introduction of a national quality model. Slovakia is still very passive in this field and was not able to learn from international experience in contrast to international self-evaluation practice.

VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

The first precondition for validation of non-formal and informal learning is to achieve agreement among stakeholders on the relevant know-how. There is, however just limited experience gathered, usually within European projects and as a consequence of amendment of the Trade Licensing Act, to enable skilled, however not formally qualified people to start their businesses⁷. Despite expectations and recommendations of the strategy on LLL validation of non-formal and informal learning was not introduced by the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. In contrast to the draft version of the act, only the recognition of competences acquired within “further education” has been addressed within the final wording adopted by the parliament. The doubts of formal educational institutions and in fact also of decision makers can be seen from the absence of terms equivalent to “validation/recognition of non-formal and informal learning” in this act. However, at least one important step was made. In addition to (full) qualifications, also partial qualifications are to be recognised in the future.

Thus, the way is open at least to the option to acquire partial qualifications based on the examination procedure aimed at the assessment of competences corresponding to the standards set for the respective (partial) qualifications. There is, however, a regulation in the act that might prove restrictive in the future. Within § 17 of this act a certificate from the CVET programme accredited by the Ministry of Education designed for obtaining respective (partial) qualification or the confirmation about 5-year practice from employer is required in addition to the certificate of the attained level of education. This indicates a very cautious approach of policy makers. In the Slovak qualification systems, the requirement to achieve a relatively high level of education (in fact at least ISCED 3C) is expected as a rule. Thus, low-educated people (ISCED 2 and less), with skills acquired in practice, will remain hampered in achieving a qualification certificate, regardless of the quality of their professional performance at work, as a consequence of not meeting the required level of formal education. Furthermore, the crucial point remained insufficiently targeted: How to provide inhabitants with quality information and how to secure their right for assessment of acquired competences regardless the ways/settings leading to their acquirement.

EUROPASS DOCUMENTS

All five Europass documents (Europass CV, Language Passport, Diploma Supplements, Certificate Supplements and Europass Mobility)⁸ are implemented and in use, of course in a different extent. Europass CV is undoubtedly the most popular document that can be considered a standard for practice and young people are used start their working career with Europass CV elaboration.

⁷ Further details are available in Slovakia: *Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, Theme 8 Accumulating, accrediting and validating learning. This procedure was however cancelled by the Act on LLL No.568/2009 Coll.*

⁸ For more information see part 3.1 in *A Bridge to the Future: European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-10: National Policy Report - Slovakia.*

The National Europass Centre (NEC) was established within the already existing Centre for the Recognition of Diplomas at the Ministry of Education (ENIC/NARIC) since 1st July 2005 to promote Europass documents and disseminate related information in support of academic, VET and professional mobility. NEC activities are supported by the website (www.europass.eu.sk) providing access to Europass documents including online forms. Nevertheless, the only document where statistics is collected by NEC is Europass - Mobility. As can be seen from the following table the interest in this document is in continuous increase in particular in the Lifelong Learning programme sub-programmes Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus and Comenius, with the steepest increase in the Leonardo da Vinci programme from 799 in 2009 to 1,050 in 2010. On the other hand, a number of documents related to other programmes decreased.

	2008	2009	2010
LEONARDO DA VINCI	747	799	1 050
ERASMUS	198	154	175
COMENIUS	14	10	45
GRUNDTVIG	1	0	0
YOUTH	21	0	0
OTHER EC FUNDED ACTIONS	139	11	0
WITHIN NON-EC FUNDED ACTIONS	-	33	8
TOTAL	1 020	1 007	1 278

Source: National Europass Centre.

The following table offers the distribution of issued Europass - Mobility documents by countries, which also indicates priorities of destinations.

AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI
55	2	0	0	329	256	5	0	24	120	27
FR	HU	IE	IS	IT	LI	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL
26	17	7	14	0	2	0	0	11	5	26
NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	TR	UK	TOTAL	
12	159	7	0	14	10	0	16	135	1 278	

Source: National Europass Centre.

2.3 INTERNATIONALISATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

2.3.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

There is no national policy in support of internationalization and transnational mobility in VET. Internationalization is rather addressed within general education and its quality

depends dominantly on individual approach of teachers or schools rather than on specific policy. Transnational mobility in VET is supported predominantly by EU programmes, in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme, and by diverse direct cooperation between schools. There is no national policy that could be seen as promoting increase of opportunities for sending VET students for studying and training abroad and/or to promote students exchange schemes. There is however a scheme in support of mobility of secondary students (preferably from socially disadvantaged families) approved by the Government on 27th February 2008, as reported in previous reports⁹, however it is not of substantial significance (as the interest of students is lower than expected by legislators) and students are almost exclusively interested in general education (grammar schools). Exchange schemes are often part of international cooperation and partnerships among municipalities and/or regions. There are no main “strategic” countries for international cooperation in VET; there are only countries naturally preferred by schools and individuals interested in partnerships. The Czech Republic is a dominant and naturally dominant destination country due to a common history, traditional contacts and no language barrier. Two other countries, Germany and Austria, are preferred as countries with strong IVET and therefore with many opportunities as well as possible partners for partnerships; partly also due to the dual VET system in these countries. Large countries are attractive due to “important languages”, e.g. the UK. Touristic destination countries in South are natural partners for schools preparing students for the tourism sector. Within the Erasmus programme, the Czech Republic, Germany, France and Spain are long-term dominant priorities for outgoing mobility. Within the Leonardo da Vinci mobilities Czech Republic, Germany, Austria and UK were most attractive in 2010. An increase in interest is visible concerning Poland, while a decrease concerning Spain.

Learning abroad is often considered a cultural event, additional attraction offered to students by the school; and less as an integral part of planned training. As a rule, different learning environment (and often better equipment, or more attractive opportunity to learn directly in the work place) is appreciated at most.

The most important barrier for increasing the mobility is a language barrier and a lack of means as grant schemes are not able to cover full costs of stays abroad. These are more serious obstacles than any legal and/or administrative obstacles. Of course facilitating an application procedure is always welcomed and rethinking procedures aimed at recognition of acquired knowledge, skills and competences is a permanent challenge and pending task of VET in Slovakia.

Although Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci mobilities are seen as an integral part of respective study there is no explicit procedure to validate knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the period spent abroad. Knowledge, skills and competences acquired abroad in addition to regular programme are usually not taken into account by certification. There are no measures to shift funding for transnational mobility in VET, not speaking about a focus on specific target groups; or any other aspects of mobilities. The National Report on the Implementation of Lifelong Learning Programme in the Slovak

⁹ See *VET Policy Report: Slovak Republic 2008: Progress in the Policy Priority Areas for Vocational Education and Training*

Republic in 2007 - 2009 explicitly stressed an insufficient attention paid to mobility by policy makers.

An interesting effect of the crisis has been observed in mobility activities, as reported in the aforementioned national report. In 2008-2010 an increasing interest of students of technical specialisations to take part in mobility actions was observed. The crisis decreased the interest of enterprises in students, either as working students or potential employees after completing their studies. There was also a decrease of possibilities for students to work in foreign production companies during holidays on the base of their own initiative. Thus, an opportunity to go abroad within the Erasmus sub-programme has become dominant. The impact of the crisis is also visible in the fact that getting new partner companies is more difficult, as well as their willingness to accept students for placements.

2.3.2 TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES IN VET

There are two crucial players promoting mobility. The Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (SAAIC) serves as the national LLP agency and lifelong learning. Programme actions promoted and managed by SAAIC are crucial instruments in support of mobility. The Slovak Academic Information Agency (SAIA) promotes internationalisation in education and research and supports mobilities predominantly of university students within diverse programmes as visible from the table below.

2. Lifelong Learning Programme - Erasmus	Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (SAIC)	EU programme	2007-2013	HEI students; HEI teachers and professionals from businesses.	Students - study mobility - 3 to 12 months; Students - placement - 3 to 12 months; HEI teachers/ professionals teaching at hosting HEI - 1 day to 6 weeks; HEI teacher and non-teaching staff training at hosting HEI institution/ business - 1 to 6 weeks; Intensive short-term programmes for teachers and students focused on professional themes - 2 to 6 weeks; Erasmus intensive language courses (EILC) for students - 2 to 6 weeks.	Outgoing recipients 2009/2010: Study mobility - 1798; Placement mobility - 353; Teachers teaching assignments - 635; Staff mobility for training - 146; Intensive short-term programmes - 87 students and 36 teachers; EILC - 57 students. Incoming recipients 2009/2010: Study mobility - 894; Students: 1085; Teachers; Staff mobility for training - 915.	Standard Erasmus procedure applied.	Students - study: Full recognition credits for study programmes after meeting Learning agreement requirements. Students - placement: Full recognition of credits after meeting requirements set in Training agreement or the placement is involved in the Diploma supplement. Intensive programmes for teachers and students: Recognition of credits for students depends on agreements between partner institutions.	National Erasmus website Reports on implementation of LLP (including Erasmus programme) A report on Slovak students and Erasmus mobility A report on implementation of LLP in 2010 Statistics on incoming recipients at EC portal
3. Lifelong Learning Programme - Comenius Individual mobilities	Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (SAIC)	EU programme	2007-2013	Pupils (up to upper secondary); Student teachers; Teachers (staff in education);	Pupils - 3 to 10 months; Assistantship for student teachers - 13 to 45 weeks. In service training of staff - 5 days to 6 weeks;	Recipients approved in 2010 (outgoing): Individual pupil mobility - 20; Assistantship for student teachers - 13;	Standard LLP procedure applied.	PUPILS/STUDENTS: Individual pupil mobility: Partial recognition of the study period abroad. Assistantship: No formal	National Comenius website Reports on implementation of LLP (including

				Staff involved in teacher training.	Preparatory visits (teachers) - 1 to 5 days	In service training of staff - 112; Preparatory visits (teachers) - 28.		recognition is provided. All participants can receive the Europass - Mobility as a certification of acquired KSC. <u>TEACHERS:</u> In service training of staff: Participants can ask for recognition of credits as a part of their further education at the Ministry of Education SR. Preparatory visits: no formal recognition is provided - the aim of this mobility is not directly linked to the study of participants. <u>PARTNERSHIPS:</u> no recognition, just certificates on participation	Comenius programme). A report on implementation of LLP in 2010
Partnerships				Mobility of teachers (may be also pupils)	1-5 days	Partnerships projects approved in 2010 - planned min. 1728 mobilities			
4. Lifelong Learning Programme - Grundtvig	Slovak Academic Association for International	EU programme	2007-2013	People working in the field of adult learning;	In service training of people working in the field of adult learning - up to 6 weeks;	Recipients approved in 2010 (outgoing): In service training - 22;	Standard LLP procedure applied.	<u>STUDENTS:</u> Assistantship: No formal recognition is provided.	National Grundtvig website Reports on

Individual mobilities	Cooperation (SAIC)			Future staff involved in adult education.	Visits and exchanges - up to 12 weeks; Assistantships for future staff involved in adult education - 12 to 45 weeks.	Visits and exchanges - 12; Assistantships - 4.		Participants can receive the Europass - Mobility as a certification of acquired KSC. TEACHERS: In service training: some participants can ask for recognition of credits as a part of their further education at the Ministry of Education SR.	implementat ion of LLP (including Grundtvig programme) A report on implementat ion of LLP in 2010
Partnerships				Mobility of teachers (may be also learners)	1-5 days	Partnerships projects approved in 2010 - planned min. 306 mobilities		PARTNERSHIPS: no recognition, just certificates on participation	
5. Youth in Action	IUVENTA National Agency „Youth in Action	EU programme	2007-2013	Young people: 13-30 years old	Action 1.1 (Youth exchanges) - 6 to 21 days; Action 1.2 (Youth initiatives) - 3 to 18 months; Action 1.3 (Youth Democracy Projects) - 3 to 18 months; Action 2 (European Voluntary Service) - 2 to 12 months; Action 3.1 (Youth in	Participants in 2010: Action 2 (EVS) - 51 participants; Relevant data for remaining actions are not available, because most of the Slovak participants were not supported by Slovak National Agency but by	Standard procedure applied.	Every person who has taken part in a Youth in Action project under Action 1.1, Action 1.2, Action 3.1 (Youth Exchanges and Training Courses), Action 2, and Action 4.3 (Training Courses) is entitled to	NationalYou th in Action website Annual IUVENTA report 2010

					<p>the world) - Maximum 15 months; Action 4.3 (Training and networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations) - 2 to 20 days; Action 5.1 (Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy) - 3 to 18 months.</p>	<p>partner National Agencies. The number of participants in the project granted in 2010 by Slovak NA is 3693 participants.</p>		<p>receive a Youthpass Certificate, which describes and validates the non-formal and informal learning experience and outcomes acquired during the project. Through Youthpass, the European Commission ensures that participation in the Programme is recognised as an educational experience and a period of non-formal learning and informal learning. This document can be of great benefit for the personal, future educational or professional pathway of the participant.</p>	
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Multi-country programmes (between several countries, including your country)									
1. NIL* Fund Supporting Cooperation in the Field of Education (mobilities are part of projects) * Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein	National contact point: Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	EEA financial mechanism/ Norwegian financial mechanism	Programming period - 2004-2009 (implementation till 2011); the programme is currently stopped.	Secondary students; Secondary teachers; HEI students; HEI teachers/ researchers.	Depending on the project the respective mobility is part of	2004-2009 programming period (implementation till 2011, duration of projects vary): Projects: Secondary schools - 12; HEI - 14; Project participants (both SK and NIL): Secondary students - 800; Secondary teachers - 200; HEI students - 800; PhD students - 170; HEI teachers and researchers - 350; Total mobilities: over 900	NIL Fund specific procedure applied - tender. Final decisions taken by the NIL Fund Board.	No recognition	Information on NIL Fund in Slovakia Publication of supported projects
2. CEEPUS - Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies	National CEEPUS Office (NCO): Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	In Slovakia by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR: Reimbursement of travel costs for outgoing (SR) students; Scholarships for	Originally founded in 1994 with the last (7- year) programming period starting in 2011	Students; PhD students; Teachers. (Applicants from countries participating at CEEPUS: HEIs participating at CEEPUS or	Students - 1-term (3 to 5 months); Students and PhD students - shorter than 3 months and focused at preparation of thesis (Bc., M., PhD); Teachers - 1 month (at least 5 working days with at least 6	Scholarships in 2010: Outgoing recipients (students, PhD students, teachers) - 505. Incoming recipients: Students - 91; PhD students -	CEEPUS specific procedure applied (decisions taken by Central CEEPUS Office located in Vienna and respective national offices)-tender: application	Recognition of study/outcomes depends on sending and hosting institutions	CEEPUS website Information CEEPUS in Slovakia

		incoming (foreign) students		individual applicants - freemovers.)	lectures).	80; Teachers - 207.	including acceptance letter (in case of students) or invitation letter (in case of teachers) of hosting institution, recommendation letter by 2 teachers (in case of students) or approval (in case of teachers) from home institution.		
Bi-lateral programmes (between your country and another country)									
1. Swiss-Slovak Cooperation Programme: Swiss-Slovak Fellowship Programme (Sciex-NMS ^{ch})	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} : Coordination unit: Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	Swiss Financial Mechanism	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} : 2010 to 2016	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} - research grants for: PhD students; Post-PhD professionals; Their tutors, researchers.	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} : PhD students - 6 to 24 months; Post-PhD professionals- 6 to 18 months; Tutors (researchers) - short-term visits.	Scholarships approved in 2010 (to Switzerland): PhD students - 4; Post PhD - 6.	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} procedures applied (final decisions taken by Steering Committee Members consisting of representatives of Swiss organisations) - tenders, applications including approval by hosting and sending institutions.	Sciex-NMS ^{ch} : PhD students: outcomes should be recognised	Swiss-Slovak Cooperation Programme website Sciex-NMS^{ch} website Sciex-NMS^{ch} website in Slovakia Information on Technical and Vocational Training project

Ad hoc projects (AHP), e.g. mobility within planned Technical and Vocational Training project (No. 2010-06)	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training project (No. 2010-06) - National contact point: Government Office of the Slovak Republic		AHP: Technical and Vocational Training project (No. 2010-06) - programmed for March 2012 to May 2016	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training (No. 2010-06) - programmed for VET professionals (IVET teacher and trainers, State Institute of VET staff).	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training (No. 2010-06) - programmed for 3-day training and visit of schools for IVET teacher and trainers, and 5-day training of IVET teachers and trainers and 2 members of State Institute of VET staff in employers' needs analysis.	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training (No. 2010-06) - programmed 50 people for 3 days and 7 people for 5 days for the whole period.	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training (No. 2010-06) - direct assignment, project designed by State Institute of VET, final decision to be taken by Swiss authorities.	AHP: Technical and Vocational Training (No. 2010-06) - certificates on completion of training	
2. Austria-Slovakia Action: Scholarships (except language courses)	Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport SR and Federal Ministry of Science and Research of Austria (equally)	Cooperation originally implemented during 1992 to 1996, relaunched in 2002 to 2007, prolonged till 2013.	Master students (since 2011); PhD students; Post PhD professionals; Teachers and researcher.	Master students - 1 to 3 months PhD students - 1 to 4 months; Post PhD professionals - 3 to 6 months; Teachers, ph d and researcher - up to 3 days.	Scholarships approved in 2010 (to Austria): PhD students - 27; Post PhD professionals - 9; Previous scholarship recipients - 2.	Specific action procedure applied (decisions taken by common AT/SK Gremium) - tender: application accompanied by an acceptance letter of hosting institution and a recommendation letter/approval by sending institution.	Recognition of study/outcomes depends on sending and hosting institutions	Austria-Slovakia Action website in Slovakia
3. Academic Mobility Programme (mobilities organised)	Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport SR individual study	Based on respective scheme	Based on respective scheme	Based on respective scheme	Scholarships approved for the 2010/2011 academic year: Outgoing recipients - 394.	Specific procedures applied for each country - applications based on	Recognition of study/outcomes depends on sending and hosting institutions	SAIA website

based on bilateral agreements with other countries)		and research mobility Slovak citizens abroad and foreign nationals in Slovakia (scholarships based on bilateral agreements) and offers by other countries governments.				Incoming recipients 2010 - 56 from 11 countries.	tenders. Decisions taken by commissions assigned for each country consisting of representatives of academic community, education ministry, SAIA, in specific cases also embassies.		
4. International Visegrad Fund Cooperation among 4 neighbouring (V4) countries - CZ, HU, PL, SK Visegrad Scholarship Program (VSP)	International Visegrad Fund Sekretariat	V4 countries from their state budgets (equally)	VSP: 2003 -	VSP: Master's and Post-Master's level scholars: Intra Visegrad Scholarship - scholars from V4 countries in any V4 country; Outgoing scholarships - scholars from V4 countries to other than V4 countries (in particular former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union); Incoming scholarships -	VSP: Master's and Post-Master's levels: 1 or 2 semesters; Master's scholarships within the Incoming scheme: 1 to 4 semesters.	VSP: Approved scholarships for 2010/2011 Intra Visegrad scholarships from SK to other V4 - 11 Outgoing scholarships from SK - 5; Incoming scholarships to SK - 8; Belarusian scholarship to SK - 6; Ukrainian scholarship to SK - 16.	VSP specific procedure applied (final decision taken by the Council of Ambassadors of V4 countries) - tender: application including acceptance letter of hosting institution (in some cases also recommendation letter).	Recognition of study/outcomes depends on sending and hosting institutions	International Visegrad Fund website International Visegrad Fund annual report 2009

				scholars from other countries (in particular former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union) to V4 countries, including Belarusian and Ukrainian Scholarships; Scholarships at Open Society Archivum Budapest (since 2001/2012).					
National programmes/schemes (not targeted at specific countries of destination)									
1. National Scholarship Programme for the Support of Mobility (mobilities for recipients from Slovakia abroad and for foreign recipients to Slovakia)	Slovak Academic Information agency (SAIA)	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR	2005 -	Scholarships recipients from Slovakia abroad: Study/research grants: Master students; PhD students; Travel grants: Students; Full-time PhD students; HEI teachers; Researchers.	Scholarships recipients from Slovakia abroad: Study/research grants: Master students - 1 term (semester or trimester) to 1 academic year; PhD students - 1 to 12 months. Scholarships for foreign recipients to Slovakia: Master students - 1	Scholarships approved in 2010: Outgoing recipients: Master students - 24 (including 13 travel grants), just travel grants - 1; PhD students - 66 (including 42 travel grants), just travel grants - 4. Incoming	Specific procedure applied (decisions taken by a commission assigned by the education minister) - tender: application including acceptance/invitation letter.	Recognition of study/outcomes depends on sending and hosting institutions	National Scholarship Programme website

				Scholarship for foreign recipients to Slovakia: Master students; PhD students; HEI teachers; Researchers.	to 2 terms (semesters); PhD students - 1 to 12 months; HEI teachers - 1 to 12 months; Researchers - 1 to 12 months.	recipients: Master students - 7; PhD students - 19; HEI teachers/ Researchers - 61.			
Regional programmes/schemes (between administrative regions in your country and foreign regions and/or countries)									
1. EU programmes promoting cross-border cooperation: Operational Programme Cross Border Cooperation (OPCBC) , in particular OPCBC SK-CZ; SK-AT; OPCBC SK-PL; OPCBC SK-HU; ENPI CBC SK-Ukraine-HU-RO.	Managing authority depending on the programme	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); In case of CBC SK-Ukraine-HU-RO ERDF and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)	2007-2013	Mobilities can be part of projects; Nevertheless, the possibility for applying for such projects is conditioned by priorities within respective calls.	Depending on the project.	Not available	Standard procedures applied.	Depending on the project.	Operational Programmes Cross Border Cooperation

Within Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects, mobility of pupils of secondary specialised schools is in a long term dominant over other eligible groups: VET professionals (i.e. VET teachers, trainers, instructors and counsellors responsible for VET in enterprises or accredited educational institutions, and people at labour market - employees, self-employed people and job seekers.

Mobility in VET is still considered by schools as a sort of benefit for students and an opportunity to make training more attractive for them, rather than a regular effort to support plurality and specialisation in training. Assessment and validation in a mobility context is organised according to agreed practice among the participating institutions. There is no specific regulation on the assessment of skills and competences acquired during mobility experience and concerning certification. Europass is however well-known by schools and used in a way agreed among partners.

Participation in secondary VET mobility is hampered by a lack of co-financing from national/local sources and a limited knowledge of foreign language, as already mentioned earlier. Thus, interested students from poor families and with poor language proficiency are disadvantaged.

Short-term mobility of Slovak HEI students is comparable with all participating countries' average (0.92 % Erasmus students in the total population of students in Slovakia in 2009/2010 academic year). However, it is lower in comparison with competitive foreign universities with a high share of Slovak students. Further improvement is needed, despite an increase in all Erasmus actions.

Average duration of Erasmus student mobility in 2009/2010 was 5 months for study mobilities and 3.9 month for company placement mobilities. Average EU monthly grant for student mobility was EUR 335 for study mobility and EUR 531.9 for company placement mobility.

Average duration of Erasmus staff mobility for teaching assignment in 2009/2010 was 6 days and the average grant was EUR 480.7. Average duration of staff mobility for training was 6.1 days and the average grant was EUR 582.

A lack of financial resources is not the only reason for an insufficient number of Slovak students in the Erasmus mobility although complaints concerning an increase in cofinancing from own budgets are louder. The reasons also comprise insufficient language skills and new rules in financing higher education in Slovakia creating important barriers. Students are at risk of having to pay for their study in case of exceeding the standard time of studies at their sending university. Therefore, students are counterproductively pushed to taking such study subjects abroad that are very similar to or identical with the subjects listed in the accredited programme of their respective sending schools¹⁰.

The numbers of incoming students from all countries involved in LLP are also comparably low reflecting low attractiveness of Slovak universities suffering from underfinancing and,

¹⁰ See the National Report on the Implementation of Lifelong Learning Programme in the Slovak Republic in 2007 - 2009.

subsequently, from both a lack of English speaking programmes and a quality infrastructure. Not surprisingly, most students traditionally come from neighbouring Slavic countries (Poland and the Czech Republic) and from France and Germany.

In contrast to low figures of short-term mobility, Slovakia features an extremely high share of students studying in full programme abroad. In 2009, 11.4 % of all ISCED 5-6 students were studying in another EU27 country compared to 2.6 % in EU27, ranking Slovakia among first countries in EU27. When looking on absolute numbers there were 29,300 students abroad, which is a remarkable increase compared to 3,800 and 3 % in 1999.

TABLE 24: STUDENTS (ISCED 5-6) STUDYING IN ANOTHER EU27 - AS % OF ALL STUDENTS											
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
EU27 (%)	2.6 (i)	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.2
EU27 (1000)	506.6 (i)	486.7	479.2	449.5	395.7	382.9	365.0	339.0	331.4	316.2	326.3
SLOVAKIA (%)	11.4	10.7	10.2	10.2	8.6	8.2	7.9	6.4	5.5	3.0	3.0
SLOVAKIA (1000)	29.3	26.9	24.5	22.3	16.8	14.5	13.4	10.3	8.3	4.2	3.8

Source: Eurostat, [educ_itertp], date of extraction 24-08-2011, last update 15-07-2011.

Note: (i) - see explanatory notes at

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm.

On the other hand, there were just 4,000 and 5,200 students studying in Slovakia from other EU27, EEA and candidate countries in 2008 and 2009, respectively, representing just 1.8 % and 2.2 %, respectively, of all students in the country, compared to 2.9 % and 3.1 % in EU27, respectively. This also seems to confirm a low attractiveness of Slovak higher education institutions.

2.3.3 ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE WORK PLACEMENTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

There are no financial and non-financial incentives to encourage companies to participate in transnational mobility in VET as host or sending organization. There are no specific measures applied to raise companies' awareness on the importance of participation in transnational mobility projects. It is fully up to a company and sensitivity of company management, whether it participates on mobility projects or not. There is no genuine apprenticeship system in VET in Slovakia and therefore companies are less used to deal with young trainees. Mobility is dominantly organized by schools within school based VET and that is why stays in companies are exceptionally valued.

Recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside regular school environment and recognition of learning outcomes from other than formal settings is a weak point of VET per se. Not surprisingly, there is no framework put in place to facilitate recognition of the periods of work placement abroad.

There is no specific database of companies participating in transnational mobility projects in VET maintained and a similar data are only offered within the LLP programme. Interested person can browse a database of offers of potential project partners (for all programmes including mobility projects) at

http://web.saaic.sk/llp/sk/_main.cfm?sw_prog=1&obsah=m_PSQ.cfm&jaz=sk.

3. VET TO SUPPORT RECOVERY FROM THE CRISIS

3.1 OVERVIEW

The Slovak GDP decreased from extremely high numbers in 2007 extremely deep in 2009; deeper in comparison with the EU27 countries average. The 2010 data showed a rush revival over the EU27 growth with expected acceleration in 2011 (e.g. over 4 % according to the Ministry of Finance estimation from October 2010) and a steep growth in 2012. Unfortunately, optimistic scenario is unlikely and Slovakia must expect a slowdown again.

TABLE 25: GDP GROWTH IN 2007 TO 2010 (%)						
GEO	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU27	3.0	0.5	- 4.3	1.9	1.6f	0.6f
SLOVAKIA	10.5	5.9	- 4.9	4.2	2.9f	1.1f

Source: Eurostat, [tsieb020].

Note: f - Eurostat forecasting.

The following table depicts a strong debt increase in 2009 and 2010; therefore an austerity package was adopted by the government to reduce indebtedness.

TABLE 26: GENERAL GOVERNMENT DEBT (% GDP) IN 2006 TO 2010					
GEO	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU27	61.5	59.0	62.3	74.4	80.0
SLOVAKIA	30.5	29.6	27.8	35.4	41.0

Source: Eurostat, [tsieb090], date of extraction: 31-08-2011.

The public finance deficit amounted to 8 % of GDP in 2009 and 7.7 % of GDP in 2010. The government declared to tighten fiscal policy in order to cut the public finance deficit down to 4.9 % in 2011 and below 3 % in 2013.

The Stability Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2011-2014 set the consolidation strategy based on a package of fiscal measures (about EUR 1.7 billion, approximately 2.5 % of GDP) as planned for 2011, and the second package of fiscal measures (about EUR 775 million, approximately 2.5% of GDP) planned for 2012, and forecasted a stable rate of economic growth - almost 5 % in 2012 to 2014. In addition, termination of anti-crisis measures that were introduced as temporary (up to 2010) has been announced. Unfortunately, the assumed favourable development of key macroeconomic indicators can not be expected anymore and a strong slowdown in GDP growth must be expected instead.

Although no hard impact of financial crisis was expected in autumn 2008 by analysts, an economic slowdown was hard as a consequence of the global economic crisis and the heavy dependence of Slovak industry on foreign demand. Production decreased the most in manufacture of electrical equipment by 44.9 %; transport equipment by 40.9 %; basic metal and fabricated metal products except machinery and equipment by 29.8 %; chemicals and chemical products by 29.3 %; rubber and plastic products and other non-metallic mineral products by 27.2 %; machinery and equipment (not elsewhere classified - n.e.c.) by 24.1 %; textiles, apparel, leather and related products by 23.7 %.

Similarly, no crisis in Slovakia was expected after the revival of economy in 2010 and a decrease in unemployment was officially forecasted for 2011. Despite a solid GDP growth, the unemployment rates are however stubbornly high as visible below. Companies learnt to rationalise during the crisis and they were reluctant to hire new workers. Compared to best data from August 2008 with 192,098 unemployed there are over 150,000 more unemployed in the mid of 2011.

	08 2008**	12 2008	06 2009	12 2009	06 2010	09 2010	12 2010	06 2011
NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED*	192098	218920	313076	335490	331655	333841	334903	346308
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (%)	7.36	8.39	11.81	12.66	12.34	12.42	12.46	12.98

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny).

Notes: * number of disposable, ** lowest unemployment in 2008.

The employment data from the following table indicates the development in selected sectors in 10 year span before the crisis.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	AGRICULTURE, HUNTING AND FORESTRY		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		TOTAL	
	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%	1000s	%
1998 Q2	178.9	8.1	577.2	26.2	203.3	9.2	2 201.4	100
2008 Q2	99.3	4.1	648.6	27.0	251.6	10.5	2 404.8	100

Source: Eurostat (LFS, second quarter); date of extraction: 26-05-2009.

Notes: * NACE Rev. 1.1.

Agriculture declined extremely, while the manufacturing and construction sectors accounted for a dominant share of about 200,000 new jobs appearing between 1998 and 2008. The following table informs about the impact of the crisis.

	AGRICULTURE (A)		MANUFACTURING (C)		CONSTRUCTION (F)		TOTAL	
	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%
EU27-2010	11 112.1	5.1	33 985.0	15.7	16 570.5	7.7	216 405.4	100
SK-2010	74.9	3.2	529.9	22.9	256.9	11.1	2 317.50	100
SK-2009	84.9	3.6	565.4	23.9	256.1	10.8	2 366.30	100

SK-2008	96.3	4.0	639.9	26.3	257.1	10.6	2 433.70	100
DIF**	- 21.4	-	- 110.0	-	- 0.20	-	- 116.20	-

Source: Eurostat, [lfsa_egan2].

Note: * NACE rev.2, in thousands and as % of total employment; ** Slovakia 2010 -2008 difference.

Agriculture continued to diminish during the crisis and is currently even far below the EU27 average in contrast to the end of 1980th, where it played a strong role in both economy and employment. Construction remained stable despite hard losses in profit; negative prospects are forecasted. A harsh decline is visible in particular in manufacturing. Nevertheless, manufacturing and constructions are very important sectors for the Slovak economy and their shares are above the EU27 average. Manufacturing in Slovakia is strongly dependent on demand for slow moving goods (in particular cars and their components, and LCD panels) abroad. During the crisis about 110,000 places were lost in manufacturing, as visible from the comparison of 2008 and 2010 data. Improvement in the labour market is not expected as a consequence of the expected decline of demand from slowing down EU economies important for Slovak export. A positive exception is the automotive industry already facing a huge demand and signalling new jobs also for the future. A less positive development is in the second most important exporting sector - electronic equipment, where decline in demand in panels and TV sets is feared.

The unemployment data below indicates that unemployment hits hard young people and extremely hard low educated young people.

TABLE 30: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 15 -24 AGED BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN SLOVAKIA AND EU27 IN 2010 (IN %)		
	SR	EU27
ISCED 0-2	67.3	27.4
ISCED 3-4	30.6	18.1
ISCED 5-6	27.5	16.2
ALL	33.6	20.8

Source: Eurostat (LFS).

Employment data from table below confirms extreme vulnerability of low educated people, but it also indicates a decrease in employability of people over 50 years of age. This indicates the need for rethinking current retraining practice and labour market policies.

TABLE 31: EMPLOYMENT BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND AGE GROUPS IN 2010 (IN %)			
EDUCATION/AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64
ISCED 0-2	2.0	32.1	27.7
ISCED 3-4	36.4	77.4	54.7
ISCED 5-6	30.8	84.6	75.5
ALL	20.6	76.0	53.5

Source: Eurostat (LFS).

A more detailed data indicates three large groups of unemployed hit by the crisis substantially: ISCED 2, ISCED 3C with certificates of apprenticeship, and ISCED 3A VET educated.

TABLE 32: EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND SEX IN 2008 TO 2010						
	EMPLOYED MEN (IN 1000s)			EMPLOYED WOMEN (IN 1000s)		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
TOTAL	1 363.7	1 326.4	1 284.5	1 070.0	1 039.4	1 033.0
WITHOUT SCHOOL EDUCATION	-	-	0.1	-	-	0.1
ISCED 2	51.1	46.8	46.7	58.8	46.0	44.8
ISCED 3C (CoA)	508.5	493.1	475.1	261.0	246.6	221.3
ISCED 3C (WITHOUT CoA)	36.3	36.3	37.1	24.2	21.0	18.4
ISCED 3A (MSLC) + CoA	81.5	68.4	49.7	44.5	36.9	32.0
ISCED 3A (MSLC) GEN	43.1	40.3	37.8	60.5	60.5	60.8
ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET	433.2	427.8	415.6	424.2	414.6	412.5
ISCED 5B	5.7	7.8	5.5	13.7	12.3	10.6
ISCED 5A - Bc	9.1	13.1	13.8	15.7	23.2	30.1
ISCED 5A - M	190.5	187.8	199.2	165.6	174.9	199.0
ISCED 6	4.8	4.9	4.1	1.8	3.3	3.6

Source: ŠÚ, LFS annual data.

Notes: CoA - Certificate of Apprenticeship (výučný list), MSLC - "Maturita" School Leaving Certificate (vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške), GEN - general education stream, VET - vocational stream, Bc - 1st cycle studies, M - 2 cycle studies.

The table above also documents that women were more successful to stay employed than man. This might be interlinked with vulnerability of the Slovak industry sector and subsequently of people with secondary VET related levels of education working in industry (and who are men rather than women).

The crisis confirmed the well-known problems of a very open and export oriented Slovak economy and made them more transparent:

- in-built instability in national economy due to its cyclical over-sensitivity;
- the need of further restructuring of economy in order to offer high value added jobs for tertiary graduates;
- vulnerability of secondary VET graduates and the need to rethink their training;
- low employability of elderly people and insufficient effectiveness of their retraining;
- extremely low employability of low educated people (with a high share of Roma).

3.2 EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

3.2.1 TRENDS IN LEARNERS BEHAVIOUR

There is a long-term trend to favour general education over VET, caused by turbulences in the labour market in the 1990s during the period of restructuring the national economy. Vulnerability of jobs in industry in the 1990s contributed to increased preference in ISCED 3A studies and subsequently in higher education programmes. As a consequence, there is a lack of ISCED 3C graduates in the country. A number of enrolments in higher education increased dramatically in particular during the years of crisis. Tertiary education is for free and there are almost more places offered than demanded as a consequence of mushrooming higher education institutions and a declining population. This together with low job creation induces strong preference for studying as long as possible and postponing entering the labour market. In 2010, almost half of ISCED 3A graduates (45.7 %) entered tertiary education. Significantly, the employment rate of 15-24 aged with ISCED 5 and higher education level decreased strongly from pre-crisis 65.8% in 2006 to 30.8% in 2010. Furthermore, Slovak students are seven times more likely to leave the country to study abroad than Czechs or Hungarians; apparently also looking for better jobs than those available in Slovakia and not just for better tertiary education. In 2009, 29,400 Slovak students studied in the EU, EEA and candidate countries; almost ten times more than before the decade. Slovakia might face a lack of tertiary graduates with a strong profile in mathematics, science and technology as humanities and social science are strongly preferred by students studying at Slovak universities and students studying abroad are able to find better opportunities abroad than at home.

The main lesson from the crisis is as follows: A further restructuring of the national economy is urgently needed. Heavy dependence on export of industrial goods makes the country vulnerable and low job creation for young professionals with higher education accelerates the brain drain for employment and self-employment opportunities abroad. Although the current mismatch between demand and supply must be addressed, and curricula in IVET, in particular in ISCED 3C studies, reformed, IVET graduates supply must not be adjusted just to current labour market needs as expected by employers. It is urgently necessary to anticipate the necessary skills in the domestic labour market need, but also take into account the EU labour market able to absorb the highest quality people by offering adequate working positions or at least more attractive wages. Slovakia is at risk of massive over-qualification or the massive brain drain in the future. Counselling services should be improved in order to better inform young people about labour market opportunities.

3.2.2 TRENDS IN ENTERPRISES' BEHAVIOUR

Slovakia has no genuine apprenticeship system naturally sensitive to business cycles. Secondary IVET is school based and therefore places are not much endangered by the crisis directly. Nevertheless, the recent crisis endangering massively jobs in industry might again feed into distrust in IVET.

In theory, there is a time to retrain staff for future challenges; however there is only anecdotal evidence about increasing CVET in enterprises. As a rule it is about international and comparably rich companies and companies from sectors as e.g. the banking sector facing changes in their services and therefore needing retraining for its staff. In opposite, trainings offered as non financial benefits (e.g. language training or communication mix) are reported to be reduced. There are no signals from regular small and medium sized

companies and small industrial enterprises that they are ready to invest in retraining to recover from the crisis.

Unfortunately, there is no statistical evidence about companies' behaviour as there is no CVET research done in Slovakia. The only relevant statistics comes from international CVTS and AES surveys; these data are however from the pre-crisis years¹¹.

Some (partial) data about training induced in companies by active labour policy come from labour offices. These data (see Table 33 in 3.2.3) indicate that retraining of employees was massively supported by active labour policy during the first period of crisis. But, a similar inflow of means might not be available in the future.

3.2.3 MEASURES TAKEN BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND BY SOCIAL PARTNERS

MEASURES TAKEN BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

The first package to fight the crisis was adopted in February 2009 introducing temporary active labour market measures. The Act No. 49/2009 Coll. amending Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services, valid since March 2009 was aimed at introducing new measures focused on reducing consequences of the crisis: retaining employment; creation of new job; employee's wage; self-employment; and self-employment in agricultural products processing and trade. Improvement was also expected from better advising of unemployed and from a stronger support including financial one for starting their own businesses. Changes in the active labour market policies induced by the crisis are visible from the detailed data about all ALMP tools in time series (2004, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010) offered in Table 12 in the Annex. In 2009, the government declared fighting the rising unemployment the most important goal. Retraining of unemployed and employed at risk of dismissal, as well as placement of graduates on Graduates practice, was made easier to access and was more generously funded. Both measures were significantly supported by ESF. An increase in funding visible in the tables below would not be possible without cofunding from ESF. An increased number of trained employees documents a more important action to prevent from dismissals and to support companies with jobs at risk willing to preserve them.

YEAR	2008	2009	2010
EUR	8 501 069.87	30 642 710.81	17 483 907.28
NUMBER OF PEOPLE	13 863	29 921	20 381

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny).

A similar huge increase in serving people at risk is visible from the table below indicating a number of young people registered with labour offices after graduating from schools

¹¹ See part 10.2.2 in Slovakia : VET in Europe - Country Report : 2010.

placed into the so-called Graduate practice (see part 6.5) to allow them acquiring working skills.

TABLE 34: CONTRIBUTION FOR THE GRADUATE PRACTICE (§ 51) IN 2007 TO 2010				
YEAR	2007	2008	2009	2010
EUR	282.7	646.3	934.2	944.7
NUMBER OF PEOPLE	8 937	13 435	11 764	21 176

Source: ÚPSVaR.

Furthermore, state aid was given to important employers, e.g. Volkswagen, in support of retaining employment. A universal measure to remit levies for up to 60 days to companies retaining employment was introduced.

In February 2010, changes in entitlement to receive unemployment benefits were adopted to increase the access to them. A shorter period of employment or insurance entitling for benefits was required: Only two years over the last three years were required from then compared to earlier three years within the last four years. To protect parents returning to the labour market without having paid insurance during a parental leave and therefore not eligible for unemployment benefits after dismissal, years of parental leave were recognised as valid for inclusion into the aforementioned period sensitive to the eligibility for benefits.

Furthermore, tax incentives to work were introduced in 2010: Non taxable part of income was raised for low income workers, in order to stimulate them to enter or stay at jobs and also to support their purchasing power.

The government asked schools for support in order to prevent secondary school graduates from unemployment as they were highly at risk of unemployment. Higher education institutions were asked to accept in addition up to 5,000 new tertiary students including PhD students in the 2009/2010 academic year. Additional funding above the already announced numbers of new entrants was offered. A current trend approaching 50 % of graduates entering higher education institutions confirms the role of tertiary studies in postponing entering the labour market by young people.

No other measures have been taken as a direct response to the crisis towards the initial education and training system. Revision of existing programmes or curricula were driven by the curricular reform introduced before the crisis. Rush changes in terms of knowledge, skills, competences attributable to the crisis are not expected. Nevertheless, curricula of regional schools have been autonomously designed by schools since the 2008/2009 school year and they can be affected by the crisis, without a special notice and evidence. In contrast to this, changes in the network of VET programmes are very visible. Numbers of students and future graduates from respective study and training branches are expected to be much more depending on employers than earlier as a consequence of the new Act on VET. There are significant changes in the network of secondary VET programmes in progress as a result of employers' interventions that can, of course, be also affected by the crisis. A fully new VET programmes portfolio will result from current discussion. (See information on National VET Council agenda and exact data of abolished, changed and newly created VET programmes in part 8.2.)

CVET in Slovakia is not a subject of direct governmental interventions. The only exception was the tax relief in support of continuing professional development of specific medical staff. This measure was however abolished within the austerity package of the government adopted in 2010. This is a negative message for hospitals in need of attested professionals.

MEASURES TAKEN BY SOCIAL PARTNERS

There are no direct measures taken by social partners influencing IVET. Nevertheless, the influence of social partners has increased compared to pre-crisis times. New VET governance was created; diverse VET councils (national, regional and sectoral) established following the Act on VET started their activities during the severest period of the crisis. The opportunity for partnerships among social partners and across sectors has been created. Besides the aforementioned changes in provision of programmes, where social partners were visible, the creation of Centres of VET (see e.g. part 4.1) in close cooperation of self-governing regions and representatives of employers is in progress despite the crisis.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Vocational education and training was traditionally linked to the activities of guilds as in other European countries. The first educational institutions appeared at the end of the 18th century. Worth mentioning is the establishment of the school in Liptovský Hrádok in 1796; it gradually developed into the Royal Chamber Forestry School. The Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II, a true Enlightenment ruler, was extremely supportive for massification of VET. In 1783 he ordered the obligatory training of all apprentices in Sunday schools. Nevertheless, schools that could be considered predecessors of today's technically oriented secondary specialised schools emerged only before the end of the 19th century with exception of the mining, metallurgy and forestry areas, where the tradition goes back to 18th century. The first secondary industrial school of machinery was established in 1872 by private initiative in Košice. It gradually developed into a model public school. On the verge of the century, industrial schools with continuity to present days were also established in other cities. A metal processing school established in Bratislava in 1903 developed into the most important industrial school of modern Slovakia.

Between World War I and World War II the unification of the inherited education system in the newly founded Czechoslovakia was begun. People's vocational schools affiliated to municipality schools were established by Act No. 75/1920 Coll. in order to support the broadening knowledge and skills of poorly educated youngsters from predominantly rural areas. In addition, the regular VET school types started to emerge (commercial, industrial, agricultural, schools of forestry and wood processing) offering also one-year courses, one-year study programmes, and two-year follow-up programmes. There were also vocational schools for women's professions offering two years of study, followed by one-year higher women schools, or other specialised schools, e.g. two-year nursery schools, or the institute for kindergarten teachers.

In the 1937/1938 school year, there were 131 apprentice schools considered by law as regular schools offering VET, however aimed at complementing work and on the job training in the workshops of their employees. While the structure of today's secondary specialised schools offering ISCED 3A VET is already visible in the development of the 1930s, schools offering ISCED 3C type school based VET still did not exist. Only after World War II, the aforementioned apprentice schools were gradually replaced by schools offering school based VET. This development was backed significantly by legislation from 1960; and further strengthened by the 1976 educational reform.

The 1976 "New Concept of Education Reform" made IVET a core of the education system. Institutions training future blue-collar workers became a status of secondary schools - the

secondary vocational schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilište*) emerged. Besides two- or three-year training programmes many SOU started to offer four-year programmes finished by a highly appreciated “maturita” school leaving exam (*maturitná skúška*) and “maturita” school leaving certificate (*vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške*). A three-tier model of secondary education - grammar school (G, *gymnázium*) providing general education, secondary specialised school (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*) providing predominantly theoretically based vocational education, and SOU providing predominantly practically oriented vocational education - created in the 1970s (and lasted till 2008) despite criticism of the unequal quality of the “maturita” programmes, especially those offered by SOU.

The enhanced status of SOU was supported by massive investment into SOU facilities. In contrast to G and SOŠ, SOU with a projected 60 % of the age cohort benefited from the affiliation with and financial support of large enterprises or respective sector headquarters. These so-called “complex” SOU mushroomed and provided campus style service including practical training in school workshops. Finally, all basic occupations were covered by respective VET study or training branches. This is why there were so many VET programmes and diverse VET schools originally concentrating on the preparation of a young labour force for respective sectors of economy.

After the political change in 1989, the collapsing command economy caused the interruption of institutional links between schools and sectors/enterprises. Almost all SOU students traditionally contracted and co-financed by relevant enterprises became “state students” fully depending on the state budget and state managed schools, as at the same time enterprises became unable to maintain SOU. In 1990, respective ministries became responsible for establishing SOU to save them from the collapse. It was clear that the VET system as a whole faced a restructuring. In the mid 1990s, under the influence of the international evaluation of the VET system¹², it was intended to reduce the number of programmes and quite surprisingly to develop occupational standards and related educational standards for all about 3,000 occupations registered on the labour market. This project backed by the 1996 government decision was however finally cancelled and the VET system further developed, dominantly influenced by the fight for survival of VET schools harmed by the economic downturn and affected by the fundamental restructuring of the economy. In the 2000s, as a consequence of a population decline, a decline in the interest in blue-collar professional training (due to its lower status and lower employability) and gradual loosening of the links with the world of work, and later also as a consequence of introducing per capita financing, SOŠ and SOU were encouraged to merge to form associated secondary schools (ZSŠ, *združená stredná škola*) or joined schools (SŠ, *spojená škola*). In the 2000s, Slovakia also underwent the process of decentralisation, with regional parliaments and heads of 8 self-governing regions elected for the first time in December 2001. Responsibility for the establishment of schools was transferred to the self-governing bodies on 1st July 2002. A new system of self-governing offices and sectoral state administration offices was established on 1st January 2004, and fiscal decentralisation came subsequently into force on 1st January 2005, dominantly based on redistribution of personal income tax. Self-governing regions got the responsibility for the establishment and cancelling (in compliance with the network of schools and school establishments) of all originally state managed secondary VET schools and VET establishments aimed at provision

¹² *Strategic Review of Vocational Education and Training - Czech and Slovak Republics.*

of practical training for some VET schools. Some schools, which are of trans-regional importance, e.g. bilingual schools established under international agreements or schools for special educational needs pupils (of which some provide for VET), have remained under the responsibility of the state administration.

In parallel, within the decentralisation process the Ministry of Education developed into the national authority almost solely responsible for IVET till 2008. Other ministries were only given the opportunity to participate in advisory bodies and working groups subordinated to the Ministry of Education. A typical example were sectoral expert commissions affiliated to the State Institute of Vocational Education (*ŠIOV, Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania*), within which also other than education sector experts had the opportunity to express their opinions concerning curricula and other aspects of IVET provision, e.g. school leaving exams. While till September 2008 the Ministry of Education approved curricula for all programmes (the so-called basic pedagogical documents (*základné pedagogické dokumenty*), the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll., in force since 1st September 2008, introduced curricular decentralisation. In the 2008/2009 school year first grade classes of VET schools started to be taught according to curricula elaborated autonomously by schools (see paragraphs on Curriculum development and pedagogies in part 5.1) in cooperation with regional/local stakeholders who were explicitly invited to contribute to adjustment of curricula by this act. This act also changed the system of secondary education, abolishing secondary vocational schools. From September 2008, there are only two secondary streams. The general education stream is represented by grammar schools (*G, gymnázia*) and VET stream by secondary specialised schools (*SOŠ, stredné odborné školy*). In practice it means that all secondary vocational schools (*SOU, stredné odborné učilištia*) were renamed as secondary specialised schools. Secondary vocational schools were originally established to offer education for skilled workers and predominantly ISCED 3C programmes, finishing with a Certificate of Apprenticeship in contrast to secondary specialised schools offering ISCED 3A programmes finishing with the “maturita” school leaving certificate. The gradual development led to a dramatic increase of ISCED 3A programmes offered by secondary vocational schools and to a non-transparent system of VET schools with an increasing share of associated (*združené*) and joined (*spojené*) schools. Thus, the legislation reflected the reducing of the differences between the two kinds of schools. Furthermore, a variety of programmes has also remained preserved.

Currently, initial vocational education and training is still school based in Slovakia. There is no typical apprenticeship scheme in use, and all participants are seen as pupils (students) according to legislation. There is a possibility for companies to co-finance IVET at secondary VET schools and also partly participate at training of students who they are interested in as future employees. To distinguish between them and students not in preparation for respective company the former are sometimes called “apprentices”, regardless the fact that legislation does not make such a difference and all programmes are strictly school based and regulated by education sector legislation. Secondary IVET system in Slovakia has remain among EU strongest in terms of number of participants, despite long-term strengthening of general education. This shift, accompanied also by the students’ preference of ISCED 3A over ISCED 3C studies still contributes to the mismatch in supply and demand in the labour market, where ISCED 3C graduates are extremely missing in some professions although there are many ISCED 3C graduates registered with labour offices. Discrepancies in supply and demand visible also in the very high unemployment of

VET graduates led to the newest reform of VET governance. Improvement is expected from regional Centres of VET¹³ in process of establishment under sectoral players' supervision, and from the strategic leadership of employers in programming VET supply.

The status of the Centre of VET can be assigned to a secondary specialised school, centre of practical training, school farm or centre of vocational practice provided it cooperates with respective professional organisation, it is equipped with modern material and technical equipment, and it delivers VET for respective occupations. Professional organisation must take a decision on the establishment of centre of VET upon the approval of establisher. Thus, no centre can be created by regional authorities without the support of respective professional organisation. It is expected that these regional centres of VET will become leaders in the provision of quality training as they will be excellently equipped in cooperation with regional authorities and employers (sectoral players).

With coming into force of Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave*), the period of a sort of isolation of VET from other sectors and employers terminated, and even more, the education sector role in VET diminished extremely. Till 2008, the VET system was dominantly supply driven (from the labour market point of view), and at the same time students demand driven (from the education services point of view). In contrast to the period till 2008, people outside the education sector are expected to take a lead in preparing strategy documents or supplying the background data for their development. The Act on VET stipulated the creation of multi-partisan VET councils on national, regional and sectoral levels. Although the Ministry of Education has remained responsible for the development of overall VET strategies, the supply of sub-national strategies to the National VET Council and subsequently to the Ministry of Education dominantly depends on the experience, specific data and points of view of stakeholders representing employers. Sectoral ministries (Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Environment) assisted by Sectoral VET Councils established by professional associations/chambers in cooperation with the respective sectoral ministry and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, are responsible for preparation of sectoral VET strategies aimed at the analysis of sectoral skills and future training of students for sectoral occupations. Education sector representatives play just an advisory role in it. Regional self-governments, advised by the Regional VET Council, again with the dominant influence of employers, are responsible for elaboration of regional VET strategies. Sectoral VET Councils under the supervision of specific employers representing the professional bodies identified by law prepare "Plans of labour market needs", indicating the number of graduates needed in respective study/training branches for the following five years. These plans are expected to be used as the basis for the decisions on networks of VET schools and their study programmes in the future next 5 years. The future will show to what extent regional VET councils affiliated to self-governing regions, and the self-governing regions themselves, will manage to balance lobbying and regulate an inflow into respective programmes appropriately. It must be stressed that not purely labour market demand and employers' co-funding (e.g. within the German-style dual system) but

¹³ See part 6.2 in *A Bridge to the Future: European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-10: National Policy Report - Slovakia*.

requests of employers for VET graduates financed from public money should serve as proxy data for anticipation of labour market needs. It is clear that the development of know-how for anticipation and forecasting skill needs is very urgent in support of evidence based policy making.

Within the last 20 years many new higher education institutions, including private ones, have been established. Former state universities were transformed into public ones according to Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll. (*Zákon č. 131/2002 Z.z. o vysokých školách*). This act distinguished between higher education institutions (HEI) according to the founder and for the first time enabled the creation of private HEI. This is why private HEI were recently so marginal and why there is a pressure to create them now. HEI are established and may be dissolved by an act of the National Council except private HEI that are established by the decision of the government following the proposal of the Ministry of Education and report of the Accreditation Commission. In 2002, in response to the long-term expectations of church, the Catholic University in Ružomberok (*Katolícka univerzita v Ružomberku*) offering Catholic religion-based education, and in 2004, in response to the expectations of the Hungarian minority, the J. Selye University in Komárno (*Univerzita J. Selyeho v Komárne*) with Hungarian as the language of instruction, were established. In 2009, there were 20 public, 3 state (military academy, police academy, and medical university focusing on in-service training), 10 private and 3 foreign (of which 2 private) higher education institutions. Thus, there are in total 36 HEIs now, in contrast to 13 in 1989. A dramatic increase in enrolment in tertiary education is caused not only by the interest of students, but also due to financial scheme. Similarly to secondary schools, tertiary schools are also stimulated by per capita financing to chase after students regardless the quality in the output. On the other hand, Slovakia is still among countries with the EU lowest shares of tertiary educated population due to restricted access to higher education under the communist regime.

In the 2000s, under pressure from the Ministry of Education and the Bologna agreement, all HEI transformed their educational programmes into three separate parts: bachelor studies, master studies and doctoral studies, with only marginal exceptions. Nevertheless, further transformation may be forthcoming due to disputable constructions of bachelor studies that are usually considered by both students and programme designers just a pre-level to continuation in master studies. Furthermore, all higher education institutions were established as universities according to the tradition confirmed also by the 1990 Higher Education Act elaborated after the political change. Although there is a possibility to distinguish between three types of higher education institutions (with higher professional schools focusing on labour market, strongly oriented education with limited research activities, and universities offering all cycles of tertiary education and interrelated research and development), this categorisation is not effective in practice. Thus, higher education faces further restructuring. The inevitable reconstruction of bachelor studies, partly in progress, opens the door for new IVET opportunities.

Even before 1989 Slovakia developed a relatively extensive network of training institutions providing continuing vocational training. Originally, continuing vocational training was provided in the form of external study (evening classes) and in the form of training of employees in enterprises. Furthermore, there were adult education institutions also offering vocational training in addition to non-formal adult education. Training centres belonged to the standard social infrastructure of every enterprise. Training centre facilities were usually located in attractive surroundings, and served both as training centres and recreation facilities for employees. Besides having an educational function they had also a socialisation function. In education and health care, the system of continuing education was strictly regulated by the state, and career paths were regulated by special legislation. Specialised sectoral institutions also operated in other sectors of the economy. After 1989, the system of continuing vocational education and training has

undergone even more significant changes than has initial vocational education. With the economic transition and economic decreases, continuing vocational education lost its economic backing. There were no means for training at enterprises facing the restructuring process. Many training centres closed down or changed their field of operation, many facilities went through privatisation, and new enterprises started to utilise them commercially. The situation gradually changed. Interest in continuing education has been increasing with the economical revival and provision of CVET is now offered by thousands of private providers registered with the Ministry of Interior indicating education within their scope of operations. The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) addressed 6,465 providers when collecting statistical data on CVET/LLL in 2010.

4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IVET

According to § 42(2) of the Constitution of SR (*Ústava SR*), citizens have the right to free primary and secondary education, including secondary VET schools and if possible (“depending on the potential of the society”) also tertiary education. Non-state (non-public) schools are entitled by the Constitution to collect tuition fees.

The most fundamental laws regulating IVET:

- Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (Education Act) (*Zákon č. 245/2008 Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon)*) in force since 1st September 2008, lastly amended by Act No. 37/2011 Coll. This act defined fundamentals of regional schooling. This means the segment of the education system composed in particular of primary and secondary schools and diverse establishments, considered “non schools” from the legislative point of view, offering services for the education sector or offering education and training. Centres of practical training and centres of vocational practice are the most relevant VET “establishments” (they are not “schools” according to legislation, despite that they offer VET). In contrast to earlier legislation two changes affecting the VET system are crucial:
 - Two original streams of VET schools¹⁴, secondary vocational schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*) and secondary specialised schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilište*) were merged into one. Thus, all VET schools are now categorised as secondary specialised schools.
 - Stipulation of levels of education is much more detailed and aligned explicitly to ISCED levels.

A set of decrees and other bylaws is affiliated to this act. The most important decrees are as follows:

¹⁴ See Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, Part 0401 Background to the IVET.

- Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 318/2008 Coll. on Completion of Study at Secondary Schools (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky č. 318/2008 Z. z. o ukončovaní štúdia na stredných školách*);
- Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 282/2009 Coll. on Secondary Schools (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky č. 282/2009 Z. z. o stredných školách*); this decree also includes the list of types of secondary specialised schools, lists of study and training branches, and the list of sectoral professional organisations responsible for the respective fields of study;
- Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 326/2008 Coll. on Types and Appropriate Characteristics of Certificates and Other Documents including the Ways of their Registration and Storage (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky č.326/2008 Z. z. o druhoch a náležitostiach vysvedčení a ostatných školských tlačív vrátane spôsobov ich evidencie a uloženia*);
- Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 325/2008 Coll. on School Facilities of Guidance and Prevention (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky č.325/2008 Z. z. o školských zariadeniach výchovného poradenstva a prevencie*).
- Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave*). This act supplements the Education Act by the new governance of VET allowing for direct intervention of non-educational stakeholders, in particular employers represented by professional associations and chambers, into IVET. A dominant part of the act is devoted to the stipulation of VET Fund related details perceived quite controversially (see part 10.1).
- Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*), in force since 1st November 2009 is a specialised act establishing rights and duties of teachers, trainers and other learning facilitators, qualification requirements for these professions as well as assessment of their performance. Originally aimed at setting of a new model of continuing education and professional development it became a more comprehensive legislative norm.

Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in Education and School Self-Government (*Zákon č. 596/2003 Z. z. o štátnej správe v školstve a školskej samospráve*) lastly amended by Acts No. 245/2008, No. 179/2009, No. 184/2009 and No. 38/2011. This act regulates in detail the procedure of establishing schools and school establishments, the status of their managers, the management of schools by local/regional and national authorities (state, public, self-governing, including specific self-governing bodies at schools and regions), the supervision of schools and school establishments, etc. This act has been substantially amended and complemented by a new view on VET governance introduced by the Act on VET.

- Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on Financing Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Establishments (*Zákon č. 597/2003 Z. z. o financovaní základných škôl, stredných škôl a školských zariadení*), lastly amended by Acts No. 245/2008, No. 179/2009, No. 184/2009 and No. 38/2011; This law and respective bylaws specify financing schools and school establishments on a per capita principle (see part 10.2). Since January 2004 all primary and secondary schools receive an equal per capita funding from the state budget regardless of their status in order to encourage the establishment of non-state schools. Since 2009 non-state establishments specified by Act No. 179/2009 Coll. are guaranteed to

receive at least 88 % of the per capita funding from the budget of the self-governing region (and in fact from income tax centrally collected and subsequently distributed).

- Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll. (*Zákon č. 131/2002 Z. z. o vysokých školách*), lastly amended by Act No. 125/2011 Coll. This law with respective bylaws is fundamental for tertiary education. It also regulates the financing aspects. Tertiary education is free of charge in public universities; however it is possible to collect fees in private universities and since 2008 also for part-time studies at public universities. All public higher education institutions were universities *lege artis*. This should be changed according to the ongoing process of comprehensive accreditation leading to categorisation of HEI into research and education oriented ones (universities) and HEI focusing on education (higher education institutions and professional higher education institutions).

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IVET AND ORGANIGRAM

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) is the single national level authority essentially responsible for IVET. Other ministries play a limited role supporting specific secondary VET schools within their professional scope (health, police, fire-fighting). Ministry of Health has a specific role due to larger network of health schools (together 30) and due to autonomy in issuing state educational programmes (together 7 ISCED 5B, 8 ISCED 3A and one ISCED 3C) and autonomous accreditation procedures. Other ministries can issue state educational programmes after agreement with the Ministry of Education. Following the latter procedure, the Ministry of Interior has issued 3 state educational programmes (ISCED 4A) for police schools and one programme (ISCED 5B) for a school of fire protection.

Nevertheless the position of Ministry of Education has changed since the entry into force of the Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave*) in September 2009, sectoral ministries (of interior; health; economy and construction; culture and tourism; transport, posts and telecommunications; environment and regional development) have more to say to VET on a national level as they have representatives in the Council of the Government for VET (further National VET Council). It is believed that the National VET Council together with Regional VET Councils (for details see paragraphs on Regional/local government below) and Sectoral VET Councils (see also 8.2) will improve the alignment of VET to the labour market. Sectoral VET Councils are to be established by professional associations/chambers in cooperation with respective sectoral ministry and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*).

The most important institutions directly managed by the Ministry of Education are as follows:

- The National Institute for Education (ŠPÚ, *Štátny pedagogický ústav*) - support for general education curriculum development including general subjects of VET schools; responsibility for elaboration of national level framework curricular documents (so-called state educational programmes);
- The National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NÚCEM, *Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní*) - responsibility for national student assessment programmes (in 9th and 13th year of study) and diverse international programmes (e.g. PISA, TALIS, SITES, etc.);

- The State Institute of Vocational Education (ŠIOV, *Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania*) - assistance in development of VET curriculum, responsibility for elaboration of national level framework curricular documents (so-called state educational programmes);
- The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) - collecting information including UOE harmonised statistics in education, analytical studies;
- The Research Institute for Child Psychology and Pathopsychology (VÚDPaP, *Výskumný ústav detskej psychológie a patopsychológie*) - psychological aspects of child and youth development, gradually focusing more on career guidance and counselling;
- Methodological-Pedagogical Centre (MPC, *metodicko-pedagogické centrum*) - responsible for the provision of in-service training for teachers and trainers with three regional offices (Bratislava, Banská Bystrica, Prešov) and six additional subsidiaries across the country;
- The State School Inspection agency (ŠŠI, *Štátna školská inšpekcia*) - a state administration body headed by the Chief School Inspector appointed for a five-year period by the Minister of Education. By law the State School Inspection is independent in its performance of school inspection, which is based on the annual plan and results in the annual report on the status of education and upbringing.

REGIONAL/LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Slovakia is composed of eight self-governing regions identical with eight state administration regions. Thus, the educational authority is currently of two types:

- the self-governing administration, with offices of municipalities, responsible for maintaining basic schools (comprising primary and lower secondary education) and other establishments of local importance; and eight offices of self-governing regions maintaining secondary schools;
- the state administration, based on eight regional school offices located in the same cities as aforementioned offices of self-governing regions, acting as intermediary for financing school and school establishments.

The first level of the state administration agenda in education is covered by school directors who are appointed for five-year terms; a school director selection process is obligatory every five years.

Before establishing or cancelling an education institution, a municipality/self-governing region is obliged to ask the MŠ to register/de-register the institution. Without this registration/de-registration, the municipality and/or self-governing region cannot act. The law also requires a statement from the municipal school board or territorial school board concerning the intentions of the municipality or self-governing region.

Although unofficial freedom in finalising the curricula was given to schools (10 % of the weekly instruction hours and 30 % of its content might have been adjusted according to local/regional needs) curriculum development remained centralised until the entry into force of the new Education Act. Since September 2008 schools make use of their own, autonomously developed educational programmes based on by MŠ approved state educational programmes (developed by ŠIOV and ŠPÚ). The MŠ provides for textbooks for

free according to a specific list. Other textbooks recommended by the MŠ can also be used.

Since 2009, with the entering into force of the Act on VET involvement of other players has been made possible within newly created Regional VET councils composed of representatives of state, self-government, employers and employees. In particular, the involvement of employers in VET should be strengthened. Employers can participate in elaborating IVET graduates' profiles and setting requirements for knowledge, skills, abilities and working habits. They can also facilitate practical training and provide for equipment and materials. In contrast to employers mentioned above acting in relation to respective schools and school curricula, employer associations or professional associations are also expected to act in a more general level, e.g. contribute to the elaboration of graduates' profiles in the state curricula, contribute to the development of textbooks and provide other teaching aids. They are in fact the most powerful body in preparing background documents, in particular VET regional strategies for decision making of regional self-governing authorities. They became more influential in quality check as they delegate their representatives to examination commissions for school leaving exams. It is of particular importance that they should elaborate plans for labour market needs in terms of estimated number of graduates in respective study and training branches for the following five years. This is an extraordinarily powerful tool for the assertion of employers' stances, which is expected to change networks of schools and programmes to adjust them to employers' needs. Nevertheless, regional human resource development is at risk of being subordinated to the employers' planning.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY IN DECISION-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION

In case of lower secondary education (marginal with regard to VET), upper secondary education and post-secondary non tertiary education, as well as a single alternative IVET pathway (ISCED 2C training), the decision-making level body, in both policy and legislation, is the Ministry of Education. Self-governing bodies play some limited role in policies (in particular with regard to networks of schools and programmes), however within strong governmental regulation, in particular due to centrally controlled fiscal policy. Responsible bodies for implementing policy at micro-level are school directors. There is a duality at the mezzo-level, as responsibility is shared by school establishers (predominantly self-governing regions) and regional state administration (regional school offices).

There is no genuine apprenticeship scheme in VET in Slovakia, only a very marginal number of students is trained for companies and their training co-financed by companies. A window for stronger participation of companies will be opened by the coming in force of the Act on VET, as this act makes some costs of the training and affiliated services of companies' tax deductible. Regional centres of VET leading well-equipped institutions providing for training of students, in-service training and regional information service are to be established under support of employers.

Although regional schools are also legal entities higher education institutions' autonomy is much stronger. The Ministry of Education is responsible for preparing legislation however there are hardly policies developed purely on the central level as there are two strong players representing higher education institutions recognised by law: the Slovak Rectors' Conference (SRK, *Slovenská rektorská konferencia*) and the Higher Education Council (RVŠ, *Rada vysokých škôl*). While the former is gradually increasing in importance as it is composed of executive representatives of universities, the latter is gradually decreasing in importance as it is a large body composed of elective representatives of all constituents of universities often unable to offer a clear stance and vision. The Ministry of Education and

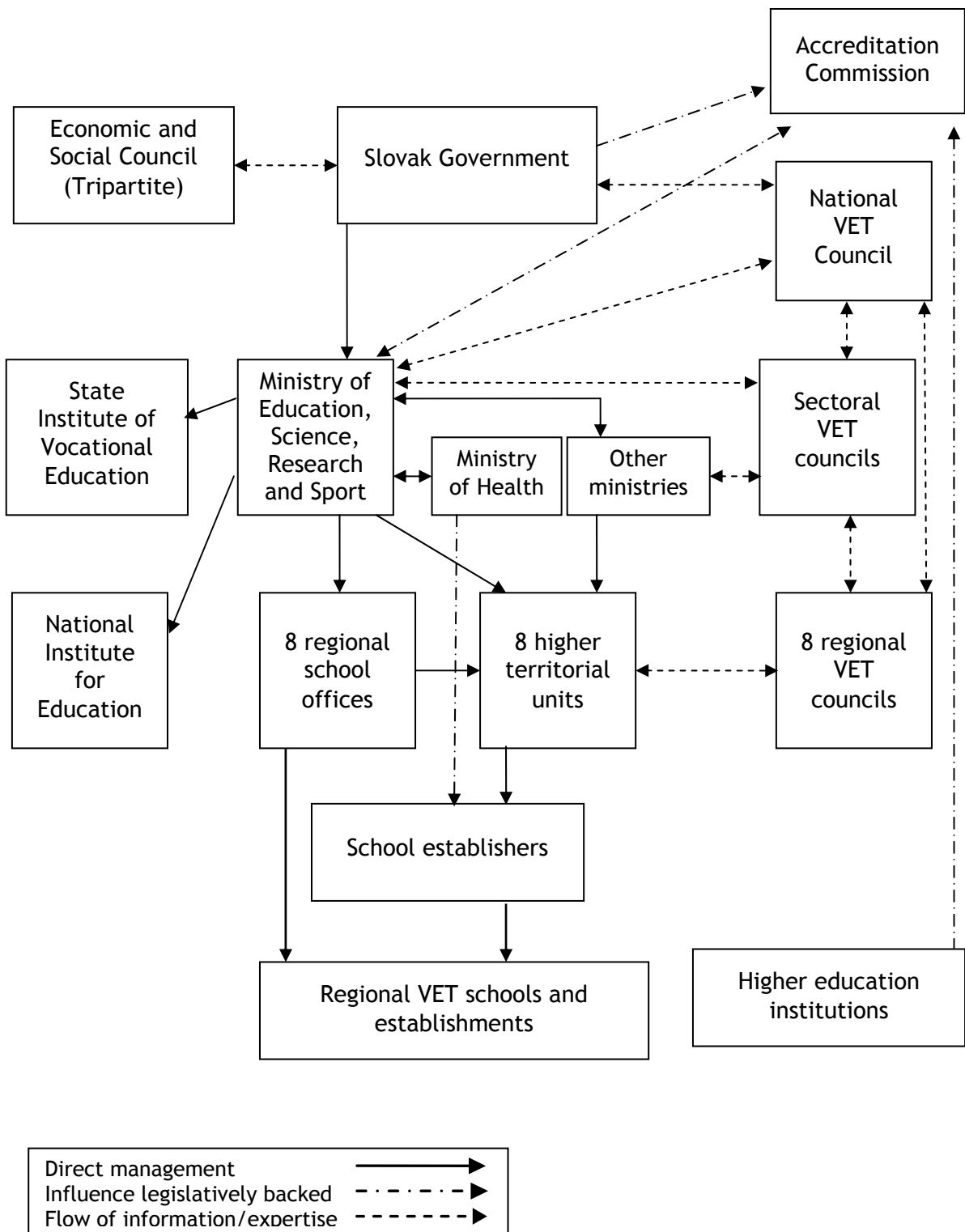
the government influence universities by a financing scheme and by regulating an inflow of funding for research activities.

There are also diverse activities within non-formal youth programmes contributing to the development of vocational skills of youth regulated by Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on Support of Working with Youth (*Zákon č. 282/2008 Z. z. o podpore práce s mládežou*), and implemented by institutions of the education sector and also by non-state organisations, however their activities do not focus on provision of training to obtain the qualification.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

The Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic (HSR, *Hospodárska a sociálna rada Slovenskej republiky*) a consulting and concerting body re-established by Tripartite Act No. 103/2007 Coll. (*Zákon č. 103/2007 Z. z. o trojstranných konzultáciách na celoštátnej úrovni (zákon o tripartite)*) discusses all policy papers and legislation before submitting it to the meeting of the government. Nevertheless, it has little influence on IVET delivery. Although social partners could have participated in decision-making processes in curriculum development, education standards establishment and in qualification exams, their role in IVET has been primarily that of advisors to the state administration. With the introduction of decentralisation in curriculum development by the Act No. 245/2008 Coll. and the new governance architecture by the Act No. 184/2009 Coll. the more space for influencing IVET by social partners is created. A representative of trade unions is one of vice-presidents of the newly established National VET Council.

ORGANIGRAM FOR IVET



4.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

LEGISLATION

The CVET relevant legislation is very fragmented and there is no single fundamental law on CVET. The most relevant legislation regulating CVET/adult learning/LLL:

- Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong Learning (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*) was expected to play a fundamental role by aligning CVET/LLL to the National System of Qualifications (NSQ) and by supporting CVET/LLL in all settings. Respective bylaw setting the NSQ should be issued by 1st January 2011. Similarly to Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education (see below) this act however concentrates on the education sector. The original overarching function umbrelling all sectors and learning settings has not been finally tackled;
- Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education (*Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní*), lastly amended by Act No. 365/2004 Coll. and Act No. 653/2007 Coll., contained classification of institutions providing CVET, training activities, accreditation and certification rules. It also identified sources of financing CVET, however only in a declaratory form, without any measures to provide for mandatory public or private financing CVET. Since 1st January 2010 this act was replaced by the Act on LLL;
- Act No. 311/2001 Coll. of the Labour Code (*Zákon č. 311/2001 Z. z. Zákonník práce*), lastly amended by Act No. 257/2011 Coll., regulates employers' and employees' responsibilities for upgrading skills. However no obligatory measures are set in support of CVET¹⁵;
- Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (the "Trades Licensing Act"), lastly amended by Act No. 556/2010 Coll. (*Zákon č. 455/1991 Zb. o živnostenskom podnikaní (živnostenský zákon)*) regulates trades. It indirectly stipulates that the provision of continuing training is a free trade, i.e. no professional qualification is requested when registering (unless the trade is explicitly listed in the law and qualification of trader explicitly required).

Although the following act is aimed at regulation of regional initial education, it also affects LLL as it regulates state language schools accepting also adults and sets levels of language proficiency corresponding to the Common European Reference Framework for Languages. Furthermore, it regulates part-time studies at secondary schools.

- Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (Education Act) (*Zákon č. 245/2008. Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon)*) adopted by the parliament on 22nd May 2008, in force since 1st September 2008 and abolishing Act No. 29/1984 Coll.

¹⁵ See also Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, part 0504 CVET at the initiative of enterprises or social partners.

(*Zákon č. 29/1984 Zb. o sústave základných a stredných škôl (školský zákon)*); lastly amended by Act No. 37/2011 Coll.

Similarly, the following act regulating tertiary education contains parts that regulate part-time studies.

- Act No. 131/2001 Coll. on Higher Education (*Zákon č. 131/2002 Z. z. o vysokých školách*), lastly amended by Act No. 125/2011 Coll.
- Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*), in force since 1st November 2010, already mentioned with regard to IVET is relevant for continuing professional development of teachers, trainers and other facilitators.

Establishment of private CVET providers can be based on the following acts:

- Act No. 513/1991 Coll. Trade Code (*Zákon č. 513/1991 Zb. Obchodný zákonník*), as amended;
- Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Foundations (*Zákon č. 34/2002 Z. z. o nadáciách*);
- Act No. 83/1990 Coll. on Associations of Citizens (*Zákon č. 83/1990 Zb. o združovaní občanov*), as amended; and
- Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing as amended (*Zákon č. 455/1991 Zb. o živnostenskom podnikaní v znení neskorších predpisov*);

Furthermore, there are four fundamental laws stipulating qualification requirements and/or the responsibility of employers to improve qualification of employees:

- Act No. 400/2009 Coll. with regard to state service (*Zákon č. 312/2001 Z. z. o štátnej službe*), replacing Act No. 312/2001 Coll. in force till 31st October 2009;
- Act No. 553/2003 Coll. with regard to public service (*Zákon č. 553/2003 Z. z. o odmeňovaní niektorých zamestnancov pri výkone práce vo verejnom záujme a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*);
- Act No. 311/2001 Coll. of the Labour Code, already mentioned above;
- Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (the “Trades Licensing Act”), already mentioned above.

The full list of all legislative norms of the education sector, containing dozens of decrees and other regulations is available in Slovak at <http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=2791> and in English partly within the Slovak education system description in Eurybase at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/eurybase_full_reports/SK_EN.pdf

In addition to the aforementioned norms there are many sectoral legislative norms stipulating in detail qualifications (vocational capabilities) for specific professions, e.g.

- Act No. 315/2001 Coll. on Fire Fighting and Rescue Corps (*Zákon č. 315/2001 Z. z. o Hasičskom a záchrannom zbore*) as amended by Act No. 48/2011 Coll. or the Decree of the Ministry of Interior SR No. 121/2002 Coll. on Fire Prevention (*Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra SR č. 121/2002 Z. z. o požiarnej prevencii*) as amended by the Decree No. 259/2009 Coll.; or
- Regulation of the Government of the SR No. 296/2010 Coll. on professional qualifications of health professionals, on further training of healthcare personnel, on the system of specialised branches and the system of certified work activities (*Nariadenie vlády SR č. 296/2010 Z. z. o odbornej spôsobilosti na výkon zdravotníckeho povolania, spôsobe ďalšieho vzdelávania zdravotníckych pracovníkov, sústave špecializačných odborov a sústave certifikovaných pracovných činností*);
- Act No. 541/2004 on Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy (Atomic Act), lastly amended by Act No. 145/2010 Coll. (*Zákon o mierovom vyžívaní jadrovej energie (Atómový zákon)*) regulating conditions of use of nuclear energy and also professional competency of staff (§ 24) and further detailed by the Decree of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the SR No. 52/2006 Coll. on Professional Competency (*Vyhláška Úradu jadrového dozoru SR č. 52/2006 Z. z. o odbornej spôsobilosti*).

Labour market training is regulated by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) by

- Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (*Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti*), lastly amended by Act No. 231/2011 Coll. It identifies respective tools of active labour market policy (§§ 49-61), provision of training of job seekers and employees in need of increasing their employability (§§ 44-48).

A specific case is

- Act No. 124/2006 Coll. on Occupational Safety and Health Protection, lastly amended by Act No. 136/2010 Coll. (*Zákon č. 124/2006 Z. z. o bezpečnosti a ochrane zdravia pri práci*), as this act regulates obligatory training of employees provided by each employer.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET AND ORGANIGRAM

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) is responsible for legislation for CVET, however, there are no clear borders between responsibilities of the MŠVVaŠ focusing on “further” education and other governmental institutions engaged in lifelong learning, in particular the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) with responsibility to labour market training.

MŠVVaŠ directly manages National Institute for Lifelong Learning (NÚCŽV, *Národný ústav celoživotného vzdelávania*, <http://nuczv.sk/>, former Academia Istropolitana). National Lifelong Learning Institute with a mission in this field is an education and training provider, and at the same time it develops draft policy papers, proposals of measures concerning CVET and lifelong learning. It was appointed to carry out the ESF project the “Creation, Development and Implementation of an Open System of Lifelong Learning in the Slovak Republic for the Labour Market”, one result of which was the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*)

adopted by the government on 25th April 2007. In 2010, shortly before the end of election period and unexpected by the education community, this institution was renamed to the National Institute for LLL with much more expanded focus in contrast to its predecessor.

The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva* www.uips.sk) also serves MŠVVaŠ, e.g. by provision of statistics or specific research studies, if required by MŠVVaŠ; This institute maintains a list of CVET providers stemming from the registry of the Ministry of Interior (MV, *Ministerstvo vnútra*) and publishes offers for further education of pedagogical staff.

Other ministries have also specific institutions taking care of further training in the sector, among which the most important is the Institute for Public Administration (IVS, *Inštitút pre verejnú správu*, www.ivs.sk), offering professional training for officers at all levels of government including self-governing bodies. This institute similarly to other sector institutes also offers expert consultancy to respective ministries. Within the Ministry of Health (MZ, *Ministerstvo zdravotníctva*) sector, even the institution providing professional training and LLL for doctors and health care personnel was transformed into the state university, the Slovak Medical University, established in 2002.

MPSVR is responsible for the funding and organisation of labour market training. Labour market training together with other employment services are provided through the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, *Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*, www.upsvar.sk), the network of offices of labour, social affairs and family, and detached branch offices, all headed by the Central Office.

The Institute for Labour and Family Research (IVPR, *Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny*, www.sspr.gov.sk) originated from the merging of diverse independent institutions under MPSVR. In contrast to the former labour market research institute from the 1980s and 1990s it has only limited research capacities. The Social Policy Institute (ISP, *Inštitút sociálnej politiky*) set up in 2004 by MPSVR in support of policy making in the social sector, was abolished in 2007 and its activities are to be covered by the Section of Social and Family Policies of MPSVR.

The Employment Institute (IZ, *Inštitút zamestnanosti*, www.iz.sk) is a non-governmental non-profit organisation created in 2004 focused on labour market analyses and provision of data for political discourse and policy making.

The Social Development Fund (FSR, *Fond sociálneho rozvoja*, www.fsr.gov.sk) has been created to assist and promote regional and local partnerships and financing bottom up driven projects supporting groups at risk of social exclusion. FSR serves as the national support structure for EQUAL, and since 2007 it has been launching calls as the ESF intermediary body under the managing authority to fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The Social Implementation Agency (SIA, *Sociálna implementačná agentúra*, <http://www.sia.gov.sk>) was set up by the MPSVR on 29th December 2006 to implement the 2007-2013 ESF Operational Programme “Employment and Social inclusion”.

An important lobbyist in CVET is the Slovak Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR*, www.aivd.sk), however, large enterprises and/or associations in branch industries are much stronger in lobbying for training benefits at the government.

REGIONAL/LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Regional partnerships were promoted by the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance adopted by the government in April 2007. In contrast to IVET where the new governance architecture is described by the Act on VET coming into force in September 2009, changes affecting CVET/LLL were not laid down by the legislation. Nevertheless, it is expected that the role of self-governing regions in CVET will be gradually strengthened with the increasing involvement of employers in programming IVET. It can be hoped that with IVET related activities of regional VET councils and sectoral VET councils the door for expansion into CVET will appear, as strong interrelation between IVET and CVET cannot be ignored. Currently there are no inter-sectoral bodies explicitly focusing on CVET, although there are some activities already indicating the importance of the overarching approach:
- The Memorandum of Cooperation between the MŠ and MPSVR, signed on 27th October 2009, should facilitate elaboration of the National System of Occupations (NSO) interlinked with the National System of Qualifications (NSQ).
- The National Forum of Lifelong Guidance established in 2008 within the European Union initiative is also an example of understanding the importance of overcoming sectoral fragmentations.

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

In Slovakia, social partnership has been introduced in the early 1990s; however the social dialogue was interrupted in 1997 and legislation even nullified in 2004¹⁶. A new Tripartite Act No. 103/2007 Coll. established a new consulting and concerting body, the Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic (HSR, *Hospodárska a sociálna rada Slovenskej republiky*). The Council consists of 21 members equally representing three partners with seven seats each. Trade unions are represented by seven representatives of the Confederation of Trade Unions (KOZ, *Konfederácia odborových zväzov*) and employers' representatives are composed of three of the Federation of the Employers' Association of Slovakia (AZZZ, *Asociácia zamestnávateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky*), two representatives of the National Union of Employers (RÚZ, *Republiková únia zamestnávateľov*), and two of the Association on Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia (ZMOS, *Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska*). RÚZ is a member of BUSINESSEUROPE.

The Council concerts standpoints and recommendations and makes agreements (e.g. general agreements and diverse social agreement on employment, productivity, wages, etc.) in the field of economic and employment development, it concerts standpoints and recommendations in the field of the state budget, and concerts standpoints to relevant legislation set by § 4 of the Tripartite Act.

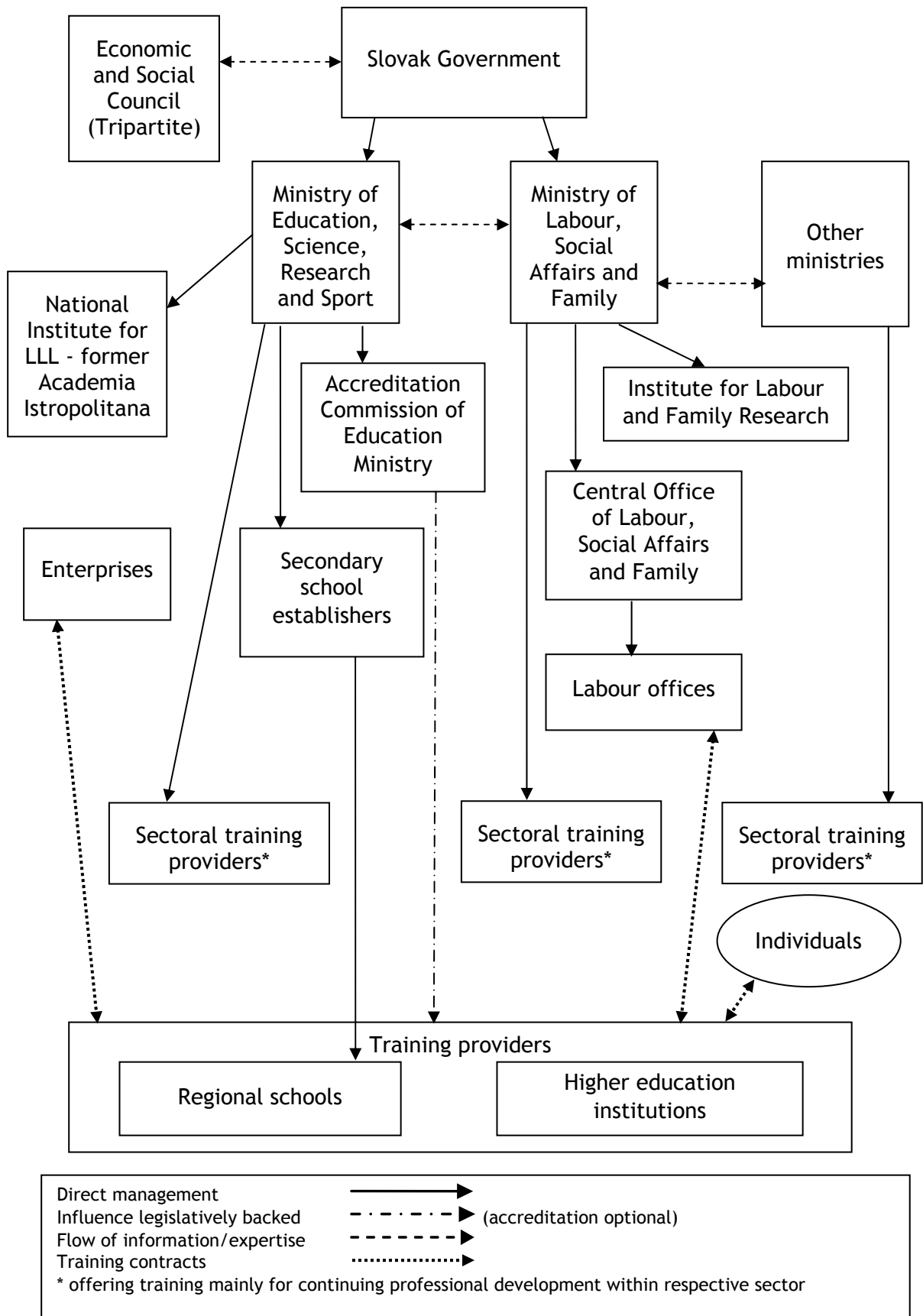
Social dialogue at the highest level could result in the General Agreement (*Generálna dohoda*) between social partners (which however happened last time in 2000). On the branch level, social dialogue is carried out through collective bargaining. Partners for

¹⁶ See Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008.

collective bargaining on this level are respective employers' organisations and respective union bodies and it results in a collective agreement at the master agreement level (*kolektívna zmluva vyššieho stupňa*). According to Act No. 2/1991 Coll. on Collective Bargaining (*Zákon č. 2/1991 Zb. o kolektívnom vyjednávaní*), lastly amended by Act No. 557/2010 Coll. Results of collective bargaining were binding during the left wing government, that was a permanent source of criticism of employers. Some businesses saw it very unfair that the results of bargaining were also valid for subjects not participating in the negotiation as the extension of results was purely based on belonging to a respective sector of the economy disregarding from real needs of employers and employees of particular businesses. Now, with the right wing government, the extension is again conditioned by the agreement of affected subjects.

Nevertheless, the collective bargaining just very rarely addresses VET and as a rule, provision of CVET is not a subject of master agreement level and agreements do not go beyond the stipulations of the aforementioned Act No. 311/2001 Coll. of the Labour Code.

ORGANIGRAM FOR CVET



5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 BACKGROUND TO THE INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

COMPULSORY SCHOOLING AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION

Pupils enter primary education at so-called basic school usually at the age of 6 years. Compulsory education lasts 10 years and this usually means nine years of basic school and at least one year of grammar school or secondary specialised school (VET school). Such a construction is intended as in-built driver to prevent leaving education early. Although there is neither education level nor classification recognised in reference to the completion of compulsory education according to legislation, it is implicitly expected that mainstream students achieve at least the ISCED 3C education level. Since 2008 a system of education levels (see the table below) has been refined in order to better diversify among the education achieved and also to better classify early school leavers. As the basic school is composed of two stages, the first lasting for four years and the second one for five years; respective levels of education have been introduced (corresponding to ISCED 1 and ISCED 2). Furthermore, the lower secondary vocational level (ISCED 2C) is newly introduced for low achievers from basic schools including those who failed to complete it and therefore cannot apply for ISCED 3C level study to receive a Certificate of Apprenticeship. Those VET students who finish at least a 3-year ISCED 3C level education obtain a certificate of completion of secondary vocational education (*stredné odborné vzdelanie*) and students who finish 4 or 5-year ISCED 3A courses with an upper secondary “maturita” school leaving certificate (*maturitné vysvedčenie*) are considered to have achieved “complete secondary vocational education” (*úplné stredné odborné vzdelanie*). These terms often lead to confusion in international comparisons as students who do not achieve complete secondary vocational education (ISCED 3A) might have completed secondary vocational education (ISCED 3C). Therefore ISCED 3A level is preferably named “full secondary education” in this report (as visible also in the table below). No specific level is recognised within the national classification that corresponds to ISCED 4. All ISCED 3A and 4 programmes’ graduates are labelled as full secondary education graduates, making a difference only between VET and general education.

EDUCATION LEVELS* ACCORDING TO ACT NO. 245/2008 COLL.			TYPE OF STUDY AT SCHOOL - ISCED**
OVERARCHING	GENERAL STREAM	VET STREAM	
PRE-PRIMARY	PRE-PRIMARY		Kindergarten - ISCED 0
BASIC	PRIMARY		1 st stage of basic school - ISCED 1
	LOWER SECONDARY		2 nd stage of basic school - ISCED 2
		Lower secondary vocational education (lower secondary)	Secondary specialised (vocational) school, 2-year programme with a final exam- ISCED 2C (extraordinarily with a Certificate of Apprenticeship)
		Secondary vocational education (secondary)	Secondary specialised (vocational) school, 3 to 4-year programme with a final exam (usually also with a Certificate of Apprenticeship) - ISCED 3C

SECONDARY	FULL SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION (UPPER SECONDARY)	Full secondary vocational education (upper secondary)	Grammar school 4 to 8-year programme with a “maturita” school leaving certificate - ISCED 3A
			Secondary specialised (vocational) school 4 to 5-year programme with a “maturita” school leaving certificate (in some cases also with a Certificate of Apprenticeship) - ISCED 3A Conservatory after 4 th year - ISCED 3A
			Secondary specialised (vocational) school follow-up study (usually 2 years) for ISCED 3C secondary vocational education graduates; completed by a “maturita” school leaving exam - ISCED 3A
			Secondary specialised (vocational) school post-maturita developing and refresher study (at least 6 months) completed by a final exam - ISCED 3A
			Secondary specialised (vocational) school “post-maturita” qualifying study (at least 2 years) completed by 2 nd “maturita” school leaving exam - ISCED 4A
HIGHER PROFESSIONAL		Higher professional education (post-secondary or tertiary)	Secondary specialised (vocational) school “post-maturita” specialising study completed by absolutorium - ISCED 5B
			Secondary specialised (vocational) school higher professional study (2 to 3 years) with absolutorium Conservatory after 6 th year - ISCED 5B

Notes: * In the first column overarching terms traditionally used are presented. In the second column levels offered within general education and in the third column levels offered in VET are presented.

** In the fourth column ISCED classification and study programmes with indication of respective schools depicted in the diagram of the education system are presented. ISCED levels correspond to classification used to feed UOE statistics.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

After completion of basic school, students, typically at the age of 15, make their choice of secondary school. They can decide for VET at secondary specialised schools, for conservatory or for grammar school.

Secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*) traditionally provide for ISCED 3A and in special cases, post-secondary education, which is content-related rated ISCED 4, and 5B. Originally they very rarely offered ISCED 3C training. However after the 2008 reform all VET schools are named SOŠ and therefore all ISCED 3C programmes are offered by SOŠ. Thus, SOŠ represent a variety of schools preparing students for both higher education and/or the labour market in professions requiring a quality general and professional education with a firm grounding in theory and also for blue-collar professions. There are 62 names of SOŠ (corresponding to types of schools and their programmes) listed

in the Decree of Ministry of Education No. 268/2011 Coll. amending the Decree No. 282/2009 Coll.

Conservatories (*konzervatórium*) were originally subsumed under secondary specialised schools. In new legislation, they are explicitly named separately in parallel to the category of secondary specialised schools (see also the diagram below). For the purpose of this report, however, we will not stress this kind of autonomy of conservatories as they are still seen as a VET system component. There are two types, dance conservatory, and music and drama conservatory.

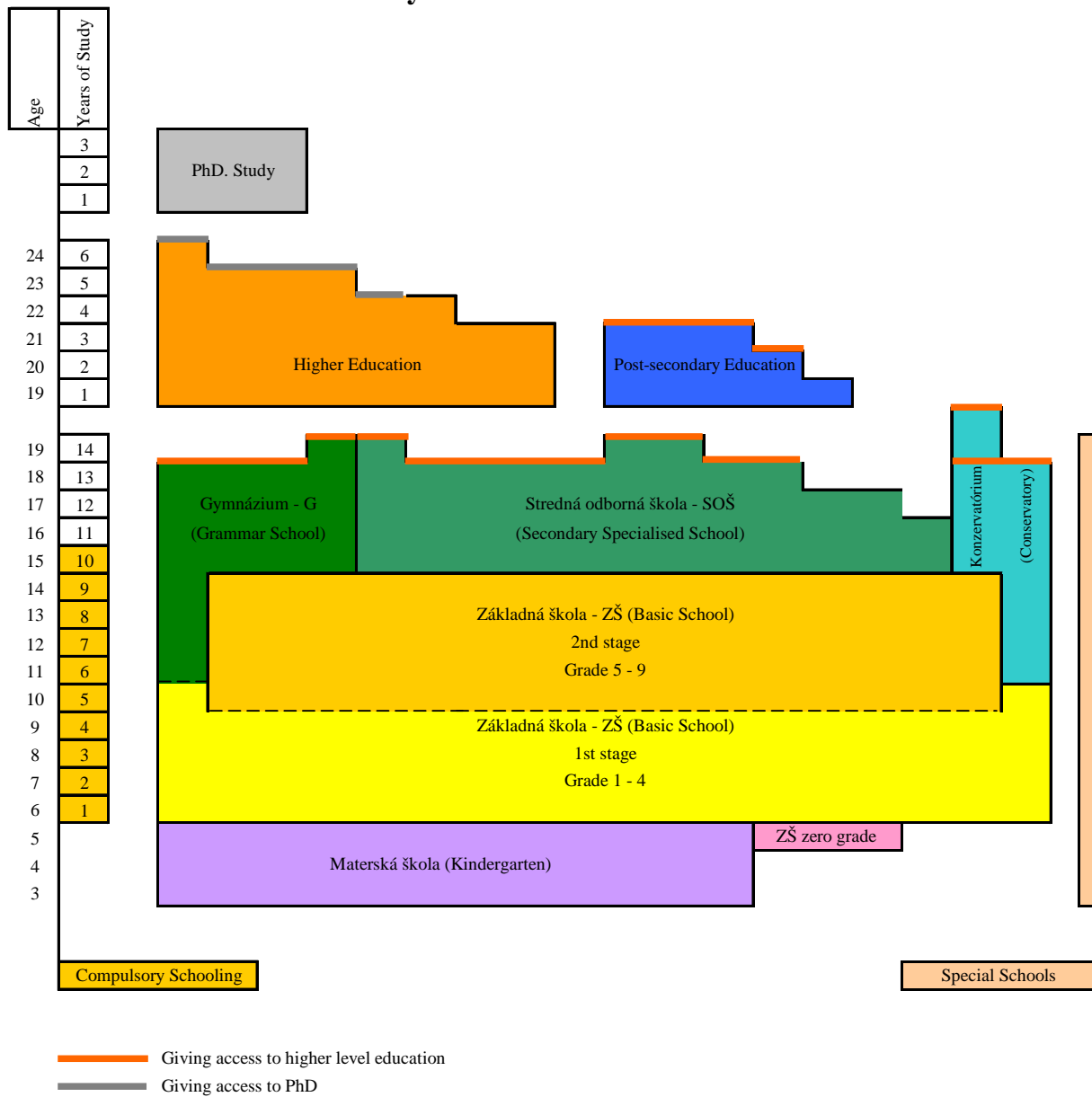
Grammar school (*gymnázium*) is the alternative to VET schools. It was originally created as a very demanding general educational institution aimed at deepening the students' theoretical knowledge and academic skills, and considered the best preparatory programme for university studies. Standard courses of study last for 4 years. The bilingual version (with English, German, French, Spanish or Italian as a complementary language of instruction) lasts 5 years. The so-called long form of study (for pupils completing Grade 5 of basic school) lasts 8 years. It was originally aimed at pupils considered as exceptionally academically gifted. Currently it predominantly attracts parents who expect a better academic environment and/or prefer bypassing the secondary school admission procedure after the completion of basic school. 24.8 % and 24.1 % of all full-time graduates from secondary general programmes at Grammar schools graduated from the long form of Grammar school in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010, respectively, in contrast to the originally projected 5 %.

Special schools provide education and training to mentally and physically challenged students. Since the early 1990s, the trend to integrate SEN students is increasing and inclusion efforts are supported by legislation and fiscal reward. Despite this, a system of special schools continues to play an important role in assisting SEN students to cope with the demands of the society and the labour market. There are both general stream special schools (basic schools and grammar schools) and vocational stream schools.

The formal education system is completed with a set of specialised facilities providing assistance to schools, parents and students (e.g. school service centres, school catering facilities, school clubs, centres of leisure, youth centres, in-country schools, pedagogical and psychological counselling centres) and offering additional specialised education (e.g. language schools, etc.). Basic schools of arts are state subsidised institutions offering paid education (with symbolic fees) in music, dance, fine arts, and drama for gifted and/or motivated children and adults.

Centres of practical training (*strediská praktického vyučovania*) provide for the practical training of students who receive theoretical education at VET schools without the full option of school based practical training.

Education System in Slovakia since 2008/2009



EDUCATION PATHWAYS AND RESPECTIVE CERTIFICATES

The mainstream students are after 10 years of compulsory education in the middle of their study either at grammar school or at secondary specialised school (or conservatory). Respective pathways of VET are presented in the table below.

TABLE 36: SECONDARY VET PROGRAMMES	
EDUCATION PATHWAY/PROGRAMME	CERTIFICATE
2-year (extraordinarily 3-year) ISCED 2C training branch with a final exam*	A certificate on final exam, extraordinarily also a Certificate of Apprenticeship
3 to 4-year ISCED 3C training branch with a final exam	A certificate on final exam + a Certificate of Apprenticeship
4 to 5-year ISCED 3A study branch with vocational training (<i>odbor s odborným výcvikom</i>) with a “maturita” school leaving exam	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate (in some cases also with a Certificate of Apprenticeship)
4 to 5-year ISCED 3A study branch with practice (<i>odbor s praxou</i>) with a “maturita” school leaving exam	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate (in some cases also with a Certificate of Apprenticeship)
6-year ISCED 5B study branch at conservatory	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate after 4 th year with the option to leave conservatory or stay for two additional years to receive absolutorium diploma.
8-year study branch at dance conservatory (containing both lower and upper secondary levels)**	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate together with a certificate on absolutorium exam and absolutorium diploma after 8 th year

Notes: * for basic school low achiever or those who even did not complete basic school (due to repeating classes).

** a specific case; the programme focused for pupils completing Grade 5 of basic school; it is an upper secondary level from graduates age point of view, however graduates are trained in a high level, as documented by absolutorium, and classified ISCED 5B.

Nevertheless, there are students who complete compulsory education earlier due to repeating classes at the basic school. If not interested in 2-year ISCED 2C training (indicated in the first row), they leave schooling without qualification. Early school leavers are a quite rare case, with exception of Roma minority.

Graduates from secondary ISCED 3 VET programmes can decide between post-secondary non-tertiary education not leading to higher level of education, higher professional education leading to higher level of education, which is currently not recognised as tertiary education (despite ISCED 5B classification) and tertiary education. Graduates from ISCED 3A VET programmes can apply for any tertiary programme of their interest. The table below presents a variety of pathways offered for graduates from any secondary programme.

TABLE 37: POST-SECONDARY NON TERTIARY VET PROGRAMMES	
EDUCATION PATHWAY/PROGRAMME	CERTIFICATE
At least 6 month developing and refresher study with a final “post-maturita” exam	A certificate on final “post-maturita” exam
2-year follow-up study branch with a “maturita” school leaving exam	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate
At least 2-year qualifying study with a vocational component of “maturita” school leaving exam (2 nd “maturita”)	A “maturita” school leaving exam certificate (for vocational component)
At least 2-year specialising study with an absolutorium exam	A certificate on absolutorium exam and an absolutorium diploma
3 year higher professional study with an absolutorium exam	A certificate on absolutorium exam and an absolutorium diploma
Conservatory in final classes (5 th -6 th year of continuing training and after acquiring “maturita”)	A certificate on absolutorium exam and an absolutorium diploma; programme can be entered only continuing after receiving maturita from the same conservatory programme*

Note: * see also explanation within the table on secondary VET programmes above.

Programmes available for tertiary students are depicted in the following table.

TABLE 38: TERTIARY PROGRAMMES	
EDUCATION PATHWAY/PROGRAMME	CERTIFICATE
1 st level (Bachelor)	A certificate on a state exam and a Bachelor diploma
2 nd level (Master)	A certificate on a state exam and a Magister, Engineer, Doctor diploma
3 rd level (PhD)	A certificate on a state exam and a PhD diploma

In addition to VET for mainstream students diverse VET programmes are offered for students with special educational needs. Special schools offer programmes equivalent to mainstream programmes but also specific programmes for mentally challenged.

TABLE 39: SPECIFIC VET PROGRAMMES FOR MENTALLY CHALLENGED STUDENTS	
EDUCATION PATHWAY/PROGRAMME	CERTIFICATE
Practical school	A final certificate (stating the area of activity the pupil is able to perform)
Vocational school	3 types of certificates based on the level on meeting respective standards (trained, fully trained, and trained with qualification); the highest level resulting in receiving a certificate on final exam and a Certificate of Apprenticeship

TYPES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN VET

There is no difference in types between public and private institutions. Non-state subjects are free to establish any type of school, provided they meet requirements set by law. All schools are public entities with a large autonomy in curriculum development since 2008. The position of school director can be restricted by financial instruments of school establisher and by education quality checking by the State School Inspection. School boards, the self-governing bodies composed of representatives of schools, parents and local/regional players, play the most important role in an open competition for the position of school director. Establishers of private and church-affiliated schools can be more influential with regard to curriculum development and pedagogies used in schools than establishers of public/state schools. All schools regardless the type and ownership (i.e. also private and church affiliated schools) are subsidised from the state budget equally based on per capita contributions (so-called normatives). These normatives are composed of wage normatives and operational normatives. There is a difference in capital funding. Private schools are not eligible for contributions from the state budget for capitals (even not in case of emergency - in contrast to public and church affiliated schools). Nevertheless, capital investment from state budget is not claimable. The following table offers numbers of schools delivering education by ownership in time series.

TABLE 40: NUMBER OF SCHOOLS* DELIVERING SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SELECTED YEARS							
TYPE OF SCHOOL		2003/04	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Δ***
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	STATE/PUBLIC	158	156	156	156	156	-2
	PRIVATE	19	40	40	38 + (1)	39 + (1)	+21
	CHURCH AFFILIATED	46	55	55	55	55	+9
VET SCHOOLS	STATE/PUBLIC	519+(3)	416+(2)	399+3**+(1)	389+3**+(2)	384+3**+(1)	-134
	PRIVATE	48+ (5)	84+(4)	92+(3)	92+(5)	92+(5)	+44
	CHURCH AFFILIATED	16	21	21	20+(1)	20	+4
CENTRES OF PRACTICAL TRAINING	STATE/PUBLIC	27	9	11	7	9	-18
	PRIVATE	6	22	21	17	15	+9
	CHURCH AFFILIATED	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva).

Notes: * without schools for special education needs (SEN) students; schools offering only part-time studies are in brackets; ** schools of other ministries; *** difference in number of schools in 2010/2011 and 2003/2004 school years.

Favourable conditions for establishment of non-state schools can be assumed from the decreasing number of public/state schools and increasing numbers in private and church affiliated schools.

OBJECTIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR IVET

Decreasing enrolment in secondary IVET is the main challenge: As a consequence of population decrease, VET schools fight hard to attract students. ISCED 3C programmes suffer from a decrease of interest caused by a dramatic decrease in demand for working professions accompanying a restructuring of economy in the 1990s after the fall of communism. There were only 10,399 ISCED 3C graduates in 2009/2010 compared to 24,828 in 1998/1999 and 34,562 in 1988/1989 in full-time studies (without special schools). Interestingly there were in total 70,694 full-time graduates from all programmes offered by secondary schools in 2009/2010 compared to 87,362 graduates in 1998/1999. Only a slight decrease in total numbers in comparison to the harsh decrease of ISCED 3C graduates indicates the increase of opportunities to receive other than ISCED 3C education. Closing old-profile factories and slow emerging of new working opportunities caused the increase in preference for ISCED 3A programmes that were traditionally highly valued by inhabitants as an “entrance ticket” to white-collar occupations. A shift to ISCED 3A general education is visible from the increasing number of grammar school full-time graduates (without special schools) from 10,463 in 1988/1989 to 19,692 in 2009/2010.

Adjusting a network of schools and programmes to prevent from overlapping, reducing mismatch in supply and demand and adjusting to both regional labour market needs and needs of personal development of students is a perennial challenge for national and regional authorities and the crucial objective for 2011 programme of reduction of programmes already in progress in cooperation with representatives of business (so-called sectoral assignees, see part 8.2).

Assuring quality of secondary schools graduates is the third challenge and objective. Financing per capita introduced without quality check of graduates resulted in gradual deterioration of their quality, as schools subordinated pedagogy to the economy. A working group was created in 2010 to elaborate a national model of quality assurance, two concurrent groups work to suggest a procedure for implementation of self-evaluation of schools and the National Council of VET set working groups to elaborate standards of equipment and other conditions for 35 secondary VET programmes with highest enrolment.

PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN IVET

VET schools organise diverse campaigns, including open door days, and visits of surrounding basic schools to present their programmes and opportunities for students. In the mid 2000s demand for graduates from studies preparing for working professions increased substantially as a consequence of economy growth, in particular in the automotive industry and electric devices. In contrast to other sectors, in these two booming sectors enterprises facing a lack of workers used to contribute to campaigning. Recession however negatively influenced the reviving school-business relations, as there are again experienced unemployed workers available on the labour market. On the other hand, in contrast to the 1990s, it is clear that interventions in promotion of VET and in particular reversion in ISCED 3C downturn are inevitable and schools and businesses have to cooperate in this. A very promising attempt to promote crafts is the “Let’s Support Crafts” campaign at the portal <http://www.podpormeremesla.sk/> financially supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*). Improved cooperation in promotion of VET is also expected as a consequence of Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní*). The newly created bodies, the National VET Council, Regional VET Councils and Sectoral VET Councils are expected to contribute substantially to promotion of VET in all sectors. Financial incentives are also expected from enterprises due to introduction of recognition of some related costs as tax deductibles (see 5.4).

CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGIES

In 2008, a decentralisation reform was introduced making obligatory only state (framework) educational programmes and leaving elaboration of details on the schools. The original general recommendation introduced in 1990 referred to as 10/30 formula (meaning that 10 % week hours and 30 % of content of original uniform curricula could have been replaced to meet local/regional needs after agreement of relevant stakeholders) is substituted by a framework regulation set by the state education programme valid for respective groups of branches (sectors) and embedded in the newly adopted Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. (*Zákon č. 245/2008 Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon)*). Since 2008, state educational programmes for groups of branches - in fact corresponding to sectors of economy have been developed by the State Institute of Vocational Education (ŠIOV, *Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania*) replacing “basic pedagogical documents” (*základné pedagogické dokumenty*) for over 1,000 individual study and training programmes¹⁷.

	ISCED 2C	ISCED 3C	ISCED 3A	ISCED 4A	ISCED 5B	TOTAL
SEP	9	16	20	23	14	82

Source: ŠIOV.

A further minor change affects conservatories. Their curricula activities are not backed by ŠIOV anymore. Now they are backed but by the National Institute for Education (ŠPÚ, *Štátny pedagogický ústav*). Individual VET schools are entitled to develop their own curriculum expressed by school educational programmes compatible with respective state educational programme and reflecting relevant labour market needs. According to § 7(2) of Education Act, a school educational programme must be discussed with employers or employers’ organisations with the responsibility to the respective field. The right of schools to reshape weekly calendars with the provision of subjects and hours was confirmed by law and the former universal 10%/30% formula was replaced by eligible adjustment limits stipulated by respective state educational programmes. The aforementioned state educational programmes were subsequently slightly updated and 83 StEPs in total, of which 17 ISCED 3C StEPs are valid since the 2010/2011 school year.

The curricular reform in VET is based on the “Concept of Two-Level Model of Educational Programmes in VET in the Slovak Republic” (*Návrh koncepcie dvojúrovňového modelu vzdelávacích programov v oblasti odborného vzdelávania a prípravy v Slovenskej republike*), approved by the government on 6th June 2007. It follows the same pattern of competence-based curricula, that was introduced in the early 2000s and that sticks to six key competences (Communicative and social-interactive; Intra- and interpersonal (including learning to learn); Creative problem solving; Entrepreneurial; Digital (ICT); Civic (“to be a democratic citizen”)), making differences between content standards and

¹⁷ See Tables 1 and 2 in part 0403 in Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, part 0401.

performance standards. Furthermore, graduate profile description had to consist of key competences, general competences and vocational competences in all VET programmes.

Traditionally, the description of “educational goals” was essential for curricular documents. These goals were based on the identification of respective knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits. Nevertheless, despite this, content based programming dominated within curriculum design. A “competence-based” paradigm became dominant in the early 2000s mixing up with a traditional approach, gradually complicated with a European “learning outcomes discourse”. Currently, EQF is not yet translated into StEPs, as the legislator preferred to work with the ISCED levels only. Further clarification of “fundamentals” and an agreement on ways of refinement of descriptions, significant for a shift towards stressing outcomes over education process, are inevitable.

It is expected that working on school curricula will strengthen the need for a deeper debate on identification of learning outcomes and refinement of outcomes/competence based school curriculum. It is still not yet clear to what extent the shift to learning output based curricula will be translated into practice. First signals not surprisingly indicate that more time is needed for crucial changes.

This curricular reform is also supported by the ESF project “Teacher Training with Regard to Developing School Educational Programmes” (*Vzdelávanie učiteľov v súvislosti s tvorbou školských vzdelávacích programov*). This project has been designed to improve skills of curricula designers at schools to reflect the new competence based approach within their own school educational programmes (see also part 7.1.)

Schools with active managers have also opportunities to respond to the calls within Priority Axis 1 “Reform of the Education and Vocational Training System”, Measure 1.1 “Transformation of Traditional School into a Modern One” and a similar measure within Priority Axis 4 “Modern Education for a Knowledge-Based Society for the Bratislava Region”.

Changes in pedagogy and innovativeness in the class and workshops depend dominantly on the individuality of respective teachers and trainers. School directors have little opportunities to stimulate this as the remuneration of teachers and trainers is comparably poor and tariff based with a low share of bonuses. In contrast to the tragedy of the 1990s and early 2000s leading to deterioration of quality of education, caused inter alia also by huge modernisation debt, dedicated individuals and schools have got more options to improve learning environment in schools. Funding of new educational initiatives from businesses as well as from ESF projects is aimed at both improving conditions (equipment) and pedagogies. Unlike an earlier period, individual examples of improvement are easily visible. Nevertheless, there is no clear picture about the nation-wide situation concerning the quality of teaching methods and innovativeness, due to insufficient evidence from monitoring and research. Dissemination of good practice is insufficiently used and even results of communitarian projects and ESF projects are not exploited for systemic changes. In ESF projects, auditing financing dominates over content monitoring and impact assessment. A revival of empirical research is an inevitable precondition of future progress.

Higher education institutions are fully autonomous in the development of their curricula only being limited by the framework description of study programme requirements, within which core topics addressing core knowledge of graduates are obligatorily set (referred as a “study branch core”). These descriptions were elaborated by an expert commission under the supervision of the Slovak Rectors’ Conference (SRK, *Slovenská rektorská konferencia*) for all study branches. Only a study programme listed in the registry of study branches issued by the decision of the MŠVVaŠ and complying with the aforementioned study branch cores are eligible for accreditation and subsequently for certification.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

Despite activities initiated in 2010 and mentioned above (see part Objectives and challenges for IVET), the IVET system is still based on traditional quality assurance mechanisms:

- input based accreditation of schools; based on formal assessment of compliance of application of school (including non-state schools and school establishments) with conditions (relevant documents) required by law;
- supervision of State School Inspection (ŠŠI, *Štátna školská inšpekcia*); its performance is based on the annual plan and results in the annual report on the status of education and upbringing;
- responsibility for quality assigned declaratively by law to respective players (e.g. director of school, establisher, MŠVVaŠ).

Thus, all working quality system mechanisms in IVET are inherent to the education system. Furthermore, quality checking activities are dominantly aimed at the assessment of students' performance in educational terms. The first impulse to address quality management from the institutional point of view came from the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 9/2006 Coll. on the Structure and Content of Reporting on Educational Activities, Outcomes and Conditions of School and School Facilities. It introduced obligatory annual reporting to the public and softly pushed schools to declaration of mission statements and self-evaluation. Nevertheless, no strong accountability inducing mechanism has been implemented and no national policy on quality management adopted. Reviewing these annual reports indicates a need to train school managements in performance of self-evaluation processes. A new ESF project "External Evaluation of School Quality Facilitating Self-Evaluation Processes and School Development", launched in 2009 and conducted under the surveillance of the State School Inspection, should therefore elaborate know-how to support schools in self-evaluation, as well as to improve current know-how in quality monitoring of the state inspection.

It is worth stressing that in contrast to the earlier ESF programming period, the quality management is addressed extensively in the 2007-2013 ESF Operational Programme Education. Promotion of school quality management systems, including supporting the development of models for evaluation and self-evaluation, is for the first time explicitly stressed and operationalised in the 2007-2013 ESF Operational Programme Education within Priority Axis 1, Measure 1.1 "Transformation of Traditional School into a Modern One". Similarly, promotion of quality culture in higher education institutions is stressed in Measure 1.2 "Higher Education Institutions and Research & Development as the Driving Forces in the Development of a Knowledge-Based Society".

Surprisingly, however, even within the 2004-2006 ESF programming period, within which quality assurance was not seen a priority, some schools decided to adopt the quality management system and they received the ISO norm 9001:2000 certificate. The ESF project "Quality of School - Guarantee of the Regional Schooling Reform", conducted since 5th September 2006 to 30th September 2008, accumulated the experience that could be

transferred to other schools provided the backing for dissemination is offered¹⁸. It must be stated that quality assurance is for a long-time a weak point of the VET system in Slovakia and that European initiatives based on CQAF, EQA-VET and EQARF have so far not been sufficiently reflected.

In higher education, curriculum development must finally materialise into an accreditation proposal within which a profile of graduates must be described containing descriptions of theoretical knowledge, practical abilities (skills), complementary knowledge and skills. Although curriculum development is in essence competence based, the quality of elaboration differs. Similarly, although all programmes are credit based, options of individualised routes vary among respective programmes. Accreditation is dominantly input based and any innovation in curriculum must not go beyond agreed courses in terms of their title and their description in the so-called information sheet of the course. Students enrolled in a programme not accredited by the Accreditation Commission (AK, *Akreditačná komisia*) due to lacking quality, insufficient amount of quality teaching staff or weak research and development activities, is at risk of not receiving a diploma, or of a transfer to another higher education institution in order to be subjected to state examination. State examination followed by awarding a diploma must not be done in the institution without the accreditation of the respective programme.

5.2 IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

There is only general education within the lower secondary level (pupils aged 10-15) with a marginal exemption - students of dance conservatory. These students can be indicated as belonging to vocational study within UOE statistics. Other students of respective age are in a general education stream (basic schools or first four years of 8-year grammar schools).

	ISCED 2 TOTAL	ISCED 2 GENERAL	%	ISCED 2 PRE- VOCATIONAL	%	ISCED 2 VOCATIONAL	%
SK -2006	345 462	341 910	99	3 439	1	113	0
SK -2007	327147	323 523	98.9	3 518	1.1	106	0.0
SK -2008	310 315	306 535	98.8	3 673	1.2	107	0.0
SK -2009	293 519	289 694	98.7	3 710	1.3	115	0.0
EU27-2009	22 064 045	21 484 802	97.4	335 599	1.5	243 644	1.1

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011.

¹⁸ See the example of initiative on the project in part 6.1 of the *A Bridge to the Future: European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-10: National Policy Report - Slovakia*.

In addition, there are also students indicated as pre-vocational according to UOE; 3,673 in 2008 and 3,710 in 2009 as visible in the table. There are several groups of students incalculated here. The first group consists of students enrolled in two or three year programmes designed for low achievers from basic school. Students who left basic school without completing lower secondary (general) education (even after repeating classes) are eligible to enter these programmes organised within secondary schools. Thus, these students are about 16-17 years old, while regular lower secondary education graduates are 15 years old. The second group of students includes students from similar programmes used for handicapped students educated within the special education system. The third group of students also includes special education needs students, however in contrast to others; they are mentally disabled and trained within a different programme, as visible from the table below.

TABLE 43: TYPES OF IVET PROGRAMMES AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL							
IVET PROGRAMME	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	SECTOR	ISCED	BALANCE BETWEEN		DURATION OF STUDIES	ACCESS TO OTHER PATHWAYS
				GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING		
DANCE CONSERVATORY	Tb	Arts	2A	n/a	n/a	4 years*	Conservatory ISCED 3**
TRAINING FOR SIMPLE AND AUXILIARY WORKING	None	***	2C	General subjects below 10 % ****	n/a	2 or 3 years	Labour market; complementary studies*****
TRAINING FOR MENTALLY DISABLED	None	***	2C	13 % *****	n/a	3 years	None
PRACTICAL SCHOOL (FOR MENTALLY STRONGLY DISABLED)	none		2C	Diverse*****	n/a	3 years	None

Notes: n/a - not applicable as programmes are school based and training in workplace can be organised only after agreement between school and organisation offering workplace for training.

Tb - Talent based, passing strong admission exam is required.

* Dancing branch is designed as 8 year programme, however after 4 years a respective level of education is achieved and continuing in other secondary school programme is possible.

** Or any secondary school, if not able or interested to continue.

*** Engineering and other metal-processing; Technical chemistry of silicate chemistry; Food-processing; Textile and clothing; Processing of hides, plastics, rubber, shoes production Wood-processing and musical instruments production; Building, geodesy and cartography; Agriculture and forestry and rural development; Economics and organisation, retail and services.

**** 126 out of 1 890 total hours within 2 year programme and 192 out of 2 880 hours within 3 year programmes.

***** Programme specially designed to complete lower secondary (general) education as it is not possible for them to continue in secondary education to achieve ISCED3 level; they are however expected to enter labour market and they also prefer to do so.

***** e.g. 384 out of 2 976 (13 %) in 3 years lasting Metallurgy programme.

***** Depends on allocation of free and disposable working hours; basic distribution is as follows: 24 - general, 24 - vocational, 15 - free/optional, 15 - disposable of total 78 week hours in three years programme.

As confirmed by the tables above, IVET programmes at lower secondary level are far marginal by both their volume and target. Even despite the large share of vocational subjects, training for simple and auxiliary works is aimed at preventing from social exclusion and dropping out of school rather than at training for specific profession. In contrast to previous regulation recognising only ISCED 3C vocational qualification as a minimum, since 2008 lower secondary vocational education has been recognised by law and therefore offering a qualification certificate expected to enable placement of low skilled people as well as disabled on the market, in both cases however working under supervision only (see table in part 11.1.2 depicting levels of education valid since 2008). These programmes will also remain marginal after the development of NQF. It has not been yet decided whether they will be assigned a specific level within NQF. It could happen they will be subsumed into one level together with all ISCED 2 level programmes (regardless whether general or vocational).

5.3 IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

The upper secondary IVET stream is among the third strongest in EU (with 71.6 % students in 2009) although the general education stream (with 28.4 % students in 2009) has been in a gradual increase since 1989.

	ISCED 3 TOTAL	ISCED 3 GENERAL	%	ISCED 3 PRE- VOCATIONAL	%	ISCED 3 VOCATIONAL	%
SK -2006	304 976	80 298	26	-	-	224 678	74
SK - 2007	299 620	80 294	26.8	: (-)	:	219 326	73.2
SK - 2008	290 863	80 477	27.7	: (-)	-	210 386	72.3
SK - 2009	284 656	80 912	28.4	:	:	203 744	71.6
EU27 - 2009	20 633 767	10 946 188	53.0	:	:	9 687 579	47.0

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; Last update: 13-05-2011.

Notes: : not available, (-) not applicable or real zero or zero by default.

The demographic decline and a preference of ISCED 3A over 3C studies changed the originally strongest secondary stream composed of secondary vocational schools' ISCED 3C

programmes¹⁹ (see also Table 46). In response to the now almost unclear and non-characteristic names of VET schools, all VET schools are categorised as secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*) since the 2008/2009 school year. Thus, there are only two secondary education streams, since former secondary vocational schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilište*) are now also named secondary specialised schools.

Nevertheless, former VET programmes types remained preserved, although all studies were redesigned according to the principles of curricular reform starting in September 2008. Study branches offered with a strong focus on theory by former secondary specialised schools were renamed as “*study branches with practice*” (*odbor s praxou*) and those offered with a stronger focus on practice by former secondary vocational schools were renamed as “*study branches with vocational training*” (*odbor s odborným výcvikom*). In *study branches with practice* students participate in the working process or assist there in the form of continuing activity for a period set by curricula; this usually happens in the summertime. In *study branches with vocational training*, vocational training is organised in alternance with theoretical education in school workshops or in places suitable for training which are contracted by schools during the whole school year.

Thus, the duality within ISCED 3A study branches remained preserved, although a common state educational programme was issued for a respective group of branches. ISCED 3C training branches typically offered by former secondary vocational schools have also remained preserved.

PROGRAMME	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	SECTOR	ISCED	BALANCE BETWEEN		DURATION OF STUDIES	ACCESS TO OTHER PATHWAYS
				GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING		
STUDY BRANCH WITH PRACTICE	SPBTN*	(1)	3A	43-48 % / 57-52 %**	n/a	4 or 5 years	4A, 5B, 5A
STUDY BRANCH WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING	SPBTN*	(2)	3A	43-48 % / 57-52 %**	n/a	4 or 5 years	4A, 5B, 5A
TRAINING BRANCH	SPBTN*	(3)	3C	about 25 % / 75 %***	n/a	3 years	3A (follow-up)

Notes: n/a - not applicable as programmes are school based and training in workplace can be organised only after agreement between school and organisation offering workplace for training.

* SPTD - see paragraph below the table notes.

¹⁹ See Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, part 0401.

*** 57 %/43 % in study branches with practice at a bilingual school due to more hours of the foreign language; similarly in cases of both types of study branch at schools with minority language of instruction (Hungarian).*

**** a share of general subjects is slightly higher at schools with minority language of instruction (Hungarian).*

(1) Mining, geology and geological technology, Metallurgy, Engineering and other metal-processing, Electrotechnics, Technical chemistry of silicate chemistry, Applied chemistry, Food-processing, Textile and clothing, Processing of hides, plastics, rubber, shoes production, Wood-processing and musical instruments production, Printing industry and media, Building, geodesy and cartography, Transport, post and telecommunication, Special technical specialisations, Agriculture and forestry and rural development, Veterinary sciences, Economics and organisation, retail and services, Library and information sciences, Pedagogy, Arts and artistic crafts, Healthcare (supervised by the Ministry of Health).

(2) As (1) except Mining, geology and geological technology, Technical chemistry of silicate chemistry, Veterinary sciences, Library and information sciences, Pedagogy, Healthcare.

(3) As (1) plus Information technology and except Metallurgy, Special technical specialisations, Veterinary sciences, Pedagogy.

Admission requirements for all types of programmes are set by respective state educational programmes and have remained unchanged by the 2008 reform. Only graduates from basic schools with completed lower secondary (general) education and from the legislative point of view (but rarely in practice) also students of the fourth class of 8-year grammar schools and 8-year dance conservatory are entitled to enter secondary specialised schools after successful passing of the admission procedure. The admission procedure may or may not comprise admission tests as it is up to individual school policies to decide upon this. In attractive branches with a surplus of demand, admission tests are usually applied. In other cases results in basic schools might be applied or even all candidates accepted. In specific cases set by Annex 9 to the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 282/2009 Coll. on secondary schools (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky č. 282/2009 Z. z. o stredných školách*), special admission regulation is set by law to test special abilities (“talent”) of applicants (e.g. art schools).

The typical age of newly enrolled students is 15 years. An upper age limit for admission is not explicitly set as in practice it is not a point of concern. As compulsory education lasts 10 years, attending at least a first class of secondary school is obligatory for regular students graduating from 9-year basic school without repeating classes. Registration and tuition fees are not applied in public and church affiliated schools.

Students entering bilingual schools established by international bilateral agreements are marginal exceptions; they are entitled to enter this kind of school one year earlier. Bilingual schools (typically but not exclusively grammar schools) offer five year programmes with a first year focusing on the language of instruction acquisition, as the language of instruction in some subjects is identical with this foreign language. Curriculum is also taken over from the partner country.

All state educational programmes and subsequent school educational programmes based on Decree of the MŠ No. 282/2009 Coll. on Secondary Schools indicate explicitly the certification (see subchapter on education pathways and respective certificates in part 5.1). Progression possibilities are indicated in the last column of Table 45 above. The aforementioned decree also regulates conditions of admission to post-secondary studies. Conditions for admission to higher education studies are set autonomously by respective universities and/or their faculties. The National Qualification Framework is in the process of preparation and should make this more transparent, and respective information easier to find on the dedicated electronic portal. No substantial systemic changes are however expected.

Traditionally all basic occupations were covered by respective study or training branches of VET. Correspondence with occupations updated according to recent developments should be secured by correspondence between the National System of Qualifications and the National System of Occupations to be renewed under the support of specialised ESF projects (see parts 6.1.2 and 9.1).

Increasing enrolment in ISCED 3A programmes and in particular in grammar schools (*G, gymnázium*) and a lack of graduates of ISCED 3C programmes is subject of criticism by businesses. The decrease in ISCED 3C graduation visible since 1989 (see the subchapter on promoting participation in IVET in part 5.1) even accelerated in the 2000s, and the number of ISCED 3C graduates halved within this period, as can be seen from the table below. The growth index indicates a shift towards higher status studies.

TABLE 46: NUMBER OF ISCED 3 GRADUATES BY PROGRAMMES					
	2009		1999		2009/1999 INDEX
	Abs	%	Abs	%	
3 TOTAL	71 454	100	90 738	100	0.8
3A GEN	19 619	27.5	15 648	17.2	1.3
3A VOC	38 402	53.7	48 220	53.1	0.8
3C VOC	13 433	18.8	26 870	29.6	0.5

Source: Eurostat, UOE harmonised data, date of extraction 06-09-2011.

Dissatisfaction of businesses with this trend and a dramatic decrease of available labour force after Slovakia's entry into the EU, and the entry of many Slovak workers onto labour markets in the EU led to calls for regulation of access of students to grammar schools and ISCED 3A VET study branches. The new Act on VET is opening the door for translation of employers' needs into IVET and even regulation of admissions into respective secondary schools. Nevertheless, without counterbalancing their power by taking into account also other factors, i.a. the wishes and behaviour of students and their parents this could result in malpractice similar to introducing financing per capita without quality check of graduates, which caused a decline of "production" of ISCED 3C graduates and an increase of ISCED 3A graduates indicated above.

5.4 APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

According to the method adopted in the UOE data collection on education systems, vocational programmes may be defined as

- school-based programmes, if at least 75 % of the programme curriculum is presented in the school environment);
- combined school- and work-based programmes, if less than 75 % of the curriculum is presented in the school environment.

In Slovakia, school based IVET share in total upper secondary IVET is 60 % and combined 40 %, according to the Cedefop's calculation based on the Eurostat data on education systems (date of extraction 25.7.2010). Nevertheless, the classification explained above does not allow for making a difference in judgement on a real influence of training on practical skills development. Final impact of practical training on learning outcomes of students depends more on the quality of pedagogy than on the environment, while of

course, lagging behind in technology and equipment can not be fully compensated by pedagogical skills of trainer.

There is, however, no typical apprenticeship training in Slovakia and there are no apprentices, *According to the Cedefop's calculation based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems (date of extraction 25.7.2010)* although ISCED 3C students from former secondary vocational schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilište*) were often considered and called apprentices. They were however regular secondary school students, according to the law, and as a rule, with no contract with employers. Since 2008 all students, including ISCED 3C students of former SOU, are students of secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*), as former SOU were renamed to SOŠ according to Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll.

Practical training of ISCED 3C students was and is usually dominantly school based, regardless of the share in environment of curricular activities. Even if organised outside the school, in centres of practical training or workplaces, it is ensured by a contract between the school and the provider (affecting about the fifth of VET students, in 2009).

Nevertheless, schools can accept an initiative of other entity willing to offer and cover practical training for a student this entity is interested in, e.g. as a future employee. In such a case, the student, if older than 15, sign a contract according to which he/she is in training for this entity and this entity is obliged to offer him/her an employment contract after successful completion of study. This kind of relation can be considered a form of apprenticeship. Nevertheless, even these students who receive theoretical education in school and practical training at the workplace of respective entity (craftsman or enterprise) will remain considered by the legislation students of the school-based VET system. Furthermore, it is a marginal case, currently about 1.5 % of respective students, as businesses are rarely interested in provision of "this kind of apprenticeship".

The Act on VET No. 184/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave*), in force since September 2009, stimulates employers to contract individual students explicitly recognising related eligible costs of employers (costs of meals, accommodation, travelling, medical and psychological testing required by specific professions, as well as provision of work and protective equipment) as tax deductible. Furthermore, costs of additional specific training agreed by the contract between school and enterprise (and not covered by state) are also classified as tax deductibles. These incentives are however insufficient to boost provision of "places", in particular in times of recession. With a revival of economy and the reduced availability of skilled unemployed ready to work businesses might rethink investment in targeted practical training of VET students. Nevertheless, it is very likely that savings from tax relief will not exceed the costs of inception training of newly recruited VET graduates.

5.5 PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Slovakia is among the EU countries with the lowest number of drop-outs and early school leavers and therefore alternative programmes are quite marginal. Nevertheless, statistics would be different for the Roma ethnic minority; in particular the Roma population living in segregated settlements. Ethnic statistics are however not available as collecting data on the ethnic principle is forbidden. According to the 2001 census only 19.9 % of those 20-24 aged who declared themselves as belonging to a Roma nationality (and representing only a fragment of all ethnic Roma) received ISCED 3C or higher level education, in contrast to 89.4 % of the total population of the same age group.

There are specific programmes to assist low skilled or inexperienced people's integration into the labour market. They are, however, organised within active labour market policies and cannot be classified as pure IVET programmes. Two ones can be perceived as interlinked with IVET:

The first initiative is targeted at adults without completed lower secondary education. The objective of the programme is to bring them back to school and assist them in completing basic school, and obtain lower secondary education level certificate. Although "second chance schools" are well known programmes from other countries, they have not proved successful in Slovakia so far. Moreover, ISCED 2 level education is very low for successful placement on the labour market in Slovakia. The employment rate of 25 to 64 aged Slovak inhabitants with ISCED 0-2 level of education was the lowest among the EU countries in 2010 with 29.7 % compared to 53.8 % in EU27, in the category of 20 to 64 aged it was 28.6 % compared to 53.4 % in EU27, again the lowest in EU27.

The second ALMP instrument "Graduate Practice" can be perceived as even more strongly linked to IVET as it was applied for graduates from secondary and tertiary schools who had graduated at a maximum 2 years previously and had failed to enter employment. Eligible graduates were given a contribution (since 2008 significantly increased and equal to the subsistence minimum) for a period of six months in the case they were accepted by an organisation offering them an opportunity to improve professional skills and gain practical experience from employment (for further details and newest development see part 6.5)²⁰.

The new Education Act No. 248/2008 Coll., in force since 2008, introduced a positive change with respect to refining the qualification (education level) range. Students who left a 9-year basic school without completing lower secondary (general) education, even after repeating classes, are now given a chance to complete lower secondary vocational education (*nižšie stredné odborné vzdelanie*) by completing 2 or 3 year long ISCED 2C "training for simple and auxiliary working". These programmes were originally aimed at retaining young people within education and training in order to enable them to obtain at least some competences. In contrast to former graduates from the former programme with unclear status, they are now clearly embedded in the system. This might open the window for many low skilled adults, for receiving a qualification in particular the unemployed who failed to complete basic school. Graduates from these programmes are classified as graduates from "ISCED 2 pre-vocational" studies within UOE statistics, and therefore are also mentioned in part 5.2.

5.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL

Traditionally, there were two kinds of post-secondary non tertiary programmes in Slovakia:

- follow-up programmes offered to ISCED 3C graduates; and
- three types of "post-maturita" programmes for ISCED 3A graduates (refresher programmes, specialising programmes, qualifying programmes).

²⁰ See also paragraphs on Graduates in part 5.1 of *A Bridge to the Future: European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-10: National Policy Report - Slovakia*.

In addition, higher professional programmes are newly stipulated, reflecting experience from a long period of experimental provision initiated by the PHARE programme in the 1990s.

TABLE 47: TYPES OF IVET PROGRAMMES AT POST-SECONDARY LEVEL ACCORDING TO THE 2008/2009 REFORM							
PROGRAMME	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	SECTOR	ISCED	BALANCE BETWEEN		DURATION OF STUDIES	ACCESS TO OTHER PATHWAYS
				GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING		
FOLLOW-UP STUDY BRANCH	ISCED 3C from RP	(1)	3A	44-47 % / 56-53 %*	n/a	2 years	4A, 5B, 5A
QUALIFYING	Any ISCED 3A	(2)	4A	100 %	n/a	2 years	5B, 5A
SPECIALISING	ISCED 3A from RP	(3)	5B	100 %	n/a	2 years	5A
HIGHER PROFESSIONAL	ISCED 3A	(3)	5B	100 %	n/a	3 years	5A
REFRESHER	ISCED 3A from RP	(2)	4A	100 %	n/a	6 month+	4A, 5B, 5A

Notes: n/a - not available as programmes are dominantly school based and training in workplace can be organised only based on an individual agreement between school and organisation offering workplace for training; RP - relevant programme with links between the two studies.

* share of general subjects is slightly higher at schools with minority language of instruction (Hungarian).

(1) The same as in case of study branch with practice listed under (1) below Table 45 in part 5.3 except the following: Special technical specialisations, Veterinary sciences, Library and information sciences, Pedagogy, Healthcare (supervised by the Ministry of Health (MZ, Ministerstvo zdravotníctva)).

(2) The same as in case of study branch with practice listed under (1) below Table 45 in part 5.3 plus Physics and mathematics, Economic sciences, Legal sciences; Special technical specialisations and Security services (both supervised by the Ministry of Interior (MV, Ministerstvo vnútra)).

(3) Mining, geology and geological technology, Engineering and other metal-processing, Electrotechnics, Food-processing, Textile and clothing, Transport, post and telecommunication, Special technical specialisations, Agriculture and forestry and rural development, Veterinary sciences, Economics and organisation, retail and services, Legal sciences, Pedagogical science, Arts and artistic crafts, Healthcare (supervised by Ministry of Health).

Follow-up programmes are offered to ISCED 3C graduates willing to receive a higher status ISCED 3A “maturita” school leaving certificate. As a rule, it lasts two years and finishes with a “maturita” examination certifying an ISCED 3A level of education. This kind of programme is offered to adults of all ages. Quite often, 18-year old graduates of ISCED 3C programmes enter this programme in full-time study immediately after finishing the ISCED 3C programme. Older people prefer it in the form of part-time study.

Qualifying programmes are of at least 2 years in length completed by a “maturita” school leaving examination. These studies are rated as an ISCED 4A level of education. These programmes are aimed at gaining an additional or new qualification as they obtain a second “maturita” school leaving certificate (in a branch other than the one studied earlier).

Specialising programmes are of at least 2 years in length completed by an absolutorium exam. These studies are rated as an ISCED 5B level of education. These programmes are aimed at acquiring new specific knowledge and skills related to the previously received education and training within the same or similar branch of study. In contrast with qualifying programmes, graduates are also awarded a higher level of education according to the legislation, i.e. higher professional education level (*vyššie odborné vzdelanie*).

Higher professional programmes are of 3 years in length, completed by an absolutorium exam. In contrast to specialising programmes, no strong interlinking in content with previous study is required. Graduates are awarded a higher level of education also according to the legislation, i.e. higher professional education level.

Refresher programmes (upgrading skills and innovative) are of at least 6 months in length and are completed by a final exam. These studies are rated as an ISCED 4A level of education. The programmes are aimed at updating of previously acquired knowledge and skills.

ISCED codes to all types of IVET programmes tabled above were originally assigned by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) in order to enable delivering the UOE statistics. Coding referred to the content and exit procedure of programmes. There was, however, a problem with legislative contradicting to this coding, instead of backing it. The new Education Act in force since September 2008 solved the problem at least partly, as an ISCED code is indicated directly within the respective state educational programme. Nevertheless, higher professional studies delivered by secondary schools are described there as “post-secondary or tertiary”, opening the door for the further recognition of some of these programmes as tertiary. Despite ISCED coding 5B, they are still not accepted as tertiary programmes by the act on higher education institutions.

All programmes tabled and described above are regulated in a same way as upper secondary programmes described earlier, as they are all offered by secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*). Thus, the aforementioned state educational programmes stipulate details for post-secondary studies (with the exception of refresher programmes) together with details for secondary studies for respective sectors. Refresher programmes are to be elaborated autonomously by schools in cooperation with other players to secure quality and compete on the market, only broadly sticking to respective state educational programmes.

As visible from the table below, there are only vocational programmes offered within post-secondary non tertiary education. A gradual decrease in participation from the peak in 2003 is demonstrated below.

YEAR	ISCED 4 TOTAL	ISCED 4 GENERAL	%	ISCED 4 PRE-VOCATIONAL	%	ISCED 4 VOCATIONAL	%
2009	3 651	0	0	0	0	3 651	100
2008	3 957	0	0	0	0	3 957	100

2007	4 159	0	0	0	0	4 159	100
2006	4 802	0	0	0	0	4 802	100
2003	6 377	0	0	0	0	6 377 *	100

Source: Eurostat, UOE data.

* Note: There is an error in the Eurostat table declaring this as pre-vocational study.

Introduction of bachelor studies after implementation of the Bologna declaration and the growth of provision of higher education across the country seems to be the reason of the decrease in “post-maturita” studies. In particular higher professional studies are endangered by a variety of bachelor studies offered at technical universities.

TABLE 49: STUDENTS IN ISCED 5B HIGHER PROFESSIONAL STUDIES* IN SLOVAKIA					
YEAR	2009	2008	2007	2006	2003
HIGHER PROFESSIONAL STUDIES	2 061	2 220	2 241	2 824	6 118

Source: Eurostat, UOE data.

Note: * Recognised as higher secondary level of education according to current legislation.

5.7 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF IVET AT TERTIARY LEVEL

All Slovak public higher education institutions were originally expected to provide university type education in accordance with Act No. 172/1990 Coll. on Higher Education. Within the new Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll. (*Zákon č. 131/2002 Z. z. o vysokých školách*), last amended by Act No. 125/2011 Coll., it was proposed to allow for the existence of non-university education and non-research based tertiary education. The evaluation of universities should have led to categorisation of all higher education institutions including private ones into

- universities (offering studies in all three cycles);
- higher education institutions (offering bachelor and master studies and no PhD studies); and
- professional higher education institutions (offering predominantly bachelor studies and doing only applied research).

A new right wing government established in July 2010 announced its intention to abolish this categorisation and respective changes in legislation are to be ready for discussion in autumn 2011. Furthermore, in contrast to the left wing government a more positive approach towards private higher education institutions is visible. Two new private schools - Ján Albrecht Music and Art Academy in Banská Štiavnica (*Hudobná a umelecká akadémia Jána Albrechta - Banská Štiavnica*) and Media, Medial and Marketing Communication Academy in Bratislava (*Akadémia médií, mediálnej a marketingovej komunikácie v Bratislave*) were approved after a 5 year pause. There are 20 public, 12 private, 3 state and 4 foreign higher education institutions in Slovakia in 2011.

All higher education institutions have reshaped their studies to a three-cycle model: with bachelor, master and doctoral studies (with exceptions of specific studies, e.g. medical studies and theological studies) in order to be compatible with the Bologna Declaration.

PROGRAMME	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	SECTOR	ISCED	BALANCE BETWEEN		DURATION OF STUDIES (IN YEARS)	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
				GENERAL/ VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING		
BACHELOR STUDY	Any ISCED 3A*	All	5A	n/a**	n/a**	3	2 nd cycle
MASTER STUDY	Bachelor from RP	(2)	5A	n/a**	n/a**	1-3	3 rd cycle
CONTINUAL (INTEGRATED) STUDY	Any ISCED 3A*	(3)	5A	n/a**	n/a**	5; 6***	3 rd cycle
PHD STUDY	ISCED 5A	(3)	6	n/a**	n/a**	3; 5	-

Notes: * Entrance exams may or may not be applied; ** n/a - not available, it is fully up to individual schools to decide upon this and it varies from programme to programme; nevertheless all programmes are school based and it is not possible to classify subjects as general or vocational reasonably and consistently; *** there is no bachelor programme in this case and only exceptionally it lasts 6 years (e.g. medical studies study).

Conditions for admission to higher education studies are set autonomously by respective universities and/or their faculties. No entrance tests are obligatory. In practice they are only applied in those universities/study branches where there is a surplus of demand over their capacities. In contrast to this, students may be accepted without entrance examination for studies with low demand, with the only precondition required the attainment of upper secondary level education (“maturita”). As students are allowed to apply for more universities (programmes), some universities organise a second round admission procedure during summer to replace students successfully accepted for more programmes who decided to choose another programme, and to attract any other free students.

Regular students entering higher education are 19-year old, as this is the regular age of graduation from secondary school. Graduates of a long-form grammar school who originally entered the 8-year grammar school after completion of the fourth class of basic school usually received a school leaving certificate one year earlier and therefore could have entered higher education studies one year earlier. The newly enrolled students of the 2008/2009 school year were the last ones who were given this advantage, as the new Education Act postponed the entry to long-form grammar schools after completing the fifth class of basic school. Some students enter higher education older due to a longer form of secondary programme or because of any other reason. Beyond the age of 26 they are indirectly penalised by obligatory cofinancing studies, paying for health insurance, and their parents are not eligible for child allowances and tax bonuses (if a parent is employed). There is no legal regulation upon an upper limit for admission to higher education; however older people as a rule prefer part-time studies.

Marginal registration fees are required to cover the costs of the admission procedure; however, no tuition fees are required for full-time studies at state/public universities.

Students studying more than one study programme or studying longer than the officially programmed length of study are, however, payers. Since the 2008/2009 academic year higher education institutions offer part-time studies officially in two modes: for better ranked students according to admission procedure for free, and for worse ranked students for fees. However, the number of part-time students is regulated, as the total number of part-timers at a university cannot exceed the total number of full-time students. In addition to this regulation (which will not be applied for future higher professional educational institutions according to the Higher Education Act), the number of students is regulated by the amount of means from the state budget available for respective schools in the form of contract with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) and based on a calculation formula (see paragraphs on “Funding tertiary education” in part 10.2).

Currently, continual master study lasts five years and sometimes four or six years. Bachelor studies last three years (exceptionally four years), without continuation to Master studies they still have limited popularity, partly due to the fact that tertiary education was free, of charge, except for part-time students over the officially set quota. Constitutional Court has ruled that this practice was discriminatory. As a consequence, all part-time students will be expected to study for fee in the future. Consecutive master studies usually last two years (exceptionally 3 years). PhD studies last 3 years; in part-time programmes 5 years. There are no higher education 5B studies offered in Slovakia. ISCED 5B participants visible in UOE statistics for Slovakia, as within the table below, are in fact students of higher professional studies, already mentioned in part 5.6 who, contrary to their expectations and the expectations of schools originally running these studies in a form of experimental programmes, are not considered tertiary students.

GEO	TOTAL ISCED 5		ISCED 5A		ISCED5B		TOTAL ISCED 6	TOTAL ISCED5+6
	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	ABS
EU27	18 988 664	100	16 370 782	83.9	2 617 882	13.4	517 085	19 505 749
SK	224 580	100	222 519	94.7	2 061	0.9	10 417	234 997

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; last update: 13-05-2011.

In contrast to ISCED 5B, the table below indicates a gradual increase in ISCED 5A participation and a comparably high share of participants in PhD studies.

YEAR	ISCED 5 TOTAL	ISCED 5A		ISCED 5B		ISCED 6
		ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS
2006	187 204	184 380	98.5	2 824	1.5	10 739
2007	206 886	204 645	98.9	2 241	1.1	11 066
2008	218 803	216 583	99.0	2 220	1.0	10 674
2009	224 580*	222 519	99.1	2 061	0.9	10 417

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; last update: 13-05-2011.

Interestingly, average wages of university (broken also by faculties) graduates are placed on the web (see <http://www.absolventi.iedu.sk/Page/UplatnenieStudentovTabulka.aspx>). It is based on the initiative of the MŠVVaŠ to reduce the asynchrony in information and to push softly students to reflect labour market opportunities.

MODES OF EDUCATION DELIVERY

The PHARE programme “Multi Country Co-operation in Distance Education”, which was conducted between 1995 and 1999 initiated the creation of the National Centre for Distance Education (*Národné centrum dištančného vzdelávania*) and the creation of the Slovak Distance Education Network. Although the National Centre for Distance Education was closed in 2000 and transformed into the Institute of Lifelong Learning (ICV, *Inštitút celoživotného vzdelávania*) at the Slovak University of Technology (STU, *Slovenská technická univerzita*), and similarly other network members were transformed, activities at universities have remained. Despite the dissolution of this network and the re-profiling of regional centres, the promotion of distance learning contributed to a more variable higher education provision.

TABLE 53: NUMBER OF STUDENTS* IN FULL-TIME PROGRAMMES BY A FORM AND LEVEL OF STUDY IN 2010					
	FORM AND LEVEL	PUBLIC HEI	PRIVATE HEI	STATE HEI	TOTAL
BACHELOR	FACE TO FACE	76 853	7 413	1 290	85 556
	DISTANCE LEARNING	732	0	0	732
	COMBINED	1 384	0	0	1 384
	TOTAL	78 969	7 413	1 290	87 672
MASTER	FACE TO FACE	37 575	1 544	202	39 321
	DISTANCE LEARNING	337	0	0	337
	COMBINED	1 146	0	0	1 146
	TOTAL	39 058	1 544	202	40 804
CONTINUAL**	FACE TO FACE	7 406	0	171	7 577
	DISTANCE LEARNING	1	0	0	1
	COMBINED	68	0	0	68
	TOTAL	7 474	0	171	7 645
ALL	FACE TO FACE	121 834	8 957	1 663	132 454
	DISTANCE LEARNING	1 069	0	0	1 069
	COMBINED	2 598	0	0	2 598
	TOTAL	125 501	8 957	1 663	136 121

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva), calculated by authors.

Notes: * Just students with the Slovak nationality in full-time programmes at HEI, except PhD studies, as of 31st October 2010.

** Master study containing first two levels consecutively and not allowing entering it as follow up after completed appropriate Bachelor studies.

TABLE 54: NUMBER OF STUDENTS* BY A FORM OF STUDY IN 2010, 2009 AND 2008					
FORM	2010	2009 TOTAL	2008 TOTAL	GROWTH INDEX 2009/2008	GROWTH INDEX 2010/2009
FACE TO FACE	132 454	134 756	132 500	1.02	0.98
DISTANCE LEARNING	1 069	1 508	1 200	1.26	0.71
COMBINED	2 598	4 416	3 647	1.21	0.59
TOTAL	136 121	140 680	137 347	1.02	0.97

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva), calculated by authors.

Notes: * Just students with the Slovak nationality in full-time programmes at HEI, except PhD studies, as of 31st October.

CURRICULUM FEATURES

Higher education institutions are fully autonomous in the development of their curricula, only being limited by

- the accreditation procedure, since costs of non-accredited programmes are not cofinanced from the state budget (contract with the Ministry of Education); and
- the descriptive framework of study programme requirements, within which core topics, addressing core knowledge of graduates are obligatorily set out, (referred as “study branch core”).

These descriptions were elaborated by an expert commission under the supervision of the Slovak Rectors’ Conference (SRK, *Slovenská rektorská konferencia*) for all study branches. These study branch cores are the subject of further development and change. Only the study programme listed in the registry of study branches, issued by the decision of the Ministry of Education, and complying with the aforementioned study branch cores, are eligible for accreditation and subsequently for certification.

Curriculum development must finally materialise into an accreditation proposal within which a profile of graduates must be described, containing descriptions of their theoretical knowledge, practical abilities (skills), complementary knowledge and skills. Although curriculum development is in essence competence based, the quality of elaboration differs. Similarly, although all programmes are credit based, options of individualised routes vary among respective programmes. Accreditation is dominantly input based and

any innovation in curriculum must not go beyond the agreed courses in terms of their title and their description on the so-called information sheet of the course.

Successful completion of accredited study programmes result in certification (Bachelor, Master and PhD diploma) issued and signed by the university rector, as faculties are not legal bodies anymore. Students enrolled in a programme not accredited by the Accreditation Commission (AK, *Akreditačná komisia*) are at risk of not receiving a diploma, or of a transfer to another higher education institution in order to be subjected to state examination. State examination, followed by the awarding of a diploma must not be done in the institution without the accreditation of the respective programme.

State exams are composed of the defending of the master/bachelor thesis and an oral/written examination in subjects explicitly listed within the accreditation documentation. Portfolio assessment is gradually gaining importance in contrast to traditional examinations.

ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Even after implementation of Bologna declaration a traditional feature - state exams remained preserved from the previous model. Despite examination in place at the end of courses an integral examination procedure is applied in addition to defending bachelor or master thesis. Assessment arrangements are set in detail by universities sticking to the framework set by law and checked during the accreditation procedure by the Accreditation commission.

- First level study programmes are bachelor's study programmes; graduates are awarded the title Bachelor (Bc., bakalár);
- Second level study programmes are master's programmes; graduates are awarded the title
 - Engineer (Ing., inžinier) in study programmes focusing on engineering in diverse specialisations (including also agriculture, forestry, transport, etc.), and economics;
 - Architect Engineer (Ing. arch., inžinier architekt) in study programme of architecture;
 - Doctor of Medicine (MUDr., doktor všeobecného lekárstva) in study programmes in medicine;
 - Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (MVDr., doktor veterinárskeho lekárstva) in study programmes in veterinary medicine;
 - Doctor of Dentistry Medicine (MDDr., doktor zubného lekárstva) in study programmes in dentistry;
 - Master of Art (Mgr. art., magister umenia) in artistic study programmes;
 - Master (Mgr., magister) in other non-specified cases;
- The tertiary study programmes are diverse doctoral studies. Graduates are awarded the title PhD and ArtD (artis doctor) in artistic study programmes, ThLic. title should be offered after first phase catholic theology programme finished with ThDr.

In addition a so-called "small doctorate" titles are traditionally awarded to 2nd or even 3rd cycle graduates after additional examination (examina rigorosa) and defending "rigorosa" thesis: RNDr. in natural science, PhDr. in humanities, social science and arts, PharmDr. in pharmacy, JUDr. in law, PaedDr. in teacher training and physical training, and ThDr. in theology (except catholic).

MAIN PROGRESS, TRENDS AND POSSIBLE IMPACTS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

The table below indicates a dramatic increase in participation in higher education - over 3.5 times more since 1990.

TABLE 55: STUDENTS IN ISCED 5A HIGHER EDUCATION IN SLOVAKIA								
YEAR	2009	2008	2007	2006	2000	1998	1990	2008/1990 INDEX
5A TERTIARY STUDIES	222519	216583	204645	184380	123136	101982	60567	3.67

Source: Eurostat, UOE data (1998 - 2008), ÚIPŠ national statistics (1990 - the 1989/1990 academic year).

The increase in graduates is also steep. There were 34,019 and 10,191 graduates in 2007, 50,040 and 12,575 graduates in 2008, and 53,742 and 19,073 graduates in 2009 (all first degrees and second degrees, respectively) from ISCED 5A programmes, in contrast to total 18,516 graduates in 1999, according to the Eurostat UOE data. A huge increase in enrolments and numbers of graduates raises questions about quality standards. Similarly to secondary schools higher education institutions follow the pressure of per capita funding, disregarding the quality in favour of their budgets.

Short track tertiary education should be more promoted in order to change the attitude of the population of secondary school graduates who usually consider it as an uncompleted master study. Furthermore, bachelor studies should be redesigned in order to provide a solid base also for assertion into the labour market.

Universities are now much more open towards LLL, as they depend on earnings from the provision of diverse paid activities. There are LLL institutes as a rule established at universities for the provision of LLL, and, in addition, all faculties provide LLL in line with their fields of interest. Universities are also stimulated to earn from LLL by current financial regulations, as the contribution from the state covers only part of their expenditures.

5.8 LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IVET

LANGUAGE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Language learning objectives are set by respective state educational programmes (StEPs) and further detailed by school education programmes (SchEPs) elaborated by schools in accordance with StEPs. Any ISCED 3A and ISCED 3C programme must cover two foreign languages.

According to § 4 of Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll., the aim of education is to allow a child or pupil to

- b) acquire competences, in particular with regard to communication skills, oral skills and written skills, ... state language, mother tongue and foreign language;
- c) acquire skills in English and at least one additional foreign language and to use them.

TABLE 56: FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IVET PROGRAMMES UP TO ISCED 5B LEVEL, ACCORDING TO STATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES				
VET PROGRAMME	FOREIGN LANGUAGE	REFERENCE TO CERF SET IN STATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MINIMUM WEEKLY LESSON HOURS SET IN STATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	CERTIFICATION LINKED TO THE PROGRAMME
ISCED 2C	No foreign language*			
ISCED 3C	First foreign language	A2	3	No certification within programme
	Second foreign language (compulsory for those continuing at ISCED 3A follow-up study)**	A1	2	No certification within programme
ISCED 3A	First foreign language	A2/B1	3	“Maturita” school leaving exam - compulsory
	Second foreign language**	A1/A2	3 in 1st and 2nd year, 2 in 3rd and 4th year; 3 in each year of 2-year follow up study	“Maturita” school leaving exams - voluntary
ISCED 4A	Foreign language may be included in curricula as part of theoretical education***	Not set	Not set or 2	No certification within programme
ISCED 5B	Foreign language as part of theoretical education	Not set	2	No certification within programme

*Note: * Acquiring foreign language skills is stated among aims of education, and development of communication skills in least in one foreign language is stated within key competences in StEPs. Regardless of this, however, foreign language is neither incorporated among educational areas nor included within framework teaching plans in StEPs. As a consequence it is not included in SchEPs. This can be seen as inconsistency in curriculum design.*

*** Till 2017 -2018 not obligatory in schools without suitable conditions.*

**** Varies across StEPs. Some programmes include compulsory foreign language provision with 2 weekly hours; some programmes include the possibility for incorporation of foreign language*

provision into school educational programme (i.e. the decision is left to respective school, in some cases with recommendation for 2 weekly hours).

According to all StEPs, the aim to acquire skills in at least two foreign languages is set for ISCED 3A+ levels.

Competences in a foreign language at ISCED 3A and 3C levels are part of general education. They are elaborated in more detail within key competences, and furthermore, content and performance standards are developed for the first and second foreign language. In bilingual schools set up under international agreements foreign language is used as a language of instruction. E.g. at Commercial Academy, Hrobákova, Bratislava, the German language is also used as the language of instruction for selected subjects.

In those ISCED 4A programmes which comprise language learning and in all 5B programmes competences in foreign language are part of vocational education. Content and performance standards for professional foreign language are developed within theoretical vocational education and performance standards also within practical training.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES TAUGHT

StEPs set in particular English, French, German, Russian, Spanish and Italian while also other languages can be taught making use of free disposable weekly hours left at discretion of school. E.g. the Private Music and Drama Conservatory (*Súkromné hudobné a dramatické konzervatórium*) in Košice included the Roma language into their curricula in addition to the first and second foreign language.

The table below offers the data on number of students learning foreign languages at secondary specialised schools. Data by study programmes, however, are not available.

SCHOOLS	STUDENTS TOTAL	ENGLISH		FRENCH		GERMAN		RUSSIAN		SPANISH		ITALIAN		OTHER	
		ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%
PUBLIC	157306	131158	83.38	5665	3.60	93442	59.40	17282	10.99	1383	0.88	553	0.35	338	0.21
PRIVATE	15383	12933	84.07	638	4.15	9110	59.22	1162	7.55	604	3.93	5	0.03	282	1.83
CHURCH	3851	3296	85.59	159	4.13	2284	59.31	406	10.54	0	0.00	64	1.66	0	0.00
TOTAL	176540	147387	83.49	6462	3.66	104836	59.38	18850	10.68	1987	1.13	622	0.35	620	0.35

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva), calculations by authors.

Note: Without schools for special education needs (SEN) students.

The English language is dominant, the German language is indisputably the second option with all the other languages playing rather a marginal role. The Russian language is disproportionately more represented in Eastern Slovakia with Ruthenian/Ukrainian minority and very likely also due to the neighbourhood with Ukraine.

The French and Italian languages are more represented at conservatories due to the tradition in dance education and music education, as can be see from the table below.

TABLE 58: STUDENTS IN FULL-TIME PROGRAMMES AT CONSERVATORIES LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN 2010/2011

SCHOOLS	STUDENTS TOTAL	ENGLISH		FRENCH		GERMAN		RUSSIAN		SPANISH		ITALIAN		OTHER	
		ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%	ABS	%
PUBLIC	1357	900	66.32	210	15.48	270	19.90	139	10.24	0	0	317	23.36	1	0.07
PRIVATE	644	502	77.95	162	25.16	178	27.64	15	2.33	0	0	186	28.88	90	13.98
CHURCH	169	86	50.89	0	0.00	100	59.17	0	0.00	0	0	43	25.44	0	0.00
TOTAL	2170	1488	68.57	372	17.14	548	25.25	154	7.10	0	0	546	25.16	91	4.19

Source: ÚIPŠ.

About 1.86 % (3,392) of students at secondary specialised schools and conservatories do not study foreign languages as a consequence of participation at ISCED 2C studies or ISCED 4A studies (in latter a foreign language is not obligatory in some programmes). Disproportionally more students not studying foreign languages - 78.4 5 % (4,758) - are within secondary programmes for special education needs students.

There is no statistics on part-time students at secondary specialised schools and concerning foreign language learning at universities. It is however worth highlighting that part-time programmes at secondary specialised schools have to comply with the requirements set for full-time programmes.

MODES OF DELIVERY AND METHODS

There are specific subjects prescribed by the national curricula (respective state educational programmes) within a general education component in ISCED 3A and 3C programmes. In some cases, however, foreign language also appears within a vocational education component of curricula to support targeted learning related to vocation or to improve communication skills. In ISCED 4A and 5B language learning is offered within vocational component only, as students graduated from ISCED 3A are supposed to have acquired sufficient language skills. Furthermore, any school is free to reshape its teaching plan in order to allow for more foreign language hours. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) involving teaching a curricular subject through the medium of a language other than regular language of instruction is in progress, however promoted on individual basis, usually in cooperation of dedicated teachers from secondary schools and universities. In any case however, language learning within VET programmes focuses on adoption of relevant field terminology and content relevant communication. For all field groups specialised vocabularies were developed, quite often within international cooperation. A very successful example of international cooperation aimed at improvement of language learning is 2008-1-SK1-LEO05-00224 Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation project "Volant". The project was aimed at supporting innovative approaches in vocationally-orientated language learning, in a specific field of car repair, service and retail, through the transfer of existing innovative teaching methodologies used in the Czech Republic - a complex online learning management system and blended learning methodology using 2D and 3D automotive animations in the UK. Within the project, teacher's textbook, student's exercise book and multilingual technical dictionary, all related to vocational language teaching in English, German and French, were developed

(see www.volantproject.net for further details offered also in English). This project was very positively accepted in the branch and even presented as an example of success within the Polish presidency meeting of Directors General of ministries responsible for VET.

ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION

A “maturita” school leaving exam in a foreign language is obligatory in ISCED 3A programmes, according to the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) No. 209/2011 Coll., amending the Decree No. 318/2008 Coll. on Completion of Study at Secondary Schools (in force since 1st September 2011, with some articles in force since September 2012 and some articles since September 2016). Other compulsory subjects in “maturita” school leaving exams for ISCED 3A VET students comprise Slovak Language and Literature, Theoretical Part of Vocational Component and Practical Part of Vocational Component.

TABLE 59: “MATURITA” SCHOOL LEAVING EXAMS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR ISCED 3A IVET PROGRAMMES, AS REGULATED BY THE DECREE OF MŠ NO. 318/2008 COLL., AS AMENDED				
SUBJECT	FOREIGN LANGUAGES	EXAM FORM	REFERENCE TO CERF* “MATURITA” SCHOOL LEAVING EXAM TILL 2010/2011 - DECREE NO. 318/2008	REFERENCE TO CERF* “MATURITA” SCHOOL LEAVING EXAM SINCE 2011/2012 - DECREE NO. 209/2011
COMPULSORY SUBJECT: FOREIGN LANGUAGE; IN CASE OF BILINGUAL STUDIES SECOND LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	English French German Russian Spanish Italian	External part: Nation-wide standardised test Internal part: Written exam Oral exam	B1 or B2	B1 or B2**; Bilingual programmes since 2016/2017: C1
VOLUNTARY SUBJECT ***: FOREIGN LANGUAGE	English French German Russian Spanish Italian	Internal part: Oral exam	B1	B1 or B2
VOLUNTARY SUBJECT: LANGUAGE INCLUDED IN A GROUP OF OTHER SUBJECTS	Polish Croatian Latin Roma (since 2011/2012)	Internal part: Oral exam	Without reference to CERF*	Without reference to CERF*

Notes: * CERF - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CERF).

** Selection between B1 or B2 levels is possible in contrast to general ISCED 3A programmes with just B2 option since 2011/2012.

*** In addition to 4 “maturita” school-leaving subjects ISCED 3A VET students can take an exam in additional language just as a voluntary exam, this is in contrast to general programmes (with Slovak language of instruction) where students can take an exam in additional language as an optional subject within 4 subjects.

In case of schools for minorities with the minority language of instruction (Hungarian, and Ukrainian) students also learn Slovak and foreign languages. They take “maturita” school leaving exams in five compulsory subjects - Hungarian/Ukrainian Language and Literature, Slovak Language and Literature, Foreign Language, Theoretical Part of Vocational Component and Practical Part of Vocational Component. In bilingual schools students take exams in four compulsory subjects - Slovak Language and Literature, Second Language of Instruction, Theoretical Part of Vocational Component and Practical Part of Vocational Component.

The following table brings preferences of students in choosing a compulsory foreign language for “maturita” school leaving exams at SSS and conservatories in 2010/2011 school year, as presented in an analysis of the National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NÚCEM, *Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní vzdelávania*). Similarly to foreign language provision, English is dominant followed by German. Just a small share of students decided for CERLF B2 level (1.4 % in English, 0.9 % in German and zero in other languages).

TABLE 60: FOREIGN LANGUAGES CHOSEN BY SSS AND CONSERVATORIES STUDENTS IN “MATURITA” SCHOOL LEAVING EXAM IN 2010/2011, BY CERF LEVEL						
CERF LEVEL	ENGLISH	FRENCH	GERMAN	RUSSIAN	SPANISH	ITALIAN
B1	25 839	84	12 073	1 169	2	1
B2	362	0	110	0	0	0

Source: NÚCEM.

Validation of language skills is still insufficiently backed by legislation. Those who want to receive certification equivalent to a “maturita” school leaving exam have to pass examination at respective schools with relevant programmes. The situation might be different in case of award from a foreign school. Recognition of language skills is regulated by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 319/2008 Coll. on Recognition of a Substitution of the Secondary School Leaving Examination in Foreign Language, as amended by Decree No. 208/2011 Coll. The decree brings it its annex a list of selected institutions entitled to issue language certificates as a substitution of school leaving exam in foreign language.

Issuing language passports is promoted and supported by the National Europass Centre. There is however no statistics available about this.

Language portfolio (passport, biography, dossier) is promoted among specialists, however with lesser interest of schools compared to Europass Language Passport. Again, no statistical data are available.

6. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF CVET AND ADULT EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF LLL

The main objectives of CVET were traditionally considered within an economic frame, as personal development

- to acquire higher qualification necessary for promotion;
- to increase employability; and
- in general to raise productivity, competitiveness, and economic efficiency, in particular via upgrading relevant skills for a relevant purpose, regardless of age.

The main objectives of adult education were traditionally less focused on employment related aspects, and more on the quality of life of adults. It was considered as a complementary activity in particular to satisfy personal and social needs and interests not necessarily related to the workplace.

Now, CVET and adult education are seen as an integral part of lifelong education/learning. Nevertheless, regardless of terms used, personal demand driven learning of adults should be distinguished from training driven by employers' requirements, in order to better understand the population's behaviour with regard to LLL, and to develop targeted interventions within policy making. The priority of future LLL development was stated in the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*), adopted by the government on the 25th April 2007, as follows:

“The main goal is the completion of the system of lifelong learning and the system of lifelong guidance in such a way that the system would make the access to repeated and flexible obtaining of new qualifications for the citizens easier through good-quality education obtained apart from formal also in non-formal system of education and in the system of informal learning with the assistance of complex counselling and guidance services during the entire life of the man and hence to help people to sustain highest possible employment level as well as to increase the participation of the population in lifelong learning to 15 %, complying with the principle of equality of opportunities.”

Following the strategy, Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong Learning (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*) was adopted in December 2009.

ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

The role of social partners differs depending on respective CVET segments. Part-time studies offered by secondary VET schools and by higher education institutions have to comply with IVET. The influence of social partners on respective IVET programmes is also manifested in respective CVET programmes. Graduates profiles are identical as this education leads to respective level of education recognised by law. Continuing professional development may or may not be regulated by law and the involvement of social partners in continuing professional development of pedagogical staff or health workers is very strictly

regulated and the influence of social partners is inherent. Similarly, CVET required for work specialisations is naturally derived from employers' requirements. A room for social partners' involvement has expanded also by the contribution to the development of registry of type positions and subsequently the National System of Occupations carried by Trexima, Ltd. (see e.g. part 6.2).

It is not possible to say that there is a direct systemic influence of social partners in defining competences in adult education and CVET. Social partners, in particular employers, naturally focus on expression of requirements, leaving the definition of relevant competences up to specialists with respective experience from IVET or practitioners (in particular with regard to CVET programme with no direct links to some IVET programmes). However, there are also examples of traditional programming authoritatively set by authorities, insufficiently referring to the outcome based approach and insufficiently reflecting social partners experience. There is little evidence about social partners' involvement in promoting participation in formal CVET. There is no research on examination of the role of social partners with regard to this but it is assumed that CVET is promoted by employers whenever needed for the sake of increased productivity, expansion of production scope and/or relevant human resource development. Some of social partners, e.g. the Slovak Craft Industry Federation (*SŽZ, Slovenský živnostenský zväz*), are for long time supportive for both CVET and IVET aimed at training of craftsmen. Regardless of this, however, there is a lack of craftsmen in the country.

BRINGING LEARNING CLOSER TO LEARNERS

BRINGING LEARNERS CLOSER TO FORMAL LEARNING

There is a wide network of secondary and tertiary VET institutions spread over the country offering formal IVET, as well as formal CVET for part-time students. As their capacities are much larger than the demand, they are very flexible in bringing learning closer to learners. Tertiary institutions are ready to create local affiliations wherever there is a demand. Similarly, it can be assumed that CVET organised to obtain sectoral qualification is also market driven and flexible in provision unless there are corporativistic restrictions enabled by law. There is anecdotal evidence about the restricted flexibility caused by protectionism of professional chambers. It is expected that e-learning based courses will be offered more, with the increase of ICT skills of the population. There is no data about numbers and fields of study of e-learning courses already successfully implemented. There are many experimental courses, but they are often vulnerable as they depend on project funding.

NGOs are not involved in formal CVET unless they participate in the provision of CVET in affiliation with schools. Similarly, workplace learning is typical for non-formal rather than formal CVET. Of course, workplace training is inevitably a part of formal training in the case of specific professions in which practice can be obtained only at a workplace. A new Act on VET, in force since 1st September 2009, introduces the establishment of regional centres of VET offering quality IVET and CVET based on earlier regional experience and sectoral experience (automotive industry).

BRINGING LEARNERS CLOSER TO NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Non-formal education *sensu stricto* (i.e. personal demand driven and not leading to certification of education level or qualification) is in essence neither regulated nor supported by any financial scheme. Of course, as a consequence of hard market competition, providers promote their products by means which might be seen as a result of regulation. Providers, for instance, indicate their courses as accredited by the Ministry of

Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*), or individual trainers/lecturers announce that they are certified lecturers of the Slovak Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR*).

As non-formal education *sensu stricto* is regulated by market forces alone, there are diverse providers to be found; NGOs and small traders alongside strong, often international organisations. Despite lagging behind in using ICT in education in the 1990s and early 2000s, e-learning is on the increase as a consequence of improving connectivity and broad band availability.

MAIN OBSTACLES IN PARTICIPATION IN CVET AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

Two points hampering participation in CVET/LLL are worth stressing - the lack of resources for learning among poor families and the lack of access to information about the quality of respective courses which would allow them for distinguishing among provision of education in terms of quality.

The traditional reluctance of the Ministry of Finance and other important players to cofinance LLL from tax money resulted in rejection of all proposals for inclusion of fiscal incentives in support of LLL into this act²¹. Despite the extremely low participation of adult people in LLL no fiscal incentives are envisaged for the future.

The Eurostat LFS statistics depicts Slovakia among the poorest performing EU countries in the adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training (with 2.8 % in both 2009 and 2010, far below 2010 benchmark 12.5 %). The Ministry of Education declared within its Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance to achieve improvement up to 15 % in 2015. Nevertheless, no fiscal incentives were agreed to boost LLL, and in particular for low income individuals and SMEs, a lack of disposable resources can create a serious barrier. Thus, no substantial improvement can be expected. Neither financial support of new coming investors and a pro-training attitude of large/rich companies, nor the ESF has contributed to the increase in the number of trainees since 2004, according to the LLL Eurostat data. It can be assumed that country inhabitants are much more positive towards learning than visible from the Eurostat LLL benchmark data. A detailed analysis of respective data is needed to identify the basis for further intervention. In particular the decrease in the 2004-2010 period (4.3 %, 4.6 %, 4.1 %, 3.9 %, 3.3 %, 2.8 %, 2.8 % respectively, according to the LFS Eurostat data) calls for rethinking both the 2015 national benchmark 15 % and policies in support of LLL.

The most important instrument in support of LLL/CVET is ESF. The Operation Programme Education, measure 2.1 Support for continuing education is aimed at increasing employability by improvement of key competences of inhabitants.

Quality of provision of CVET/LLL and informing about the quality of respective learning opportunities is gradually seen a serious problem. The Information System of Continuing Education (<http://isdv.fri.uniza.sk/>) was newly created offering i.a. a database of

²¹ See Slovakia: Tax Incentives for Lifelong Learning Face Obstacles in Cedefop Newsletter, Issue 1/2010.

accredited training programmes. Furthermore, a new ESF national project to be launched in autumn 2011 should address this by creating a “KOPLAT” electronic communication platform.

6.2 FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF FORMAL CVET

There are no levels of qualifications explicitly set by law. There are only levels of education explicitly set by law, and the level of qualification can be partly derived from this. In case of part-time studies provided by secondary schools and higher education institutions qualifications (comprising however a level of education only) can be described in terms of ISCED levels. Specific sectoral qualifications are as a rule defined as a composition of educational level (which can be directly classified by an ISCED level), specific qualifying conditions, sometimes described as specific vocational capabilities, and experience already gained in the respective field. Furthermore, any employer can specify in detail the additional requirements for a specific job. The individual who does not meet these additional requirements is considered not qualified for this job although he/she can be fully qualified for the occupation related to this job.

Until now, there has been no National System of Qualifications explicitly set covering all sectors, segments and learning settings in Slovakia. There are different segments of formal qualifications and their regulation differs depending on respective sectors. There is a very strictly set system of initial VET programmes linked to relevant study programmes leading to qualifications, which can also be obtained through formal CVET, designed for part-time studies. In contrast to IVET and the segment of formal CVET for part-timers, other segments of CVET are dominantly market driven. Such CVET, however, encompasses both formal and non-formal settings: enterprise training, labour market training and training to increase employability of individuals may or may not be labelled as formal CVET.

Trexima Bratislava, Ltd. (*Trexima Bratislava, s.r.o.*) has been assigned by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) to update the National System of Occupations (*Národná sústava povolani*) based on its experience within the Czech Republic implemented “Integrated System of Type Positions” (ISTP, *Integrovaný systém typových pozícií*). Thus, Trexima Bratislava will also become an important player in the development of the National System of Qualifications (NSQ) compatible with the European Qualification Framework. Respective ESF funded project planned by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) to adjust the Slovak NSQ to EQF is however still pending.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES

There is no data about main characteristics of CVET programmes. Although all programmes of formal CVET indicate objectives; target group; admission criteria; duration, assessment and progression as it is required in the process of accreditation, there were no surveys conducted to analyse respective features of CVET. The ratio between general competences and vocational competences depends on the type of training and it is impossible to offer detailed data.

An initial picture about programmes by field of training can be obtained from the MŠVVaŠ data on accredited programmes (“educational activities” according to the vocabulary of the relevant legislation) in the following table.

TABLE 61: CVET PROGRAMMES (“ACTIVITIES”) BY FIELDS ACCREDITED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION		
FIELDS	PROGRAMMES	
	N	%
PEDAGOGY	98	2.1
HUMANITIES AND ART	120	2.57
GENERAL PROGRAMMES	237	5.07
AGRICULTURE, VETERINARY	238	5.09
TECHNOLOGY, PROCESSING, CONSTRUCTING	437	9.34
HEALTH CARE, SOCIAL SECURITY	465	9.94
SERVICES	476	10.18
LANGUAGES	650	13.9
NATURAL SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS, INFORMATICS	699	14.95
SOCIAL SCIENCES, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, LAW	1 240	26.51
OTHER	17	0.36
TOTAL	4 677	100

Source: MŠVVaŠ.

Note: * listed are programmes accredited between 9th October 2003 to 23rd June 2008.

Data from the table above resulted from the ad hoc survey of Ministry of Education and no newest data are available in a similar structure. In total, 16,174 programmes were accredited till 30th September 2011 according to the searchable electronic database of accredited programmes. Each programme listed there presents its title, the date of accreditation award, and duration of the programme in hours, the name of provider and the seat of provider. A target group, profile of graduate, name of the trainer and of professional responsible for programme design (a so-called guarantor) is available after clicking on the title of the programme (see also part “Main providers” below).

CVET training programmes may or may not be accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Continuing Education at MŠVVaŠ and for health sector programmes at the Ministry of Health. In such a case the accreditation procedure (in both sectors) induces learning outcome based approach. In other cases the main characteristics of formal CVET depend on philosophies of providers and approving authorities. It was expected that the Act on LLL will support an outcome based approach across sectors, but this is not the case. On the other hand, all CVET programmes accredited according to this act in the future will have to comply with respective IVET (outcome based) programmes and qualifications included in the National System of Qualifications. Creation of an overarching NSQ is thus a precondition for induction of outcome based approach in all formal CVET programmes.

In-service training programmes for pedagogical staff is a specific case with accreditation procedure conducted by the Accreditation Council (*Akreditačná rada Ministerstva školstva pre kontinuálne vzdelávanie pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov*) at MŠVVaŠ stipulated by specialised law regulating their continuing professional development (see part 7.2.2).

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRICULA

Curricula within formal CVET part-time studies provided by secondary schools and higher education institutions correspond to full-time programmes, as part-time and full-time studies are equivalent according to law. There is a difference in the number of face-to-face lessons, as more room is left for individual study. Since September 2009, with the coming in force of Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (Education Act) (*Zákon č. 245/2008 Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon)*) curricula are to be key competence, and learning outcome, based. Thus, curricula based on key competences and learning outcomes for both full-time and part-time programmes are gradually being developed.

The Accreditation Commission for Continuing Education affiliated to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (AK MŠVVaŠ, *Akreditačná komisia MŠVVaŠ SR pre ďalšie vzdelávanie*) responsible for accreditation of educational programmes also supports modularisation and outcome based approaches within the evaluation procedure of the proposal and through a template prescribed for submission.

Curricula within sectoral formal CVET are regulated by sectoral legislation differently. In some sectors learning outcome based approach is adopted (e.g. in nuclear power sector qualifications), in others a traditional approach based on obligatory numbers of training hours, still dominates (e.g. concerning driving schools). In the health sector, where formal CVET is the most strictly regulated, programmes are accredited by the Accreditation Commission affiliated to the Ministry of Health (MZ, *Ministerstvo zdravotníctva*), which displays at its websites lists of accredited public and private institutions.

MAIN PROVIDERS

The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) maintains a list of CVET providers stemming from the registry of the Ministry of Interior (MV, *Ministerstvo vnútra*). In 2010, the institute addressed 6,465 providers when collecting statistical data. The number of private and non-state CVET providers has increased significantly in the 1990s, some of them however do not offer CVET on a regular basis, and some of them are just interested to have the chance to offer CVET, if appropriate, and currently are not interested in doing so. The largest of the non-state training institutions, and the only one with a regional network, is the Academy of Education (*Akadémia vzdelávania*) with centres in 34 cities spread over the whole country. This institution originated from the dominant state adult education provider of the former regime before 1989. Of course, there are also many other strong private providers often linked to internationally recognised training institutions competing on the market.

A list of educational institutions and their educational activities is traditionally prepared by the ÚIPŠ on an annual basis is available at <http://www.uips.sk/dalsie-vzdelavanie/>. A novelty is an Information System of Continuing Education set up following the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll., an electronic portal at <http://isdv.fri.uniza.sk/Default.aspx>. It is the most comprehensive instrument offering information on CVET. Over time it should also serve as information and counselling tool to support the development of continuing education in Slovakia. The system is directed predominantly at educational institutions applying for accreditation of their continuing education programmes by the MŠVVaŠ and at participants of education searching for information on accredited programmes including the specification of education providers, types of training programmes and training modules. A database of accredited training programmes is available at <http://isdv.fri.uniza.sk/SearchForm.aspx>.

An important source of websites and addresses of the strong players is the website of the Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých*) at www.aivd.sk. Lists of providers of CVET are also available from many commercial websites, e.g. <http://www.zlatestranky.sk/zs/hf/vzdelavacie-zariadenia-a-agentury>. Lists of courses (and respective providers) are at www.education.sk.

It is however not always clearly indicated within the aforementioned lists whether the respective course/programme corresponds to formal or non-formal setting. Furthermore, part-time studies are, as a rule, not promoted within these lists.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

CVET provided by secondary schools and higher education institutions within formal education follows the same quality assurance mechanisms as applied in IVET. School educational programmes have to stick to state educational programmes, university programmes have to make submissions for accreditation to the Accreditation Commission, an advisory body to the government.

The Accreditation Commission affiliated to the MŠVVaŠ, which is responsible for accreditation of educational programmes, as well as the Accreditation Commission affiliated to the Ministry of Health, both concentrate on assessment of input conditions and as a rule output quality is left up to the market power and clients. No national quality assurance programmes were elaborated and no quality assurance mechanisms based on specific European tools (CQAF, EQARF) were made obligatory. Improvement in this area is expected as a result of the new legislation on LLL.

There are, however, positive examples from practice: VÚJE, a.s., is an engineering company that performs design, supply, implementation, research and training activities, particularly in the field of nuclear and conventional power generation. Training to obtain qualification for nuclear plant technician positions is based on job analysis and learning outcomes, and is certified according to ISO norm 9001. This training is internationally recognised and foreign specialists are trained there, too.

The new LLL strategy paper to be prepared by the MŠVVaŠ in 2011 should address quality assurance as one of ultimate priorities.

DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Distance learning programmes were originally typical for part-time studies. Its share was higher compared to full-time studies in higher education institutions. Absolute data are visible from the table below.

	FORM AND LEVEL	PUBLIC HEI	PRIVATE HEI	STATE HEI	TOTAL
BACHELOR	FACE TO FACE	20 211	14 919	1 266	36 396
	DISTANCE LEARNING	517	3 087	0	3 604
	COMBINED	2 488	0	0	2 488

	TOTAL	23 216	18 006	1 266	42 488
MASTER	FACE TO FACE	13 340	4 896	1 101	19 337
	DISTANCE LEARNING	332	68	0	400
	COMBINED	1 808	901	0	2 709
	TOTAL	15 480	5 865	1 101	22 446
CONTINUAL**	FACE TO FACE	251	0	0	251
	DISTANCE LEARNING	5	0	0	5
	COMBINED	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	256	0	0	256
ALL	FACE TO FACE	33 802	19 815	2 367	55 984
	DISTANCE LEARNING	854	3 155	0	4 009
	COMBINED	4 296	901	0	5 197
	TOTAL	38 952	23 871	2 367	65 190

Source: ÚIPŠ.

Notes: * Just students with the Slovak nationality in part-time programmes at HEI, except PhD studies, as of 31st October 2010.

** Master study containing first two levels consecutively and not allowing entering it as follow up after completed appropriate Bachelor studies.

Although distance learning and combined learning are much more presented in their share in part-time studies compared to full-time studies, the provision of distance learning in general is underdeveloped in Slovakia, despite improvement in 2010 as visible from the table below comparing three past years.

FORM	2010	2009 TOTAL	2008 TOTAL	GROWTH INDEX 2009/2008	GROWTH INDEX 2010/2009
FACE TO FACE	55 984	60 992	64 966	0.94	0.92
DISTANCE LEARNING	4 009	2 688	5 642	0.48	1.49
COMBINED	5 197	7 193	6 354	1.13	0.72
TOTAL	65 190	70 873	76 962	0.92	0.92

Source: ÚIPŠ.

Notes: *Just students with the Slovak nationality in part-time programmes at HEI, except PhD studies, as of 31st October.

Distance learning can also be offered by secondary VET schools as it is explicitly mentioned in § 54(10) of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. Data is, however, not available as it is not contained within the regular collection of data of ÚIPŠ.

The aforementioned searchable database of CVET programmes accredited by MŠVVaŠ indicated only one distance learning programme and 30 combined programmes within total 16,174 accredited programmes.

Distance learning is gradually gaining importance within the professional staff development. Even in-service teacher training which was traditionally provided in a face-to-face form by regional in-service training institutions is changing due to the lack of funding of travel costs and the reluctance of directors of schools to free teachers from schools during their teaching time. A good example is the e-learning course of personal management provided by the Methodological-Pedagogical Centre Bratislava in cooperation with the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of Slovak University of Technology making use of human and technical resources of the former Local Centre of Distance Education, and funded by the ESF.

With the increase in citizens' familiarity with ICT, distance learning programmes are also on the increase in the very competitive CVET/LLL market offered by private CVET providers in an even more dynamic way than public providers.

Current provision of distance learning or its further development is primarily connected with the ESF as a source of funding. Universities are interested in gradual development of virtual campuses, however, they are usually hampered by a lack of resources and the reluctance of staff to reduce the number of face-to-face lessons. Nevertheless, several universities work at the creation of centres of distance learning. Furthermore, diverse institutes of LLL offer distance learning in order to compete on the market.

COMMENTS ON THE STATISTICAL DATA

Participation of adults in formal CVET is below the EU average, as visible from the table below.

TABLE 64: PARTICIPATION RATE OF PEOPLE (AGED 25-64) IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
GEO	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	TOTAL
EU27	2.7	6	12.7	6.6
SK	:	4.9	11.2	6.1

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); extracted on: 24-05-2011; last update: 30-03-2011.

Notes: : - not available.

Slovakia also suffers from the Matthew effect - a higher share of trainees with higher education level, as visible from the table above. These data confirm similar results from the Eurostat LLL ad hoc module LFS 2005 with the reference year 2003²². This is also a reason for rethinking measures to boost the interest of low-income individuals in training. The following table also confirms the need for rethinking training policies. While the participation rate in training of employed people is slightly above the EU average, rates of two other groups are below the EU average (for more details see active labour market policies in part 6.5).

TABLE 65: PARTICIPATION RATE OF PEOPLE (AGED 25-64) IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	UNEMPLOYMENT	TOTAL
EU27	6.6	6.3	7.1	6.6
SK	6.4	5.1	4.6	6.1

Source of data: Eurostat (AES); extracted on: 24-05-2011; last update: 13-04-2011.

There are also other data confirming the low participation in CVET. Slovakia scored below the EU27 average (38 % and 49 %, respectively) in the share of enterprises providing CVET courses, according to data gathered within 2005 CVTS3. All these CVET data might be partly explained by a comparably high level of education/qualification attained within IVET as Slovakia has one of the highest shares of VET trained population within upper secondary education. Thus, it can be assumed that there is no need to train more such a population within formal education.

Nevertheless, with 2.8 % of the adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training in 2010 (according to Eurostat, LFS) Slovakia is far below the 2020 LLL benchmark of 15 %. Very likely, a traditionally strong stream of IVET causes insufficient awareness of the need for intervention in support of formal CVET.

6.3 NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL CVET IN SLOVAKIA

The statute of non-formal learning/education is neither legislatively specified nor explicitly perceived by inhabitants. It is usually subsumed under the traditional terms *further education* or *adult education*.

No currently valid legislation speaks about non-formal learning/education. It has been more frequently used under the influence of European Union activities in particular since the consultation process to the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. Non-formal learning/education was for the first time defined in the governmental policy document the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*) as follows: "It takes place aside the main ways of education

²² For further details see Table 37 in Slovakia: VET in Europe: Country Report 2009.

and vocational training and usually it is not concluded by issue of official document on achieving a qualification. It can be organised at schools apart from their main activity, in organisations, which were created for supplementing the programmes of education in the formal system, at workplaces, at interest organisations, etc.”

The newest definitions of non-formal learning/education in a governmental document stem quite typically from the proposal to implement EQF in the Slovak Republic responding to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council. In contrast to an earlier definition, the main objective of non-formal learning/education has changed and the following is added: “to supplement, widen or deepen knowledge, skills and competences of individual”.

Within the Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education (*Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní a o zmene zákona Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky č. 387/1996 Z. z. o zamestnanosti*), the term “further education” subsumed diverse forms of education that is not formal (and even some segments of formal) without stressing classification and the difference among them in detail. In the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*), in force since 2010 abolishing the aforementioned Act No. 386/1997 Coll., only terms further and continuing education are used, in contrast to the draft version of this act, where also the term “non-formal learning/education” was used.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINING PROVISIONS

Non-formal learning *sensu stricto* (as specified in the terms of reference by Cedefop, i.e. intentional from the learner’s point of view, but without explicit learning objectives and not leading to certification of education level or qualification) is not regulated by state and therefore no detailed information about it is available. In such a case training offers and target groups are not transparent for an observer from outside and any details, as admission criteria or duration, are in fact a private issue between a provider and trainees, if even agreed.

Nevertheless, it is quite strange to reduce non-formal learning so strictly. Quite often provision of non-formal learning might have learning objectives, learning time and learning support explicitly set.

Thus, as a consequence of hard market competition, some of providers promote their products by means which might be seen as a result of regulation. Providers for instance indicate their courses as accredited by the Ministry of Education, or individual trainers/lecturers announce that they are certified lecturers of the Slovak Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR*).

As non-formal learning is regulated by market forces alone, there are diverse providers and target groups to be found. However as this provision is not certified (except at most certification of attendance), there are no detailed data available either.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

There are diverse providers - state, public and private: NGOs and small traders alongside strong, often international organisations.

As already indicated, CVET and adult education are now seen as an integral part of lifelong education/learning, regardless of whether they refer to formal or non-formal setting. A

major feature of non-formal CVET is that it is usually an ad hoc, short training aimed at the improvement of specific skills related to better performance at work. From this point of view the main providers are companies and/or training providers hired by companies. The main providers are registered at the AIVD promoted by diverse portals already mentioned in part 6.2, as it is not always possible to draw the line between pure formal and pure non-formal education providers.

The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) which maintains a list of CVET providers stemming from the registry of the Ministry of Interior (MV, *Ministerstvo vnútra*) addresses thousands of providers when collecting statistical data on an annual basis. Although the number of private and non-state CVET providers has increased significantly in the 1990s, some of them do not offer CVET on a regular basis. The provision of training is not regulated, small traders and companies indicate training among their activities just to have a window of opportunity opened for the future.

The largest of the non-state training institutions, and the only one with a regional network, is the Academy of Education (AV, *Akadémia vzdelávania*) with centres in 34 cities. It originated from the privatisation of the largest adult education network of the former regime. Gradually there are more and more internationally recognised strong training providers on the market. An overview of courses and their providers can be gained e.g. from the web page <http://kurzy.education.sk>.

ENTERPRISES' INVOLVEMENT IN PROVIDING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

A very important part of non-formal learning/education, which is however neither studied, nor explicitly statistically covered on an annual basis (except international AES and CVTS surveying), is non-formal education/learning in companies usually driven by employer requirements. Diverse in-company training or even on-the-job training is often even not perceived by participants as “learning or education”, in particular due to the comparably short duration of activity. Frequent short education/learning activities or many activities not perceived as education seem to be one of alternative explanations for the low adult LLL data.

There are no national/sectoral regulations in support of non-formal learning except active labour market policies (see part 6.5) and financing from structural funds. A targeted support for small and medium sized enterprises is offered within the Scheme for Counselling and Training for Small and Medium Entrepreneurs of the Ministry of Economy (MH, *Ministerstvo hospodárstva*) implemented by the National Agency for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises (www.nadsme.sk). There were e.g. 13 projects approved (with 20 % cofinancing of each beneficiary) within the call of 16th December 2010 with total EUR 175,958.66 contribution from the scheme. Training can also be supported within a de minimis scheme (within the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth) aimed at support of starting SMEs. Within this scheme they can apply simultaneously for ERDF (for equipment and technology) and for ESF (for covering training and/or wages or levies).

There is no evidence about the role of social partners concerning provision of training. Training provision is not addressed in any of 19 collective agreements at the master agreement level displayed at the website of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*).

DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES

There is no official (and statistical) evidence about the existence of distance learning programmes offered as typical non-formal activity. They however exist, e.g. within the banking sector or in international companies. They are also developed within international projects or as a result of grants received for this purpose, however respective portals are often short-lived and abolished after the end of project. Training providers preferably invest in the development of distance learning programmes offered in parallel to an accredited formal programme rather than in the development of a non-formal programme.

TOOLS AND PRACTICES TO ACCREDIT NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING

The Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*) recognises the existence of partial qualification. It was hoped it would stimulate non-formal education aimed at improvement of working skills, as a consequence of the possibility of getting recognised/validated non-formal/informal learning. No project aimed at paving the way to accreditation of non-formal and informal learning has been however officially launched so far. The only experience already gathered is linked to international projects with Slovak participation, of which the Leonardo da Vinci project EPANIL (European Common Principles for the Accreditation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Lifelong Learning CZ/04/B/F/PP-168010, <http://www.epanil.net/> and the ESF project ATENA (Centre for the Development of Non-Formal Learning and Personal Development, SOP HR 2004/1-189) are worth mentioning.

COMMENTING THE STATISTICAL DATA

The statistical data collected by the ÚIPŠ using the official “further education” data collecting instrument overlaps with formal education and at the same time it subsumes diverse (and essentially very different) kinds of non-formal education.

TYPE OF TRAINING ACTIVITY	TP	%	TRAINEES	%	GRADUATES	%
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL TRAINING	3 526	51.74	152 309	40.88	97 621	47.57
TRAINING FOR RECEIVING A PARTIAL QUALIFICATION	962	14.12	38 168	10.24	28 336	13.81
INTEREST AND CULTURAL EDUCATION	858	12.59	59 515	15.97	29 732	14.49
CIVIC EDUCATION	126	1.85	52 262	14.03	4 975	2.42
EDUCATION FOR OLDER PEOPLE	35	0.51	3 210	0.86	899	0.44
OTHER	1209	17.74	65 442	17.56	42 903	20.90
NOT AVAILABLE (DATA MISSING)	99	1.45	1 702	0.46	758	0.37
TOTAL	6 815	100	372 608	100	205 224	100

Source: ÚIPŠ.

Note: TP - training programmes.

The decrease in numbers of trainees and graduates in 2009 visible from the table below can also indicate the influence of the crisis.

	TRAINING PROGRAMMES	TRAINEES	GRADUATES
TOTAL 2010	6 815	372 608	205 224
TOTAL 2009	4 548	320 429	182 656
GROWTH INDEX 2010/2009	1.50	1.16	1.12
TOTAL 2008	3 526	388 049	291 278
GROWTH INDEX 2009/2008	1.29	0.83	0.63

Source: ÚIPŠ.

In contrast to participation lower than EU average in formal CVET, participation of adults in non formal education and training is close to or even above the EU average, as visible from the table below.

GEO	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	TOTAL
EU 27	15.6	31.4	51.5	31.3
SK	14.2	38.4	56.8	41.2

Source: Eurostat (AES); extracted on: 24-05-2011; last update: 30-03-2011.

Note: * in the 12 months prior to the survey.

The Matthew effect is again visible here: the share of trainees is increasing with the education attainment level. Also 2003 data, stemming from 2005 LLL (LFS) ad hoc module presented Slovakia as performing above the EU25 average in non-formal education. Furthermore, 2005 CVTS3 data indicated that the share of all employees trained in all enterprises was above the EU27 average (38 % and 33 %, respectively). All this might be seen by authorities as evidence of a reduced urgency for intervention.

When it comes to working status the participation of employed people is above the EU average, while the other two groups' participation is dramatically lower, as visible from the table below.

GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	UNEMPLOYMENT	TOTAL
EU 27	38.8	12.4	19.5	31.3
SK	51.5	7.2	12.1	41.2

Source: Eurostat (AES); extracted on: 24-05-2011; last update: 13-04-2011.

Note: * in the 12 months prior to the survey.

It can be concluded that specific interventions in support of low skilled (and usually low-income people), as well as for the unemployed, is urgent.

Only two points hampering efforts to bring learning closer to learners are worth stressing - the lack of resources for learning among poor families and the lack of access to information about the quality of respective courses which would allow them for distinguishing among provision of education in terms of quality.

6.4. LANGUAGE LEARNING IN CVET

The newly created Information System of Continuing Education offering a searchable database of accredited programmes <http://isdv.fri.uniza.sk/SearchFormAdvanced.aspx> brings the picture (as of October 2011) as follows:

TABLE 70: NUMBER OF ACCREDITED LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES	
LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES
ENGLISH	1 404
GERMAN	484
FRENCH	76
SPANISH	76
ITALIAN	41
RUSSIAN	30

Source: Information System of Continuing Education.

The data above contains all accredited programmes including old ones accredited according to the Act on further education and the new ones accredited according to the Act on LLL. It is worth stressing the all newly accredited programmes must be vocationally targeted (e.g. German for nurses). Many courses include the reference to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

A picture of delivered courses is available from the official data on educational activities of CVET providers collected by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) on yearly bases <http://www.uips.sk/dalsie-vzdelavanie/>.

TABLE 71: TRAINING PROGRAMMES, TRAINEES AND GRADUATES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN CVET IN 2010

FOREIGN LANGUAGE	TRAINING PROGRAMMES		TRAINEES				GRADUATES			
			TOTAL		OF WHICH FEMALE		TOTAL		OF WHICH FEMALE	
	N	%*	N	%**	N	%	N	%**	N	%
ENGLISH	927	13.60	34 374	9.23	20 705	60.23	21 183	10.32	13 460	63.54
GERMAN	285	4.18	5 447	1.46	3 622	66.50	3 831	1.87	2 597	67.79
FRENCH	86	1.26	1 471	0.40	1 098	74.64	843	0.41	612	72.60
SPANISH	97	1.42	1 767	0.47	1 297	73.40	1 035	0.50	745	71.98
OTHER	184	2.70	2 817	0.76	1 870	66.38	1 759	0.86	1 111	63.16
WITHOUT SPECIFICATION	3	0.04	158	0.04	95	60.13	0	0.00	-	-
ALL PROGRAMMES	6 815	100	372 608	100	191 497	51.39	205 224	100	112 998	55.06

Source: ÚIPŠ, data according to ISCED 97 education fields.

Note: * of all programmes provided, ** of all trainees.

6.5 TRAINING PROGRAMS TO HELP JOB-SEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

“VULNERABLE GROUPS” AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Seen from practice, the main groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market are ethnic Roma, low skilled, elderly and disabled. Slovakia is not attractive for immigrants yet, however in the future training of immigrants may develop to an urgent problem. The aforementioned groups are at higher risk of unemployment, often belonging to hard core long term registered unemployed and even at higher risk of inactivity.

Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (*Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti*), as amended, identifies so-called “disadvantaged job seekers”, who are in detail described by § 8(1) as follows:

- A citizen below 25 years of age, who has completed his/her systematic vocational preparation in full-time study courses less than two years ago and failed to acquire his/her first regularly paid employment (hereinafter referred to as “graduate”);
- A citizen older than 50 years;
- A citizen maintained on the register of job seekers for at least 12 months in the last 16 months (hereinafter referred to as “long-term unemployed citizen”);
- A citizen who did not perform gainful activity not even prepared for a profession in the framework of systematic vocational preparation or further education for at least 24 months, due to an inability to harmonise duties at work with his/her parental obligations;
- A citizen, who is a parent, or a person, pursuant to a special regulation, who cares for three or more children, or a lone citizen caring of a child;
- A citizen who has lost the ability to carry out his/her current employment for health reasons and who is not a disabled citizen;

- A citizen moving or having moved within the territories of Member States of the European Union, or a citizen staying in the territory of a Member State of the European Union in order to carry out an employment;
- A disabled citizen;
- A citizen with reduced ability (minimum 20 %, maximum 40 %) to perform economic activity;
- An immigrant who has been granted asylum;
- A citizen unemployed due to diverse non-subjective reasons (e.g. organisational change, at risk of occupational disease, etc.);
- A citizen who has dropped out from secondary school;
- A citizen with specific status in relation with penitentiary or other institutional care.

Thus, all job seekers belonging to at least one of the group listed among the groups of disadvantaged above can be seen as “vulnerable”. Active labour market policies (ALMP) in support of disadvantaged job seekers as a vehicle for labour market assertion is explicitly stressed in § 11(1)d of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services.

PROVISION OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Other people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market than those identified as disadvantaged and served by labour offices are predominantly served within ESF Operation Programme Education funded activities, but also by NGOs drawing from other financial schemes. A specific Measure 3.1 Enhancing educational level of members of marginalised Roma communities targets Roma through Activity 3.1.3 aimed at continuing education of members of marginalised Roma communities and Activity 3.1.4 aimed at “continuing education” of people and the support of organisations engaged in reintegration into labour market of Roma. (Activities 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 refer to initial education). Measure 3.2 Enhancing education level of people with special educational needs (SEN) contains similar activities, Activity 3.2.3 aimed at “continuing education” of SEN people and Activity 3.2.4 aimed at support of those working at their reintegration. (Activities 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 refer to initial education). Examples of training can be seen in the website of the international project funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme aimed at evaluation of VET of disadvantaged people in eight countries including Slovakia (www.evalvet.eu).

PROVISION OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES WITHIN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Unemployed people are served by employment services provided by the headquarters of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, *Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) and its network of offices spread throughout the country. Employment services are regulated by Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (*Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti*), as amended. In addition, employed people can also be entitled to be served by ALMP, provided they are at risk of dismissal. E.g., they can be trained provided the employer receiving financial incentive from the labour office confirms their employment for at least 12 following months or if the training prevents from mass dismissal.

A full list of ALMP instruments with relevant data is presented in the Annex (Table 12 and Table 13). The employment services directly related to CVET can be seen from the table below (see explanation of ALMP tools below the table): policies are presented in time series since 2004.

TABLE 72: ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES IN 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009 AND 2010					
ALMP TOOLS	PEOPLE AFFECTED				
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010
§ 46	27 208	8 890	12 143	17 924	8 824
§ 47	- *	12 537	13 863	29 921	20 381
§ 51	14 462	8 937	7 451	11 764	21 176
TOTAL**	273 354	304 249	264 801	208 016	251 966

Source: Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

Notes: EUR 1 = SKK 38.796 as of 31st December 2004; EUR 1 = SKK 33.603 as of 31st December 2007; 2008 and 2009 data offered in EUR by the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

§ 46 Education and training for the labour market of the unemployed job seekers and employed job seekers, § 47 Education and training for the labour market of employee, § 51 Contribution for the graduate practice.

* not implemented. ** including also additional tools listed in the act.

Education of job seekers and other persons interested in employment (§ 46) is an obligatory instrument; it means that all eligible applicants must be served. Disadvantaged groups are however preferred. In contrast to the previous measure, Education and training for the labour market of employee (§ 47) is not an obligatory instrument.

In 2010, 8,824 employed and unemployed job seekers were placed on training, of which 4,825 were women and 4,732 were classified as disadvantaged unemployed. 2,431 trainees were subsequently employed, which is 27.54 % of all 8,824 people trained. Courses with the highest number of trainees traditionally focus on ICT, business and services, and diverse blue-collar occupations. A specific category is the training for self-employment - a precondition for receiving a contribution to start the own business. 716 people qualified for this instrument (§ 49).

In 2010, 20,381 employed people not seeking new jobs were placed on training, of which 10,053 (49.33 %) were women; 4,868 could be classified as disadvantaged.

A comparison with previous years in the table above indicates a severe decrease in training of both job seekers (§ 46) and employees (§ 47). The table also indicates a dramatic increase in numbers of trained employees since in 2009 caused by the reallocation of unused resources from other ESF measures. A comparison of the year 2010 with the pre-crisis year 2007 clearly indicates a new employment services paradigm: a focus on newcomers in the labour market (Graduate practice) and on employees at risk of dismissal. Training of people registered at labour offices is comparably seen as less important.

The graduate practice (§ 51) is targeting graduates from secondary and tertiary schools who are maximum 2 years after graduation and have failed to enter employment. It is aimed at acquiring vocational skills and practical experience at employer's workplace in order to expand graduates' employability by improving his/her professional skills and by gaining practical experience from employment. Although not certified by any special procedure, it is considered a successful instrument with a clear advantage for participants, as it is reported that it really improves their skills. There are however, no data about interlinking study field and skills to be developed during the graduate practice as well as about the direct impact of graduate practice on later employment. There is just data about their subsequent placement, however, without estimation of the deadweight. Within the graduate practice a graduate works up to 20 hours weekly for the period up to six

months. Based on the contract between a labour office and a school graduate, he/she receives a contribution equal to the level of subsistence minimum provided to one adult person according to Act No. 601/2003 Coll. on Subsistence Minimum (*Zákon č. 601/2003 Z. z. o životnom minime*); from 1st January 2009 it was EUR 178.92 per month, from July 2009 it was EUR 185.19, from July 2010 EUR 185.38 and since July 2011 EUR 189.83. The contribution for the graduate practice is an obligatory instrument, thus all eligible applicants must be served. Originally, school graduates registered as unemployed for at least 3 months were eligible for this measure. As a consequence of crisis this period of registration was not required and from 1st November 2009 to 31st December 2010 all registered graduates were entitled to apply for the graduate practice immediately after registration.

Training activities were completed with certificates of attendance, however, without the obligatory indication of the respective education branch according to the national classification, or the specific indication of newly acquired or improved skills. E.g., people retrained in accountancy improved their skills in the area as certified by their participation; however, this does not mean that they became qualified for such a profession. Improvement was expected from the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*) allowing for recognition of partial qualifications, nevertheless with no improvement so far due to missing procedural precondition envisaged by the law.

Other educational activities were also planned, aimed at completing education in order to attain the education level (basic education, lower secondary education). This kind of training was however just marginal (within second chance school experimental projects) and not mainstreamed, although low educated people are disproportionately presented among unemployed.

A new instrument (§ 55a) has been introduced since May 2008 to offer specific assistance to disabled people unable to enter regular education and training for the labour market. It was intended by legislators to facilitate the disabled to gradually adjust to working position requirements. Nevertheless, this instrument was not applied in 2009 and only marginally applied in 2010 (see Table 12 and Table 13 in the Annex). Another new instrument the Contribution to support employment of persons that have completed education and training for the labour market (§ 51a) was also introduced by the 2008 amendment of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. It was particularly intended to increase the interest of employers in employment of older workers. Finally it focused on “youngest and oldest”, on the employment of secondary school graduates registered with the registry of job seekers for at least six months, and citizens over 50 years of age registered with the registry of job seekers for at least three months. The contribution to employers employing a job seeker for 24 months depended on the unemployment rate in a respective region, the status of the employer and the status of the job seeker. This measure was however not applied in 2009, and as a consequence of a lack of interest in this instrument, the respective paragraph was abolished. It could indicate a mismatch between the focus of labour market training programmes and specific employers’ needs, as well as employers’ negative attitudes towards older workers and the youngest ones during the economic crisis with a supply of unemployed experienced workers in their best years.

In 2010, 11,489 people were served within § 54 measures aimed at new piloted activities, among which 3,890 people were trained using e-learning. They were offered language training with a particular focus on job seeking skills (CV and motivation letter writing, admission interviews in foreign languages). Furthermore, individual state aid to investors approved by the government or the European Commission and provided by the ÚPSVaR contribute to the creation of new jobs. The state aid explicitly specifies a contribution for training of newly recruited staff for these jobs. There is however no official aggregated data available about using these means.

7. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1 PRIORITIES IN TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

ENTERING AND DEVELOPING CAREER FOR TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

The Bologna process and a subsequent reform of tertiary education influenced also study programmes for teachers and trainers. All higher education institutions have redesigned their programmes introducing three independent cycles, and submitted the reconstructed study programmes for accreditation to the Accreditation Commission. The reform also contributed to the emergence of new programmes - bachelor studies for VET trainers. Although formal requirements for secondary VET school trainers remained unchanged, VET trainers enter universities to achieve a Bachelor degree, allowing them also better remuneration in public sector jobs (including schools).

The most important reform concerns profession definition, and consequently in-service training. A working group established by the Ministry of Education (consisting of representatives of the ministry and pre-service and in-service teacher training institutions) developed the Methodology Proposal for Developing Professional Standards for Individual Categories of Pedagogical Staff (*Návrh metodiky tvorby profesijných štandardov jednotlivých kategórií pedagogických zamestnancov*). The proposal reflected “Education and Training 2010” goals as well as the work of the European Commission Working Group B. Furthermore, a Draft Concept Paper for the Professional Development of Teachers in a Career System (*Koncepcia profesijného rozvoja učiteľov v kariérovom systéme*) was elaborated and was approved by the government on 18th April 2007. A new act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff, in force since November 2009, sets the following categories of pedagogical staff: teacher, trainer, tutor, and pedagogical assistant, foreign lector, trainer of sport school or sport class, and répétiteur. Additionally, it sets five categories of other professional staff dealing with psychological, social and health aspects of education. The act specifies personal and qualification prerequisites concerning all categories of pedagogical and professional staff and it aims to improve teacher qualifications by using a model of continuous professional development with four career levels in all categories representing a career path marked by sets of respective standards for

- beginning pedagogue/professional worker;
- independent pedagogue/professional worker;
- pedagogue/professional worker with the first attestation;
- pedagogue/professional worker with the second attestation;

and two specific career positions: specialist and leader (manager).

The act introduced the credit system for standards driven continuing training. Accreditation of continuing training programmes should be carried out by Accreditation Council for Continuing Training of Pedagogical and Professional Staff (*Akreditačná rada Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky pre kontinuálne vzdelávanie pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov*), established in November 2009 as an advisory body to the Ministry of Education. The intention of legislators was to increase the social status and remuneration of pedagogical employees as a consequence of their additional training, to improve the quality of their in-service training. This act also includes measures

concerning the protection for the pedagogical employees from excessive psychological stress, protection of teachers from aggressive behaviour from students and/or their parents, differentiating of performances of pedagogical profession, and includes a proposal for fair evaluation and remuneration.

Within ESF Operational Programme Education Priority Axis 2 “Continuing education as an instrument of human resource development”, Measure 2.1 “Support of continuing education”, and corresponding Measure 4.2 “Raising competitiveness of the Bratislava Region through the development of higher and continuing education”, two national projects with the title “Professional and Career Development of Pedagogical Staff” were launched in October 2009, coordinated by the Methodological-Pedagogical Centre (*Metodicko-pedagogické centrum*). These national projects are aimed at creating an effective system of in-service training with a special focus on the development of key competences of educators. 5,484 people were trained till December 2010, according the annual monitoring report. At least 18,000 people are to be trained within full 48 months of project duration. 144 out of planned 625 education programmes were newly-designed, of which 20 out of 30 planned education programmes focused on gaining and developing ICT knowledge.

CURRICULUM REFORM AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Since September 2008, as a consequence of decentralisation of curricular development, schools must prepare school educational programmes. Therefore, two national projects with the same title “Teacher Training with Regard to Developing School Educational Programmes” and similar goals were set within the ESF Operational Programme Education Priority Axis 1 “Reform of education and training” and Priority Axis 4 “Modern education for knowledge society for Bratislava region”. These projects have been designed to improve skills of curricula designers at schools to reflect the new competence based approach within their own school educational programmes. According to its Strategic Goal No. 2, innovative pedagogies aimed at increasing motivation, critical thinking and creativity are envisaged. As of 30th September 2011, there have been already 152 trainers-multipliers (of which 85 for VET) and 5,218 teachers (of which 2,967 from VET schools) trained out of 6,700 (of which 700 for the Bratislava region) planned in the project. The rest of teachers should complete training till the end of 2011.

A school leaving examination reform was implemented in 2006-2008 already interlinked with a future 2008 curriculum reform. This reform was substantially accompanied by retraining of pedagogical staff, supported by the ESF national projects on in-service training of VET teachers regarding completing the study in secondary school (valid for the Bratislava region and separately for the rest of Slovakia). Since then, adjusting school leaving examination to new requirements has become a hot issue of in-service training.

In 2010, the national project “Further Training of Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the Subject Informatics” within Priority Axis 2 “Continuing education as an instrument of human resource” was also in progress. A project aim is to design, develop and implement modern further education for Informatics and IT education teachers at regional schools, supported by digital technologies. 1,052 schools became involved in the implementation of project activities, far more than 530 initially planned, with 1,320 people involved in project education activities. The project will terminate in September 2011.

Furthermore, additional twin projects were implemented within the ESF Operational Programme Education Priority Axis 1 “Reform of education and training” and Priority Axis 4 “Modern education for knowledge society for Bratislava region” aimed i.a. at “adapting

the education system to the needs of a knowledge-based society” and to “innovate and modernise the content, methods and outputs of the learning process for new competences of work in a Modern School of the 21st Century”. A more clear picture can be gained from activities presented in the annual monitoring report: Digital content for teacher training was created for Module 1 “digital literacy of the teacher”, Module 2 “Modern teaching technology in the work of the teacher” and Module 3 “Use of ICT in the given subject” for all 7 subjects (mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, Slovak, history) with the digital library with all study materials for all participants opened for access at the project portal; textbooks and teaching aids were created for the aforementioned modules of teacher training; teacher training itself on the basis of the use of ICT was provided together with the provision of technological means for modernising education in involved schools. 665 out of planned 687 schools were involved (of which 200 schools having pupils from marginalised Roma communities) with 1,560 people out of planned 1,884 teaching staff involved in training to improve using information-communication technologies in teaching process. The project is expected to be closed on 31st November 2013.

Two specialised national projects of the “Development of New Educational Programme in VET for Automotive Industry II” were launched as a follow up to the project on “Development of New Educational Programmes in Vocational Education for the Needs of the Automotive Industry” carried out in the 2004-2006 ESF programming period. They were envisaged to focus on the training of staff to improve curriculum development (school educational programmes elaboration) by schools preparing workers for the automotive industry. Nevertheless, these projects were stopped by the new government as the preceding project was considered sufficient for supporting the automotive sector.

SPECIAL TEACHER TRAINING PROVISIONS

There is a special stream of schools serving SEN students including IVET schools and specific schools assisting mentally disabled to acquire some vocation skills. To be fully qualified teachers and trainers of these schools must graduate from special education training at universities. Therefore, all pieces of educational legislation address education of SEN students by specific paragraphs.

Integration and inclusion processes that have emerged since 1989, are increasingly supported by authorities and public, however, in practice still hampered by a lack of resources (despite the obligatory additional funding from the state budget) to create an appropriate environment for SEN students within mainstream schools. The remarkable progress can be seen in inclusion of SEN students and in improvement of conditions for their study in tertiary education. Special facilitators (specialised according to the type of disability) are identified in all faculties to coordinate support for SEN students and assist students and/or teachers in overcoming problems.

Special attention is paid to SEN students and/or training of staff dealing with them by ESF, where the special Priority Axis 3 “Support to Education of Persons with Special Education Needs” was identified. Similarly, ESF and EQUAL served and ESF still addresses VET of socially disadvantaged population (with a large share of Roma from segregated settlements) as the most visible vulnerable group. The results are controversial, despite some partial success.

7.2 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

7.2.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

Secondary IVET is dominantly school based and there is no genuine apprenticeship system in Slovakia. Even when practical training is offered outside school facilities, the education sector regulation must be respected and the dominant partner finally responsible for practical training is the school and not the contracting partner offering workshops or workplace for the training of students. Thus, IVET staff is dominantly bound to the education institutions.

TABLE 73: TYPE OF VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN THE IVET SYSTEM			
TYPE	PLACE OF TEACHING/ TRAINING	CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	ASSESSMENT
TEACHER OF GENERAL SUBJECTS	school	partial autonomy*	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu)
TEACHER OF VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	secondary specialised schools SOŠ	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ
TEACHER OF PRACTICAL TRAINING	school, workplace	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ
TUTOR	school, dormitory, specialised out-of-school facility	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ
TRAINER AT EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES	school, centre (SOP, SPV), workplace	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ
TRAINER AT EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS OF COMPANIES	centre (SPV at companies), workplace	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ, Company
INSTRUCTOR**	workplace	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ
HIGHER EDUCATION (UNIVERSITY) TEACHER	higher education institution	full autonomy	Accreditation Commission (AK, Akreditačná komisia)
RÉPÉTITEUR	conservatory	partial autonomy*	MŠVVaŠ

Notes: * expanding since September 2008 in case of first classes of secondary schools; curriculum development decentralisation results in designing individual school educational programme, within

which cooperation of pedagogical staff is envisaged. ** newly recognised by education sector legislation within Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET.

SOŠ - secondary specialised school (stredná odborná škola), SOP - centre of vocational practice (stredisko odbornej praxe), SPV - centre of practical training (stredisko praktického vyučovania) providing for the practical training of students who receive theoretical education at VET schools without the full option of school based practical training.

There are traditionally three categories of VET school teachers officially recognised by the education sector legislation: teachers of general subjects, teachers of vocational subjects and teachers of practical training. The latter category of teachers is involved in practical lessons at school, e.g. in laboratories and practical lessons connected to workplaces specified within the curricula and aimed at applying theoretical knowledge gained during theoretical subjects.

Trainers are responsible for assisting in gaining respective skills (predominantly manual) during practical training. Although VET in Slovakia is dominantly school-based, in some cases practical training is offered outside the school. The first option comprises centres of practical training (SPV, *stredisko praktického vyučovania*), originally aiming at the practical training of students of former secondary vocational schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilište*), and since September 2008 training branches of secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredná odborná škola*), and centres of vocational practice (SOP, *stredisko odbornej praxe*) originally aimed at the practical training of students of secondary specialised schools.

Based on an agreement between a school and a company, practical training can be provided directly by the company in its own premises and by its own staff, but under the supervision of the school. These professionals are often called instructors to differentiate between them and trainers from schools.

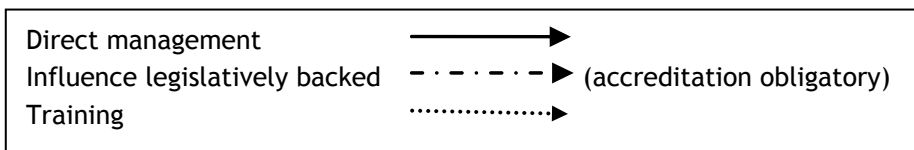
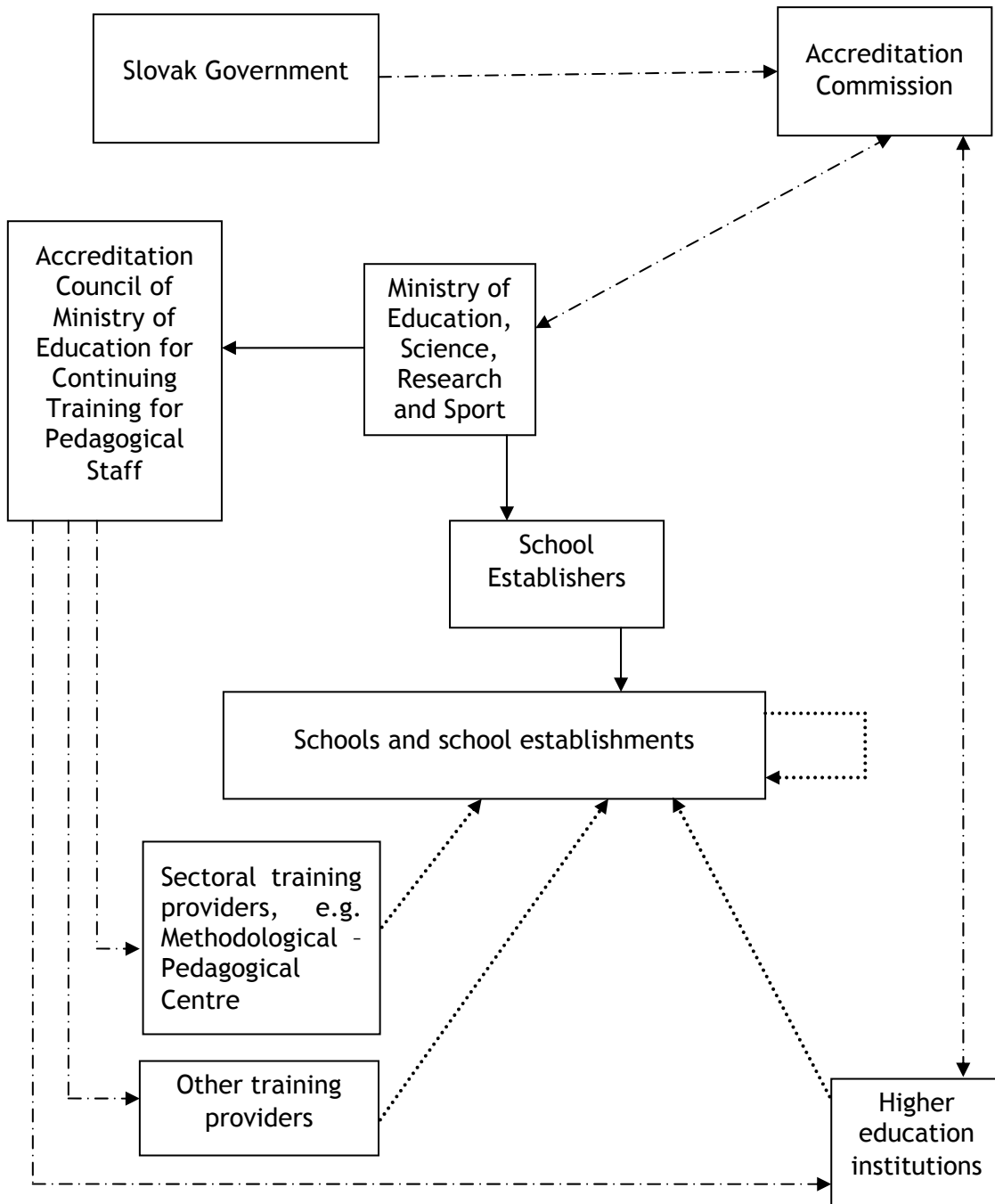
Tutors serve students residing at affiliated dormitories and take care of diverse aspects of the students' personal interest.

Sport instructors are in fact specialists at schools dedicated to the education of students who are at the same time (pre)professional sportsmen and sportswomen.

BODIES REGULATING TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

Teacher training must be accredited by the Accreditation Commission (*AK, Akreditačná komisia*) established by the government as its advisory body. Higher education institutions are the only institutions awarding qualifications to IVET teachers. Higher education institution must submit accreditation documents (in detail prescribed by law) and a list of specialists (professor as a guarantor of the quality of study and other experienced teachers as "supervisor" of respective courses delivered within the programme to be accredited. The same procedure as discussed in paragraphs on quality assurance mechanisms in part 5.1 applies also for teacher training. Higher education institutions are fully autonomous in the development of their curricula as already discussed earlier (see the last paragraph regarding curriculum and pedagogies in part 5.1). The same applies to newly emerging bachelor studies for IVET trainers. So far, the accreditation processes have been exclusively input based. The only feed back instrument is the feed back questionnaire to be submitted to students. Although educational institutions must collect information from students concerning the quality of programme, it is not obligatory for students to respond to the respective questionnaires. Hence, the validity of this kind of monitoring can be questioned. Thus, there is no explicit instrument monitoring training relevance introduced in Slovakia. No national quality assurance model has been introduced yet, either.

ORGANIGRAM FOR TEACHER AND TRAINER TRAINING



7.2.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

PRE-SERVICE (INITIAL) TRAINING

Qualifications of IVET teachers and trainers are strictly regulated by the Ministry of Education. Till October 2009 by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 41/1996 Coll. on Professional and Educational Competence of the Educational Staff (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva č. 41/1996 Z. z. o odbornej a pedagogickej spôsobilosti pedagogických zamestnancov*) and since 1st November 2009 by Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*), and by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 437/2009 Coll. on Qualification Prerequisites and Specific Qualification Requirements for Respective Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff Categories (*Vyhláška MŠ SR č. 437/2009 Z. z., ktorou sa ustanovujú kvalifikačné predpoklady a osobitné kvalifikačné požiadavky a osobitné kvalifikačné požiadavky pre jednotlivé kategórie pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov*).

All secondary IVET teachers must be graduates from higher education institutions. Teachers of general subjects are prepared at universities within teacher training programmes designed for all types of schools, usually in two fields corresponding to respective subjects (e.g. Mathematics and Physics). There is no specific initial training for teachers of general subjects at VET schools. They adjust to VET schools demands within the first years of service, assisted by appointed experienced colleagues.

Teachers of vocational subjects at VET schools are usually graduates from technical universities (with an Engineer's degree - Ing.) and from specific complementary pedagogical study (DPŠ, *doplňujúce pedagogické štúdium*) with the minimum duration of 200 hours offered at universities for those interested in a teaching career despite studying or graduating from non-teacher-training tertiary studies. This pedagogical study is aimed at the full provision of training in "pedagogy" and can be studied simultaneously or consecutively, after graduation from non-teaching programme. It is regulated by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 581/2007 Coll. on Complementary Pedagogical Study (*Vyhláška MŠ SR č. 581/2007 Z. z. o doplňujúcom pedagogickom štúdiu*). This specialised training in pedagogy is also offered for practitioners interested in becoming IVET teachers. Currently, a certificate in this complementary pedagogical study can only be awarded by higher education institutions with relevant accredited studies.

Teacher training programmes for VET teachers exist, but they are not attractive. Thus, teachers of vocational subjects can be graduates from teacher training programmes at universities with other priorities than teacher training (e.g. University of Economics), but it is traditionally very rare and gradually vanishing. Students interested in acquiring teaching qualification at these universities prefer to study in non-teaching programmes and in the aforementioned complementary pedagogical studies to secure the acquisition of two qualifications simultaneously (as a specialist in the respective field and a teacher of relevant vocational subjects).

There is no specific initial training for teachers of vocational subjects differentiating between the needs of ISCED 3A and ISCED 3C programmes.

IVET trainers must also fulfil the minimum requirements set by the legislation mentioned in the first paragraph. Since 1st November 2009 Act No. 317/2009 Coll. and subsequent decree also apply for IVET trainers and other learning facilitators at VET schools and school establishments. IVET trainers are usually graduates from relevant secondary VET school

who additionally completed studies to acquire relevant skills in pedagogy. They can enter the qualification studies organised by in-service training institutions (according the § 8 (2) of the Act No. 317/2009 Coll. after accreditation by the Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Education for Continuing Training of Pedagogical and Professional Staff (*Akreditačná rada Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky pre kontinuálne vzdelávanie pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov*) in cooperation with relevant higher education institution. Training in “pedagogy” is also offered by universities in a form of the aforementioned complementary pedagogical study. Gradually however bachelor studies for trainers are replacing it as it is more attractive for future trainers to acquire a bachelor decree. There were traditionally no entry requirements for training in “pedagogy” (qualification studies as well as complementary pedagogical studies). Admission exams may or may not be applied for bachelor studies for trainers. Higher education institutions act ad hoc concerning this, usually depending on the demand for these studies.

The following data on qualifications of staff presented in the table below indicates a low share of unqualified staff in IVET, 5.1 % among VET schools teachers and 6.6 % among trainers. A decrease from over 11 % among teachers and 20 % among trainers of former secondary vocational schools in 2001 indicates a significant improvement.

SCHOOLS		TEACHERS				TRAINERS			
		WITH QUALIFICATION		WITHOUT QUALIFICATION		WITH QUALIFICATION		WITHOUT QUALIFICATION	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
KINDERGARTEN		13 622	98.7	177	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
BASIC SCHOOL		34 059	95.1	1 752	4.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
OF WHICH	1ST STAGE	13 628	95.6	624	4.4	0	0.0	0	0,0
	2ND STAGE	20 431	94.8	1 128	5.2	0	0.0	0	0,0
BASIC SCHOOLS OF ARTS		4 677	81.3	1 073	18.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS		7 856	98.2	143	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
SECONDARY SPECIALISED SCHOOLS		15 448	94.9	835	5.1	3 473	93.4	247	6.6
CONSERVATORIES		718	89.8	82	10.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
LANGUAGE SCHOOLS		397	95.4	19	4.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
SPECIAL SCHOOLS		3 382	80.4	825	19.6	549	87.7	77	12.3
TOTAL		80 159	94.2	4 906	5.8	4 022	92.5	324	7.5

Source: ÚIPŠ.

IN-SERVICE (CONTINUING) TRAINING

The new Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff introduced a credit based and standards driven continuing development model. The following table depicts the new scheme influencing in-service training expected since November 2009. Respective categories of pedagogical staff: teacher; trainer; tutor; pedagogical assistant; foreign lecturer; trainer of sport school or sport class, and répétiteur, in 4 career levels in diverse career paths are to be trained.

TABLE 75: CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL (2007 CONCEPT PAPER, 2009 ACT)			
CAREER LEVELS	BASIC PATH (NO SPECIALISATION)	SPECIALISATION PATHS	
4 TH LEVEL		↑	2 nd Attest holder ↑
3 RD LEVEL	↑	1 st Attest holder ↑	⇒
2 ND LEVEL	Independent ↑	⇒	
1 ST LEVEL - BEGINNER	⇒		

Notes: ↑ ⇒credit gathering ↑ upgrading after exam and credits assessments against a set of standards.

Specialisation paths: Subject matter expert; Pedagogue-specialist; Leader/ Manager.

There are two levels of attestation determined as can be seen from the table above. Both require a specific length of pedagogical practice, a minimum amount of credits gathered and an exam taken before a committee. It is up to teachers and other staff to decide for respective career path and to find an agreement with a school director who is responsible for planning continuing development of his/her employees, concerning harmonisation of teaching duties and continuing education. Participation in in-service training is voluntary. Teachers/trainers are however indirectly pushed to participate and to gather credits in order to proceed in career levels and to be better remunerated. No official quality assurance system has been introduced yet; as a rule, it is up to the director of the school and the school establishment to monitor the quality of service as well as to arrange for guidance on improving staff skills. All programmes with accountable credits must be, of course, accredited by the aforementioned Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Education for Continuing Training of Pedagogical and Professional Staff. The list of providers with accredited programmes (531 in October 2011) is available at the Education Ministry portal (at http://www.minedu.sk/data/USERDATA/KONTI_VZDEL/ZPAKVV-21072011.pdf).

The following types of continuing education are recognised by Act No. 317/2009 Coll., and by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 445/2009 Coll. on Continuing Education, Credits and Attestation of Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Vyhláška MŠ SR č. 445/2009 Z. z. o kontinuálnom vzdelávaní, kreditoch a atestáciách pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov*), which came into force since 15th November 2009:

- adaptive education (*adaptačné vzdelávanie*), which is obligatory for starting teachers and lasts two years. The teacher does not earn any credits for its completion;
- up-to-date education (*aktualizačné vzdelávanie*), which is designated for upholding the professional competence needed for standard performance or attestation;
- innovative education (*inovačné vzdelávanie*), which is meant to improve professional competence of a teacher;
- specialised education (*špecializačné vzdelávanie*), which is designated for acquiring professional competences to pursue specialised activities;
- function education (*funkčné vzdelávanie*), which is obligatory for teachers in administrative positions. The teacher does not earn any credits for its completion;

- qualification education (*kvalifikačné vzdelávanie*), which provides the teacher with higher qualification.

7.3 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

7.3.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN CVET

It is not appropriate to differentiate between teachers and trainers in CVET in Slovakia. CVET professionals are usually called lecturers, regardless of the content of their education or training and their status; and sometimes, in particular when training affects practical skills, instructors. The terms *teacher* and *trainer* are related rather to the initial formal education system. It would be possible to offer classification with many sub-categories, however, any detailed classification is vulnerable as there are no strict legal regulations, except for the national classification of occupations (KZAM 2008, *klasifikácia zamestnaní*) used for statistical purposes rather than in daily life. CVET teachers are classified as belonging to unit group No. 2320. In KZAM 2008 it is a little bit confusingly titled as “Teachers of further VET” (*Učítelia d’alšieho odborného vzdelávania*) in contrast to ISCO-08 title “Vocational education teachers”. Many professionals prefer their own classifications (e.g. coaches usually prefer not to be seen as trainers and even not counsellors). Similarly, many professionals prefer to be named lecturers and alternatively the category of professional trainers could have been labelled as a category of lecturers.

TYPE	PLACE OF TEACHING/ TRAINING	CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	ASSESSMENT
obligatory CPD* trainer/ facilitator	educational establishment	limited autonomy	respective authority**
adult education trainer	educational establishment, facilities leased by provider	full autonomy	provider (could be based on feedback from client)
professional trainer	based on agreement with respective company/institution/individual	full autonomy	provider/client
trainer at companies/institutions	company, training facilities of company	full autonomy	company
professional instructor	based on agreement with respective company/institution, usually at workplace	full autonomy	provider/client

Notes: * continuing professional development; e.g. in-service training of teachers.

** Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu), in case of pedagogical staff; Ministry of Health (MZ, Ministerstvo zdravotníctva) and respective professional associations in case of medical staff, etc.

Lecturers are predominantly professionals of diverse occupations who are contracted for CVET by training providers or directly by institutions interested in training for their employees. Thus, lecturing is often a job rather than an occupation. The level of education of lecturers from 596 in 2009 positively responding organizations within regular annual data collection done by Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*) can be seen from the following table.

TABLE 77: LECTURERS IN CONTINUING TRAINING IN 2010				
	TOTAL	%	OF WHICH WITH PEDAGOGICAL QUALIFICATION	
			NUMBER	%
ISCED 2	1	0.01	–	–
ISCED 3C (CoA)	11	0.08	–	–
ISCED 3C (WITHOUT CoA)	13	0.10	–	–
ISCED 3A (MSLC) + CoA	65	0.49	25	38.46
ISCED 3A (MSLC) GEN	214	1.60	55	25.70
ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET	636	4.75	184	28.93
ISCED 5B	81	0.61	44	54.32
ISCED 5A - Bc	534	3.99	93	17.42
ISCED 5A - M	8 384	62.68	2 442	29.13
ISCED 6	3 436	25.69	1 254	36.50
TOTAL	3 375	100.00	4 097	30.63

Source: ÚIPŠ.

Notes: CoA - Certificate of Apprenticeship (výučný list), MSLC - “Maturita” School Leaving Certificate (vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške).

GEN - general education stream, VET - vocational stream.

BODIES REGULATING TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

There were no official regulations applied concerning CVET trainers (lecturers) on the free market unless self-imposed by the respective professional association. Certification of adult education trainers based on training offered by the Slovak Association of Adult Education Providers (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR*) is not obligatory; however, gaining gradually more importance. Being listed at the AIVD website as a certified lecturer is considered a signal of quality by clients. Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*), in force since 2010, however stipulates to add a proof of lecturers’ “capability” within the process of accreditation of the programme. Neither specific scheme for monitoring training relevance nor national quality assurance scheme is introduced. It is fully up to a provider (in fact a specialist indicated as programme “guarantor”) to take care about the quality.

7.3.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF CVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

PRE-SERVICE (INITIAL) TRAINING

Continuing training education is not a regulated trade and thus no certificate of lecturing (pedagogical or andragogical) competence is required by law and no evidence of professional qualification is needed for setting up an educational institution. Thus, systematic initial training for lecturers does not exist and it is not as a rule officially required from lecturers, either. Submitting a proof of professional competence is required

consistently only in some specific cases, such as training in the field of occupational safety, fire protection, arts, healthcare, where such proof must be submitted in accordance with regulations stated by the Trade Licensing Act No. 455/1991 Coll. (*Živnostenský zákon č. 455/1991 Zb.*) or sectoral legislation (e.g. Act No. 124/2006 Coll. on Occupational Safety (*Zákon č. 124/2006 Z. z. o bezpečnosti a ochrane zdravia pri práci*), Act No. 125/2006 Coll. on Labour Inspection (*Zákon č. 125/2006 Z. z. o inšpekcii práce*), the Act No. 93/2005 Coll. on Driving Schools (*Zákon č. 93/2005 Z. z. o autoškolách*)). In such cases a certificate of lecturing competence (the so-called lecturing minimum) is also usually required. Thus, lecturers in the field of blue-collar professions, who generally have only secondary education, often complete training in pedagogy pursuant to such a sectoral legislation or based on their own initiative. They often enter training originally designed for trainers in formal IVET (see part 7.2.2).

A great number of lecturers in continuing education are higher education teachers, who in contrast to teachers of basic schools and secondary schools are usually not trained in pedagogy. Thus courses have been developed to improve lecturer skills (e.g. by the Slovak Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD, *Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR*) to assist those with difficulties to adjust their natural styles of instruction to adults needs (see the next paragraphs).

IN-SERVICE (CONTINUING) TRAINING

Systematic in-service training for CVET trainers and other learning facilitators does not exist and continuing training is not officially required from a lecturer. In-service training of internal lecturers may be set by individual training providers or companies in accordance with their training culture; however, there is no official evidence nor impact surveys about these activities.

Nevertheless, a paid certified course for lecturers was developed and is offered by the AIVD to all those interested in improving their lecturing skills. Output requirements of the certification course for lecturers provided by the AIVD include mastery of adult education theory; a video taped lecture for the analysis of their performance; and a final paper in the form of the lecturer's course design and/or manual. The list of certified lecturers is maintained by the association and displayed at the association's website with an expected comparable advantage in the market for graduates.

It is often hardly possible to label existing fragments of training as pre-service or in-service training. In fact, courses on lecturing could be considered the latter or the former depending on the status of participants, i.e., novice or lecturer already in service.

As already explained pre-service and in-service training of CVET teachers and trainers is substantially less regulated than training of IVET teachers and trainers. There is no quality assurance system developed and any quality improvement is based on initiatives of market players only.

The assessment of lecturers is performed based on inquiries after completing an educational/training activity and usually does not have any impact on the lecturer's formal career. The lecturers' career path is fully his/her business, influencing and influenced by the demand for their services and the honorarium. The career path of an internal lecturer fully depends on the training provider, or company, where he/she is internally employed to provide training of employees.

With rising competitiveness in the market, efforts to establish quality control and quality self-regulation became a subject of discussion. It was intended to set certification of

lecturers as obligatory by law. The certification of lecturers however remained not obligatory as visible from § 11(4) of the Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on LLL (*Zákon č. 568/2009 Z. z. o celoživotnom vzdelávaní*). Certificate confirming skills in lecturing/pedagogy can be replaced by the declaration of training provider confirming experience of individual lecturer.

8. MATCHING VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS (JOBS)

8.1 SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS (IN SECTORS, OCCUPATIONS, EDUCATION LEVEL)

There is no genuine system and there were no reliable mechanisms developed for anticipation of skills needs so far. There is no institution and there are no specialists focusing on qualitative anticipation of skills needs. There is only sectoral data or regional data, collected ad-hoc. All these surveys were limited by a specific focus corresponding to respective sectoral fields of interest and without efforts to develop instruments to be used periodically to monitor labour market supply and demand. The earlier ReferNet reports²³ offer details on these surveys and studies. There is only an experience with quantitative techniques (see the information below on the Slovak Academy of Sciences contribution in this field) however not related to anticipation of skills needs.

2010 Country report²⁴ informed about failures to develop know-how within the sub-measure 3.3.B “Systems for linking vocational education and training with the labour market” as well as within the ESF project “Creation, Development and Implementation of an Open System of Lifelong Learning in the SR for the Labour Market”²⁵. In both cases the severe divergence from initial plans happened partly due to the lack of research capacity and expertise. While it is understandable that there was no experience in this field during the command economy period it is hard to understand why the relevant research capacities were not created after 1989.

In October 2009, the government discussed the information on forecasting labour market needs and skill needs submitted by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family on its own initiative as a reaction to the EU “New Skills for New Jobs” initiative and under the strong influence of Cedefop’s Skillsnet project. For the first time labour demand was forecasted according to three categories of education (low, medium, high). The level of education up to ISCED 3C was labelled as low, ISCED 3A+4+5B (containing post-secondary non tertiary VET) as medium, and higher education as high. It must be stressed here that

²³ See e.g. *Slovakia: VET in Europe - Country Report 2009, part 7.1, and A Bridge to the Future: European Policy for Vocational Education and Training 2002-10: National Policy Report - Slovakia, part 4.1.*

²⁴ See part 8.1 in *Slovakia : VET in Europe - Country Report : 2010.*

²⁵ See e.g. *Slovakia : VET in Europe - Country Report : 2010.*

ISCED 3A level includes a strong VET component and post-secondary non tertiary VET is quite tiny in Slovakia.

This forecasting was based on the econometric model of the Institute of Economic Research of Slovak Academy of Sciences and its forecasting of the macroeconomic development of the Slovak Republic till 2020. In relation to labour market employment (absolute numbers, year to year change) and unemployment (absolute numbers, unemployment rates, year to year change) were forecasted, disaggregated into 8 regions. Forecasting of employment by NACE groups was offered as well.

TABLE 78: EMPLOYMENT AND A SHARE IN EMPLOYMENT BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (IN 1000S AND %)							
	NACE	2008		2015		2020	
		IN 1000s	%	IN 1000s	%	IN 1000s	%
AGRICULTURE, FISHING	A-B	79.9	3.6	90.1	4.0	75.6	3.3
MINING AND QUARRYING	C	8.7	0.4	6.3	0.3	5.1	0.2
MANUFACTURING	D	544.2	24.3	533.7	23.5	554.9	24.3
ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER SUPPLY	E	33.3	1.5	31.7	1.4	31.4	1.4
CONSTRUCTION	F	182.9	8.2	182.0	8.0	182.2	8.0
MARKET SERVICES	G-I	656.5	29.3	693.7	30.5	712.5	31.2
FINANCIAL SERVICES	J-K	229.5	10.3	241.5	10.6	249.9	10.9
PUBLIC SERVICES	L-Q	502.1	22.4	492.9	21.7	474.2	20.7
TOTAL	A-Q	2 237.1	100	2 271.9	100	2 285.8	100

Source: Institute of Economic Research of Slovak Academy of Sciences (Ekonomický ústav Slovenskej akadémie vied), tabled by authors.

Out of three scenarios (low, medium, high) the second one was used for forecasting labour demand according to three categories of education. A year on year increase about 4-5 % in higher education demand is expected for the whole period till 2020, as a consequence of a heavily unsaturated market with demand strongly exceeding supply. After a few years of stagnation caused by the crisis a year on year increase of about 1-2 % is forecasted for secondary education demand for the next period. Low level education is expected to decrease, with an accelerated decrease close to the end of the period, dropping from 39.3 % share in demand in 2008 down to 22.9 % in 2020. In contrast, labour demand for higher educated is expected to increase from current 15.8 % up to 26.0 % in 2020.

The importance of prevention from the mismatch between labour demand and supply and conducting periodical forecasting of demand and supply, the anticipation of skill needs on the regional and sectoral basis based on surveying skill needs in enterprises has been promoted by this governmental paper. Subsequently, the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, started to develop a system of forecasting labour market needs within the Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion National Project XIV-2 “Created and Eliminated Jobs Detection System and Forecasting Labour Market Needs” (*Systém zisťovania vzniknutých a zaniknutých pracovných miest a prognózovanie potrieb trhu práce*). In 2010, the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in cooperation with Deloitte Slovensko launched a project to identify a methodology, data and interpretation of collected data for annual forecasting of labour needs in order to develop a system aimed at monitoring labour market needs (and *expressis verbis* at “emerging and lost working places”). Medium and short-term forecasting of labour market needs by regions,

broken by NACE and ISCO classifications, should be carried out by Deloitte Slovensko. An English version of Data Collection Questionnaire consisting of 44 items in four sections (general identification data, data regarding the number of employees and jobs, data on job vacancies, supplementary explanatory data) is available at

http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SlovakRepublic/Local%20Assets/Documents/sk_en_Data_Collection_Questionnaire.pdf.

A data collection questionnaire for 3rd survey developed in 2011 includes 50 items (6 additional items are included in the last section). The English version is available at http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SlovakRepublic/Local%20Assets/Documents/np14/sk_en_Data_Collection_Questionnaire_3.pdf.

This initiative conducted under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family should have been complemented by the activity under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Within ESF Operational Programme Education, the Ministry of Education announced launching a national ESF project “National System of Qualifications in the Context of Continuing Education Supported by Guidance and Counselling System” (*Národná sústava kvalifikácií v kontexte ďalšieho vzdelávania podporená systémom poradenstva*). The project is however still pending, and the final decision on the project detailed goals including creation a new National System of Qualifications presented online by the communication platform “KOPLAT” has been postponed. It is expected that the National Institute for Lifelong Learning (NÚCŽV, *Národný ústav celoživotného vzdelávania*) created on the basis of Academia Istropolitana will start the project in 2011.

A cooperation of the two ministries is urgently needed to make an effective and efficient use of ESF resources. This might prove to be hard to achieve, as the aforementioned projects are conducted within different ESF operational programmes that are run independently by respective ministries and supervised by different monitoring committees.

In practice, the only substantial influence on matching supply and demand on the labour market stems from the requirements put on the National VET Council table by sectoral players as reported below in part 8.1.

8.2 PRACTICES TO MATCH VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH SKILL NEEDS (JOBS)

QUALIFICATION DESIGN

As explained in the previous chapter, there are no genuine instruments available to identify labour market needs with direct impact on matching VET provision with skill needs. Nevertheless, increasing interest in the identification of labour market needs has recently emerged fuelled by employers’ dissatisfaction with graduate supply. This changed attitude of employers, manifested by diverse (often non-standard and/or particular) activities, will hopefully translate into systemic surveying based on valid and reliable measuring. The two aforementioned ESF projects should secure this. Thus, it can be concluded that there are only partial and no national systemic and systematic activities aimed at matching VET skills with labour market needs and jobs; and that the first relevant data and subsequent evidence based policies can be expected in the future from results of surveys based on the aforementioned ESF project run by Deloitte Slovensko.

A new Act on VET No. 184/2009 Coll. (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní*), first ever exclusively focusing on VET, stipulates responsibility for the identification of labour market needs. This Act resulted from the pressure of the automotive industry, the

leading industry of the Slovak national economy. Changes in VET for automotive industry could be seen as an example of the translation of sectoral studies' findings into the sectoral VET reform in all segments, i.e. programming VET, assessing VET and teacher and trainer training. This sector's experience and some self-governing regions' (the Bratislava, Košice and Žilina Regions being forerunners) experience in regional development planning influenced substantially the governance reform represented by the Act on VET.

Subsequently, a Decree of Ministry of Education No. 282/2009 Coll. on Secondary Schools (*Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva SR č. 282/2009 Z. z. o stredných školách*) already set a list of so-called professional "sectoral assignees"- thus, it stipulated, what professional organisations are responsible for the respective fields of study as counterparts to education sector authorities and experts. Annex 8 to this decree listed a classification of education branches according to the classification of education branches (*KOV, klasifikácia odborov vzdelania*) and respective "sectoral assignee". "Sectoral assignees" are legal bodies representing employers (e.g. chambers, employers associations) and defending employers' interests. They were expected to develop to crucial players in secondary IVET, according to the Act on VET.

Subsequently, Sectoral VET Councils were established (14 out of 17 originally planned, 16 after abolishing of a sectoral assignee for the field group Textile and closing by the amendment of Decree No. 282/2009 Coll. in force since September 2011.) by professional associations/chambers in cooperation with the respective sectoral ministry and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (*MPSVR, Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*). Sectoral VET Councils were expected to play a crucial role in particular in identification and anticipation of sectoral skill needs and translate them into so-called "plans of labour market needs" in terms of numbers of graduates in respective study/training branches for the following five years. Furthermore, they were expected to provide for inputs for education sector experts to align graduates profiles to professional competences required on sectoral working positions.

During 2010, all self-governing regions worked out regional strategies in cooperation with Regional VET Councils composed of representatives of state administration, self-governing administration, employers and representatives of trade unions and/or employees' councils.

Furthermore, all relevant ministries (but the Ministry of Culture) elaborated "Sectoral Paper for VET and Training of Learners for Sectoral Occupations and Performance of Professional Activities" to inform about the sectoral points of view concerning future employment and unemployment and forecasting future labour market needs, as well as educational requirements towards respective programmes.

Moreover, a plan of labour market needs (an aforementioned obligatory document required by law forecasting numbers of graduates needed for a period of 5 years) had to be adopted by self-governing regions elaborated by respective professional organisations of employers and submitted to the Regional VET Council and National VET Council for commenting, with a final say of the self-governing region. Nevertheless, results were disappointing as aforementioned plans of labour market needs were of limited validity and reliability. Not surprisingly, as all data were based on estimations of insiders without conducting professional surveying.

Thus, self-governing regions assisted by Regional VET Councils and supported by Sectoral VET Councils expertise developed regional VET strategies in close cooperation with social partners, as envisaged by the law. However, the aforementioned "plans of labour market needs" that need to feed a quality regional strategy as well were finally identified as a weak point. Respective documents (regional strategies, sectoral strategies and also

particular plans of labour market needs) submitted for discussion to the National VET Council meetings are available at its website www.radavladyp.sk.

Warnings from experts fulfilled and the need to rethink a procedure for anticipation of labour market needs as well as to change the law is now widely accepted by authorities. Again, a crucial point relates to the need to professionalise collection of labour market intelligence data and to elaborate a professional one or adopt and adjust already an existing know-how used by experienced bodies abroad.

There were however important changes introduced to match supply and demand on the labour market. It resulted from the requirements put on the National VET Council table by sectoral players and discussed in 15 working groups. These groups focusing on respective fields of education were established by the National VET Council and are i.a. responsible for adjusting a network of programmes within a respective field to meet labour market needs. As a consequence, out of 541 education sector programmes with identified and active “sectoral assignees”, which were already reviewed, 181 programmes were recommended to be closed, 356 programmes are recommended to continue and 4 programmes need to be reassessed. Only few programmes without a counterpart from the employers side (conservatoires and some other programmes from non industrial sectors) have not yet been discussed. In addition, 14 new programmes were already positively assessed by the National VET Council and additional 7 programmes better fitting to labour market needs were already positively evaluated by the aforementioned working groups. Nevertheless, all these changes are only based on fragmented evidence from some sectoral employers and some sectoral insiders rather than on a reliable data collected using sophisticated surveying.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Before the Act on VET came into force in September 2009 stakeholders were invited to participate in respective VET related activities, however, their engagement was not explicitly agreed and set by legislation and their participation was dominantly based on personal cooperation/partnership rather than the institutional one²⁶. A curricular reform starting in September 2008 and changes in governance in force since September 2009 are two milestones of the recent reforming of VET. Thus, in contrast to earlier conditions, employers were expected to participate more deeply at the elaboration of profiles of VET graduates and at setting requirements on knowledge, skills, abilities and working habits, as well as on elaboration of school educational programmes. Before they are issued, any school educational programmes must be submitted by school for commenting to the relevant employers’ representative. According to the §7 of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. (*Zákon č. 245/2008 Z. z. o výchove a vzdelávaní*) is issued by the director of the school after discussing in board of pedagogical staff in the School board and with relevant regional employer or aforementioned “sectoral assignee”.

It is too soon to predict a real impact of involvement of stakeholders in the respective VET related activities, as the quality of labour market intelligence envisaged by the Act on VET

²⁶ For detailed description of pre-reform situation see *Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008, chapter 07 Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy*.

suffers from a lack of reliable know-how as commented above. Furthermore, all VET related state educational programmes are in process of monitoring and are to be redesigned subsequently. The weak point of the current model is that state educational programmes are designed to cover the full range of programmes corresponding to the field of study as a whole. First findings indicate that they are seen as too broad and not taking into account the variety of programmes and sometimes strong differences between respective programmes in the same field of study. As a consequence they do not inform schools about expectation of state appropriately and schools were not satisfied with information offered to them while working on their own school educational programmes

TEACHER TRAINING

Pre-service training of teachers seems to be quite resistant to changes induced by labour market needs. Schools, as a rule, suffer from a lack of information about incoming changes in technology, not to speak about improvement of learning environment. In both cases as regard teachers and trainers training concentrates on pedagogy and any innovations, e.g. setting of standards relates on skills in pedagogy rather than on skills linked to respective professions/vocations.

As a consequence of a new model of continuing professional development teachers and trainers (see part 7.1 informing an a new Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*)) are strongly involved in in-service training to collect credits needed for better remuneration and career award. There were over 500 courses accredited by the Ministry of Education with diverse focus, however, offering space for new players interested in improving teachers and trainers skills. Thus, in-service training can be seen as rich in supply and demand driven. Even more, pedagogical staff is subjected to evaluation of their performance by school directors within a specific evaluation procedure resulting in an annual certificate similarly to annual certificates issued for students. Thus, pedagogical staff can be better informed about their weaknesses and a need of retraining. Two problems must be highlighted stubbornly resistant to solving. Accreditation of programmes is still only input based and there is no mechanism to assess the quality of provision. Secondly, there is still not enough done for in-service training of trainers, as their training as a rule requests involvement of employers who are only able to update them about recent changes and technology and to offer them appropriate learning environment. Although there are very good examples of supporting trainers by employers it is not yet systematically addressed as also visible from permanent dissatisfaction of the Slovak Craft Industry Federation (*SŽZ, Slovenský živnostenský zväz*) calling for an introduction of follow up master studies for trainers for years without any success.

OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

The development of the National System of Occupation, which is in progress cofinanced from ESF, under the leadership of Trexima Ltd. (the freshest development is available at www.sustavapovolani.sk) and the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*), has not yet resulted in full setting of occupational standards, and the influence of the so-called “type position description” already prepared on educational standards is not yet systemic, although being a positive feature. Educational standards are at the same time under the pressure of changes induced by the ongoing curricular reform. There is however no research and no relevant and reliable data, which would reflect labour market needs, to influence educational standards. More time is needed to interlink activities conducted under

education and labour sectors players to agree on an undisputed model of matching skills needed by jobs on the market with the skills provision offered by VET (but also with skills interesting for adoption by the population). Nevertheless the MSVVS pushed by the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. started to work on descriptions of qualifications in terms of standards set for respective knowledge, skills and competencies (abilities). Results are to be placed at the website www.isdv.fri.uniza.sk/Qualifications.aspx, where the list of “LLL qualifications” is to be made available.

SOCIAL PARTNERS INVOLVEMENT

As documented above the Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET substantially redefined social partners' role. They have got rights to contribute to both qualification redesign and structure of VET, as well as curriculum development. Nevertheless as already also stressed, stakeholders' rights and responsibilities are still in the process of change and the real impact of their involvement will be much clearer after the reform plans embedded in the newly adopted legislation are settled. The currently available findings indicate that a much longer period of time is needed than expected by legislators.

9. LIFELONG GUIDANCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

9.1 STRATEGY AND PROVISION

Up to now there is no evidence of really national, cross-sectoral strategy in lifelong guidance. In spite of the fact that crucial policy documents were adopted several years ago, only small progress has been achieved since the last twelve months. The key challenge is therefore still the same - get the agenda of lifelong guidance from the official, though not very loudly pronounced level to action level, in both key sectors, develop new action plans and bring them to life.

The provision of career guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment is traditionally a shared, or better, strictly divided responsibility of two sectors/ministries - the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, *Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*). The description of the main approaches to guidance and counselling is therefore focusing on these two sectors separately.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROVISION IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

A series of policy papers and in some cases subsequent legislation relating more or less substantially to career guidance, submitted by the Ministry of Education, were adopted by the Slovak government during last four years:

- The Concept of Pedagogical and Psychological Guidance System and its Implementation into Practice (*Koncepcia pedagogicko-psychologického poradenského systému a jeho implementácie do praxe*), March 2007, focusing on the further development of wide scope guidance and counselling services provided for children and youth since late 1950s;
- The Concept of Special Education Counselling (*Koncepcia špeciálnopedagogického poradenstva*), March 2007, concentrating on children and youth with special needs;

- The Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*), April 2007, a key document in this specific area, for the first time putting together and stressing interrelations between lifelong learning and lifelong guidance;
- The Act on Vocational Education and Training, which was approved in May 2009 and came into force in September 2009. Stress is put here also on the co-operation of all stakeholders and social partners on national and regional levels to harmonize VET with labour market needs. According to this regulation, the regional self-government is responsible, besides other tasks, for informing young people and their parents on labour market needs and possibilities of VET studies in secondary schools in the respective region, and also for passing all relevant information of that kind to guidance and counselling centres.
- The Act on Lifelong Learning, which was approved in December 2009 and which came into force on 1st February 2010. The National System of Qualifications, based on the National System of Occupations, was established by this Act and as a public register describing existing national qualifications was supposed to be open to public in January 2011. According to this Act it was also supposed that information system of further education consisting of educational and training institutions register, register of accredited E&T study programmes, register of further E&T participants, and also prognosis of E&T needs would be developed. The Act explicitly declares that the prognosis is a tool for guidance in lifelong learning, which is used both by career guidance services providers and by the Ministry of Education, the latter for coordination of lifelong learning opportunities.

From the policy level point of view the current situation in the educational sector in relation to career guidance and counselling might be described as follows:

- While the basic documents were approved and the legislation conditions are quite supportive, there are no signs of major significance that career guidance and counselling could become higher in the agenda, and this is true in spite of such European initiatives like Europe 2020, New Skills for New Jobs or ESCO, where guidance and counselling is strongly present.
- The Section of Regional Education of the Ministry of Education persists in neglecting career guidance and counselling. This might be also due to the fact that this agenda was fully put under the responsibility of the Section of Lifelong Learning (its current name is the Section of Further Education), and this was possible because of misinterpretation that lifelong guidance had only to do with lifelong learning, where LLL was read only as learning following formal (pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary) education.
- Nearly no communication between these two ministerial sections exists in relation to career guidance and counselling issues. The fact that lifelong guidance is a transversal agenda exceeding not only one section of the ministry, but several ministries at the same time (not mentioning that there are many other relevant partners and stakeholders on national, regional and local levels) is not accepted.
- Very dangerous from the point of view of future perspective is the reduction of “lifelong guidance” to “guidance in lifelong learning” - such a narrowing is presented currently by the Section of Further Education and its subordinated National Institute for Lifelong Learning, which was in 2008 established also as the secretariat of the National Forum for Lifelong Guidance. In 2011 the new National Forum was established where majority is represented by representatives of further education institutions. The main aim of this advisory body was to provide expert support for the national project focused on

building specialised guidance and counselling centres throughout Slovakia that would support adult population in lifelong learning. Due to changes in political situation the project was not approved and any further steps in this direction might be expected not sooner than after parliamentary elections in spring 2012.

Nevertheless, the picture is not so dark - in spite of what has been mentioned above, there are also several examples of very successful initiatives and though their main focus was different, guidance and counselling was more or less obviously present there as well:

- Within the national project the National System of Occupations an international conference “Labour Market Needs - a Challenge for Lifelong Learning” was organized in April 2011 (for detailed information see www.sustavapovolani.sk). Here it should be mentioned that the development of the second part of the National Qualification Framework - the National System of Qualifications - has not started yet, though the Act on Lifelong Learning proposed this tool to be available since January 2011.
- A series of workshops focused on the Europe 2020 agenda is being organised during the year 2011 by the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia in cooperation with the Slovak Governance Institute (<http://www.governance.sk>). The workshop in June was dedicated to the New Skills for New Jobs Programme, where major attention was paid to current challenges in VET and its linking with labour market needs and future prospects (for more information on this initiative see www.europa2020.sk).
- The Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation, an institution which is hosting the National Agency for Lifelong Programme as well as Euroguidance and Eurydice centres, started a project of five national partners titled “National Forum as a Tool for Improvement of Lifelong Learning Strategy”. Within this project a national conference was organised in September 2011, and guidance and counselling were strongly emphasised there as well (<http://web.saaic.sk/naforfil/>).
- With the aim to help young people to be better oriented when making their career decisions the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport launched two web sites with information on:
 - unemployment rates of secondary school graduates (<http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=8950>)
 - numbers of graduates of higher education institutions and their average incomes (<http://absolventi.iedu.sk/>)
- In September 2011 a new call for proposals was published by the MŠVVaŠ under the Operational Programme Education - “The Innovation of Content and Methods in Secondary Schools for Labour Market Needs”. Within its Priority Axis 1 - Reform of the VET System, and Measure 1.1 - Transformation of traditional school to a modern one, there is also a partial activity 1.1.2 with the title “Supporting educational and career guidance at primary and secondary schools”. Unfortunately, the only bodies that are eligible to submit their proposals are secondary schools themselves, which means that there will be too many local initiatives, project, programmes, but nothing on common, national level.
- It might be said that institutionally, the strongest voice for career guidance and counselling in its life span perspective can be heard from the National Agency for Lifelong Learning (www.saaic.sk), as well as from the Euroguidance Centre Slovakia (www.saaic.sk/euroguidance).

As far as career guidance and counselling services provision in educational sector itself is concerned, according to the new Act on Education this is the responsibility of the different facilities of education guidance and counselling and prevention, namely:

- centres of educational and psychological counselling and prevention;
- centres of special education guidance and counselling;
- educational counsellors in primary and secondary schools;
- school psychologists;
- school special pedagogues;
- therapeutic pedagogues;
- social pedagogues; and
- prevention coordinators.

Nearly all of these providers existed in the educational sector also according to the previous legislation, but were not such explicitly mentioned as part of the guidance and counselling system. (N. B.: career guidance and counselling is here only one part of the more widely arranged services provided by all actors mentioned above.)

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROVISION IN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

There are no major changes in guidance and counselling services provision in employment services comparing the current situation with that of last twelve months, at least from the current legislation point of view. Due to the continuing financial and economic crisis the situation on the labour market is changing - the registered unemployment rate increased from 12.42 % in September 2010 to 13.37 % in September 2011 (see also Table 27 in part 3.1 and this is the highest rate since 2003. According to current prognoses, the situation might be even worse in next months. In spite of this there cannot be seen any more systemic approach either of the Ministry of Labour, or of the public employment services how to face two most serious problems of the national labour market - extremely high long-term unemployment, and extremely high unemployment of young people under 25 years of age.

Guidance and counselling in this situation is viewed as a supporting measure both for all new registered unemployed and also for long-term unemployed, the reduction of unemployment rate through various active labour market measures is hampered by very limited number of vacancies.

The responsibility for career guidance and counselling provision for unemployed (registered) and employed job seekers, including disadvantaged groups lies mainly on public employment services (Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family), as well as on agencies of supported employment (focusing on long-term unemployed and people with disabilities), and partly on agencies of temporary employment.

As far as the question on evidence base is concerned, it should be mentioned here that career guidance and counselling policy and strategy design is very rarely based on deep and serious analyses, evaluation and research of existing data, as an argument is here either lack of financial sources, and/or shortage of time.

Cooperation between education and employment sectors is still something that is just declared on various levels than really existing. In spite of the fact that the Strategy on Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance was adopted by the government, the key role is played by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family is here not active enough, at least not in the sense of trying to be the most important stakeholder in relation to all adult population, not only regarding the registered (mostly) and unregistered job seekers.

9.2 TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

The target groups in the education sector are primary and secondary school children and youth, mainly in upper grades who can use career information, guidance and counselling services provided by specialised staff and school facilities mentioned in the previous section. Students in higher education are offered these services in career information and guidance centres, which were established with the support of ESF financial sources during the last few years in many faculties and/or universities throughout the country.

In employment services target groups are strictly defined by the Act on Employment Services - two categories are distinguished here: unemployed (and registered) job seekers, and employed job seekers (registration is not obligatory). Career information and guidance services are usually offered to all clients, career counselling is focusing mainly on disadvantages, registered/unemployed job seekers (especially long-term unemployed, those under 25 or above 50 years of age, people with disabilities, etc.).

When talking about career guidance and counselling for groups with special needs in the education sector, we have in mind mainly children and young people with disabilities - they could be offered few measures focusing on their specific career development. There is a set of written information (both in printed and electronic versions) with the detailed description of medical, psychological and labour market aspects of career guidance of pupils and students with 13 various types of health problems influencing their career choices. Information and help is offered also to their parents, teachers, educational counsellors and all those who are or could be interested.

Another possibility is a module for people with disabilities in a web based program *Guide to the World of Occupations* with the title "Have you got a health problem?" (The Slovak title of the program is "*Sprievodca svetom povolani*") and it is available at www.povolania.eu; English and other eight languages versions are available at www.gwo.cz).

Also the web based Integrated System of Type Positions (ISTP, *Integrovaný systém typových pozícií*; www.istp.sk) allows clients in one module (so-called Analysis of individual potential) to identify their health problem and then they can be offered a specific information relating to their prospects on the labour market.

In employment services all the above mentioned measures are available also for adult clients, mainly registered, unemployed job seekers. Besides these, clients with health problems can visit one of the five Information and Guidance Centres for people with disabilities (they are part of Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family), where an attempt to measure their individual employability potential is made and corresponding job offers are provided by qualified staff.

In relation to pupils and students a quite a wide range of career information is provided, focusing mainly on further education and training paths in secondary and/or postsecondary educational institutions. This is combined also with information on possible career

prospects, employment possibilities and job offers on local, regional, and national levels, in some cases also on EU level (web portals www.eures.sk, as well as PLOTEUS are used here). Those who have some problems with their career decisions (e.g. who are not able for various reasons to make the decision, those with ambitions not corresponding to their potential, etc.) could use psychological counselling provided by school psychologists or by the Centre of Educational and Psychological Counselling and Prevention.

Methods for the main target groups of clients in employment services are similar to those mentioned above - provision of wide range of career information including vacancies; individual action plans are obligatory, offered for some groups of disadvantaged job seekers (those under 25, over 50 years of age, long-term unemployed); a set of psychological methods and instruments used as “*bilan de competences*” mainly in guidance and counselling for long-term unemployed and some other disadvantaged job seekers.

Since the adoption of the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*), the importance of career guidance and counselling both in education and employment sectors is rising. It is evident at least from policy papers, but less evident in the reality, especially in the professionalisation of career guidance and services provision, initial and lifelong learning possibilities for guidance practitioners, financial sources, adequate support of research and evidence base, quality assurance, etc. Most of these shortages are addressed by the Strategy and the Concept of Lifelong Guidance and there are some ideas, plans how to deal with these challenges in the next three - four years.

9.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

There is no accreditation scheme for gaining professional credentials for career guidance counsellors in Slovakia, neither in education, nor in employment sectors. The main reason is that “career guidance practitioner/counsellor” does not exist as an official, certified occupation, there are only people who are dealing with career guidance and counselling issues, who provide career information, guidance and counselling services. Career guidance and counselling as a comprehensive study programme or course is not available in universities or other third level educational institutions.

Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff (*Zákon č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov*), in force since November 2009, does not include educational counsellors and career counsellors into pedagogical or professional staff categories (see part 7.1). Individuals (usually the category of teachers) can decide for performance of these specialised activities requiring acquisition of respective professional competences within their professional development. Education counsellor and career counsellor are listed among career position specialists. Their continuing professional development is also regulated by this act. Furthermore, psychologists/school psychologists and special pedagogues/school special pedagogues belong to professional staff categories (the act makes a difference between professional staff and pedagogical staff.)

Qualification background of professionals providing career information, guidance and counselling services in both educational and employment sectors is as follows:

- Educational counsellors in elementary and secondary schools are regular teachers with university degree (Master level) qualified for two or three school subjects. Most of them have in-company, on-the-job training for career guidance and counselling, duration of which varies from 40 to 200 hours. According to the current legislation in the educational sector no formal qualification for career guidance and counselling is required

and therefore no university or any third level educational institution offers such a course. On the other hand there were many different courses for “career counsellors” or in career guidance and counselling running throughout the country provided mostly by accredited non-governmental organisations and funded from the ESF. The problem is that these courses are not following one common qualification/occupational standard and therefore they vary in content, structure, duration, quality and also in other details;

- School psychologists must have a 5-year university qualification in psychology (a Master degree), most often in counselling or educational psychology (where “counselling” means all areas of counselling, not specifically career counselling - this is only a very small part of their pre-graduate course), or a Master degree in teacher training programme in psychology plus four-term specialised education in educational psychology provided by higher education institution;
- School special pedagogues must be also graduates from master studies. With respect to their main task (providing help and assistance for children with special educational needs, or with disabilities), career guidance and counselling is only a marginal topic in their duties and usually they have no formal or informal/non-formal training in career guidance and counselling.

There is no formal qualification required for career information and guidance officers in employment services working at the Career Information and Guidance Departments of Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (*úradý práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) and here it is possible to have very different and variable qualification background - it is even not necessary to have a university degree.

In the case of career counsellors working at the Counselling Services units of Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family a master level of university degree is required by the current legislation (Act on Employment Services No. 5/2004 Col.), but it does not include any further specification, which means that also here it is possible to find counsellors with very different and variable university qualifications.

10. FINANCING: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 VET FINANCING POLICY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND HOT ISSUES

One may say there is no genuine VET financing policy in Slovakia. VET funding arrangements are very simple. IVET is dominantly funded from the state budget as there is no tradition of typical apprenticeships in the country and the secondary VET is school based. Full-time tertiary education is for free and part-time education is for fee. CVET is funded from the pocket of interested players, employers or individual participants. Labour market retraining is financed from the state budget and from the ESF. There are no sophisticated instruments implemented to support cofinancing or direct investment in education/learning by private subjects.

A debate about additional funding mechanisms with clear incentives to private subjects positive towards funding VET goes back to the early 1990s. Initially, a payroll levies financed train-or-pay type VET fund was considered appropriate and later tax relieves were proposed, e.g. in the National Action Plan of Employment for 2004-2006 or in the Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania*

a celoživotného poradenstva) adopted in 2007, however without any success. Since then, the debate on fiscal incentives in support of private investment in education continues, dominated by two basic fundamentals of all Slovak governments: Efficient tax policy is considered incompatible with any kind of tax related incentives for VET/LLL, and reallocation of means for investment in education, LLL and R&D at the expense of other public expenditures is seen impossible.

In 2010, a VET fund was established according to Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní*). In contrast to a payroll levies financed fund known from other EU countries and promoted by a professional audience, the VET fund created in Slovakia, presided by the minister of education, cannot receive funding from state authorities and funding from businesses is strictly on a voluntary basis. As the Ministry of Finance (MF, *Ministerstvo financií*) strictly opposed creating a VET fund fed from the sources that could decrease the state budget income, employers also accepted only non-obligatory contributions. This VET fund, immediately seen by experts as a deadborn child, is going to be abolished, according the signals from the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) already working on the amendment of Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET, due to a lacking inflow of means.

Businesses still cofinance IVET only in a very limited way. They can contribute to individual benefits of VET students under the contract on future employment (see part 10.2 detailing the costs of these students that are tax deductible for a future employer). Furthermore, they can contribute to improvement of training provided intended costs cannot be subsumed in the costs already covered by the state. Only a contribution that cannot be seen as double financing is eligible as tax deductible. This is of course a weak point that might hamper direct investment of businesses aimed at improvement of equipment and training activities. Thus, it still remains open how to invest effectively in improvement of learning environment in VET schools. The envisaged abolishment of the VET fund will reopen the debate on an appropriate mix of cofinancing.

The Ministry of Finance opposes in principle all proposals for tax incentives in support of IVET and/or continuing VET for individuals considering low 19 % tax rate for income tax and corporate tax a sufficient stimulus for encouraging investment in human resources and/or own education. As discussed in more detail in part 10.3.2 there was only one measure based on tax incentives for individuals temporarily introduced.

Currently, the only substantial inflow of means from businesses to schools is based on a specific tax credit measure originally introduced to support NGOs. 2 % of personal income tax (since 2001) and corporate tax (since 2004) can be directly allocated by tax payers in support of NGO activities. Many schools are very successful in attracting subjects with a special interest (parents, businesses from similar sector, etc.) to cofinance their costs via their affiliated NGOs. Unfortunately, this scheme will be gradually weakened under the pressure of the Ministry of Finance. In 2011, only 1.5 % of corporate tax can be assigned to NGOs with gradual decrease in following years. In the effort to increase the inflow of tax money to the state budget, the Ministry of Finance suggests corporations and self-employers to match a decrease in funding NGOs via tax credits by after-tax financial contributions. The Ministry of Finance argued that many corporations used to self-service their own NGOs. On the other hand, there is no evidence about effects of activities of respective NGOs and some NGOs of strong corporates evidently support education.

An increasing number of private and church affiliated schools led to some political controversies caused predominantly by limited investment in education. Public/state schools claimed that they were discriminated against as compared to private and church affiliated schools, as the incoming per capita contributions from the MŠVVaŠ might be affected by reductions by establishers. Authorities establishing public schools are entitled

to do this in order to create a temporary reserve fund at the regional level and to differentiate among schools, while establishers of single private or church affiliated school transfer the full per capita contribution to their school. On the other hand, private schools feel discriminated as they are not eligible for contributions from the state budget for capitals (even not in case of emergency - in contrast to public and church affiliated schools), according to the newest measure valid since 2009. Although private schools officially require tuition fees from parents, in contrast to church affiliated schools and public schools, and therefore have an additional source of funding, they feel discriminated in contrast to church affiliated schools.

TRENDS IN FUNDING AND IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

The Ministry of Finance data illustrates a severe decrease in expenditure on education in terms of percentage of the GDP from 4.75 % in 1995 down to 3.89 % in 2007, taking into account only the decrease of population in schools and disregarding from the need to invest substantially in improvement of education environment in the times of GDP increase.

	1995	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
% OF GDP	4.75	4.17	4.03	4.15	4.15	3.89	4.33	4.94	4.96
% OF TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE	9.76	9.90	10.00	10.58	10.8	10.9	10.15	11.83	12.31

Source: Ministry of Finance.

Note: * All expenditures of the government, of municipalities and self-governing regions, including private sources of regional schooling; expenditures of private higher education institutions are not included (they are not available).

Lagging behind the EU27 level is also better visible from the following table comparing GDP per capita and expenditures on educational institutions per capita. It can be seen as an indicator of political support for education: how much of the wealth of the country is invested in education. Unfortunately, it signals that the level of investment in education is lower compared to other European countries, and that even poorer countries than Slovakia invest comparably more in education.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27 ISCED 5-6	:	37.5	37.5	36.8	35.6	37.1	36.3	36.8	36.9
SK ISCED 5-6	44.2	46.0	37.4	35.0	44.5	36.1	33.6	28.3	28.1 ¹
EU27 ISCED 2-4	:	26.0	25.9	26.0	25.2	26.4	26.0	25.2	26.1
SK ISCED 2-4	16.6	16.3	17.2	18.0	18.7	16.9	16.5	15.9	17.0 ²
EU27 ISCED 1	:	18.5	19.0	19.7	19.7	19.7	20.2	20.7	21.1
SK ISCED 1	11.1	10.9	11.6	15.1	14.1	17.5	17.9	17.3	17.8 ³

Source: Eurostat [educ_thexp]; tabled by authors; last update: 14-06-2011.

Notes: Expenditure at ISCED 5B is included under upper secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4). Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available for 2007. ¹ second lowest in EU27, ² lowest in EU27, ³ fifth lowest in EU27.

The 2008 data for Slovakia are among the lowest in the EU, however, disproportionately low expenditure in education is not caused by low performance of the Slovak economy, as demonstrated below.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EUR	4 100	4 400	4 800	5 500	6 300	7 100	8 300	10 200	11 900
INDEX	100	107.3	117.1	134.1	153.7	173.2	202.4	248.8	290.2

Source: Eurostat; [nama_gdp_c]; last update: 24-08-2011.

The economy nominally grew with Index of change 290.2 and was almost three times stronger (from this point of view) in 2008 compared to 2000. Nevertheless, this development did not translate into the expenditure on education, as can be more transparently seen from the indexes of change in expenditures on education presented below.

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ISCED 5-6	UNIT*	44.2	46	37.4	35	44.5	36.1	33.6	28.3	28.1
	IoC**	100	104.1	84.6	79.2	100.7	81.7	76.0	64.0	63.6
ISCED 2-4	UNIT*	16.6	16.3	17.2	18	18.7	16.9	16.5	15.9	17
	IoC**	100	98.2	103.6	108.4	112.7	101.8	99.4	95.8	102.4
ISCED 1	UNIT*	11.1	10.9	11.6	15.1	14.1	17.5	17.9	17.3	17.8
	IoC**	100	98.2	104.5	136.0	127.0	157.7	161.3	155.9	160.4

Source: Eurostat [educ_thexp]; last update: 14-06-2011; tabled and calculated by authors.

Notes: * Expenditure per student in EUR compared to GDP per capita in EUR, ** Index of change compared to 2000.

A substantial improvement is visible in primary level (with Index of change 160.4), however behind the improvement in economy, while a tertiary level decline is dramatic (63.6). A huge increase in enrolment in tertiary education was not accompanied by a corresponding increase in expenditure. A very slight improvement in secondary education questions the technological renewal in schools and raises concerns over hidden indebtedness (insufficient modernisation, in particular in VET schools). The trend is unfavourable and deciphers national policies: Slovakia does not see education as a priority despite political rhetoric of all political parties and governments. No improvement can be expected in future due to the inevitable fiscal consolidation since 2011. Although in contrast to other sectors subjected to cuts caused by the coming period of fiscal prudence, less severe expenditure cuts are expected for the education sector (affecting predominantly capital expenditures) and a modest increase in salaries is also expected in contrast to almost all other workers' salaries in public sectors. The ageing of teachers and trainers and the low interest of young people to start a teaching career due to uncompetitive salaries threatens education severely. Till 2013, no substantial improvement in investment in education can be

expected due to the efforts of the government to achieve the general government deficit below 3 % in 2013. Furthermore, a continuation of the decrease of education expenditure share in GDP has to be expected, according to stability programme plans, as visible below.

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	38.0	39.1	43.0	48.8	57.5	68.8
EDUCATION EXPENDITURE*	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.3

Source: *Stability Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2011 - 2014 (April 2011)*.

Note: * COFOG class 09, Education.

Expenditure on education is identified as sensitive to population ageing, and a subsequent decrease in expenditure as induced by demographic changes. It is a long-term policy of the Ministry of Finance to overstress this phenomenon. Regardless of future GDP development the Ministry of Finance does not think about improvement of investment in education to compensate for the hidden indebtedness resulting from the postponed renewal of equipment and modernisation of learning environment in schools.

Another sad picture can be seen from comparison of remuneration of teachers based on the OECD data.

	SALARIES IN LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL				SALARIES IN UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL			
	STARTING	AFTER 15 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE		TOP OF SCALE	STARTING	AFTER 15 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE		TOP OF SCALE
		USD	R(GDP)*			USD	R(GDP)*	
SLOVAKIA	12 139	13 964	0.61	15 054	12 139	13 964	0.61	15 054
OECD	31 687	41 701	1.24	51 317	33 044	43 711	1.31	53 651

Source: *OECD, Education at Glance (2011); Tables D.3.1 and D.3.4.*

Note: * Ratio of annual statutory teachers' salaries in public institutions after 15 years of experience.

Relative to GDP per capita, mid-career salaries not just lag significantly behind the OECD average, but they are the OECD lowest and, interestingly, also the lowest compared to neighbouring countries with no language barrier for many Slovak inhabitants (Hungary with 0.87 and Czech Republic with 0.99). This clearly indicates that the attractiveness of teacher and trainer professions are seen not important from the governments' point of view and that they were not aware of risks of decreasing attractiveness of these professions. A decrease in quality of teachers in mathematics, science and informatics in primary and secondary schools can soon translate into a lack of quality of future technicians and engineers and no chance for building the knowledge economy in Slovakia.

10.2 FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There is no substantial difference in funding the respective levels of IVET, except the difference caused institutionally. VET offered by secondary specialised schools (SOŠ,

stredná odborná škola) and VET establishments (covering upper secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education) is regulated by Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on Financing Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Establishments (*Zákon č. 597/2003 Z. z. o financovaní základných škôl, stredných škôl a školských zariadení*), as amended, while funding higher education institutions (covering tertiary education) by the Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll. (*Zákon č. 131/2002 Z. z. o vysokých školách*), as amended. As explained earlier, lower secondary education and apprenticeships are not crucial for consideration with regard to the Slovak VET system.

Linking funding and quality in regional schooling is in a very slow progress. The obligation of regional schools to prepare annual reporting to the public about school outcomes introduced by the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 9/2006 Coll. resulted in an overall narration rather than a detailed accountability feedback so far and did not translate in any fiscal corrections. Nevertheless, as a result of shameless advertising of some private secondary schools about ISCED 3A programmes and subsequent criticism for not keeping quality standards of some private schools, a possibility to punish private schools was introduced in 2008 by § 6a of the Act No. 597/2003 Coll. A 15 % reduction of normative for all months a failure (e.g. not sticking to curricula, too many teachers without qualification, exceeding numbers of students in class) identified by the State School Inspection (*ŠŠI, Štátna školská inšpekcia*) lasts, can be applied. This measure only applies for private schools and no similar measures are applied for public and church affiliated schools. Surprisingly, such an extension has not been proposed by legislators. On the other hand, there are also some positive incentives: bonuses for schools are possible for successful performance of students in national and international events (e.g. student competitions or projects), according to § 4b of the same act.

There is in fact little known about efficiency of allocation of means as there is no overall data about total income of educational institutions available. It affects institutions depending substantially on alternative sources to the state budget (in particular former secondary vocational schools (*SOU, stredné odborné učilištia*), which were expected by the state to earn independently as they were not budgetary but contributory organisations, and all higher education institutions). Monitoring data is also complicated due to the involvement of school-affiliated non-profit organisations that earn part of the income used by schools. The real income from own activities and other private sources is therefore not known in detail, often even to regular staff of institution. As overall expenditures are not monitored by the educational authorities, and there is no research conducted on the real structure of expenditures and benefits of VET, changes in policies are not evidence based and are dominantly driven by lobbyism of important players (i.a. political parties).

For a temporary period (2010 and 2011), church affiliated establishments (e.g. language schools and basic schools of art, which were classified by us as IVET schools) are guaranteed to receive from the budget of the self-governing authorities at least 88 % of per capita funding offered to respective public establishments, according to Act No. 179/2009 Coll. amending Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on financing. This is in contrast with private subjects that are also entitled to ask for cofunding from the budget of the municipality or self-governing region (as funding this is their so-called original competence), however, without a guaranteed level of cofunding. For years 2007-2009, at least 90 % of the per capita funding was guaranteed for both the private and church affiliated establishments.

There is no collective fund for VET in place. Long-lasting efforts to persuade the Ministry of Finance to reduce levies or offer some tax incentives for those willing to cofund VET resulted in the establishment of a non-state VET Fund in 2010. However, this fund faces problems with sources as contributions from the state authorities are forbidden and businesses are asked to contribute only on a voluntary basis receiving no stimulation from the state.

An important possibility is open for establishers of schools to reduce the modernisation debt through applying for funding from the Regional Operational Programme, originally managed by the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development (MVRR, *Ministerstvo výstavby a regionálneho rozvoja*), since 2010 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MPRV, *Ministerstvo pôdohospodárstva a rozvoja vidieka*). Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education is aimed at reconstruction, expanding and modernisation of school facilities and procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment for schools in connection to their reconstruction, expanding and modernisation. The Operational Programme Bratislava Region (Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective) offers similar options for schools from the Bratislava Region, however just to some extent, as this region with GDP per capita far over 75 % of the EU average does not qualify for the Convergence Objective. In addition and in contrast to the earlier ESF programming period, a specified ESF Operational Programme Education managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MŠVVaŠ, *Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu*) is aimed at the reform of education in regional schooling, the support of improvements of higher education and the development of human resources for knowledge-based society within Priority Axis 1 Reform of Education and Vocational Training. The main objective is being achieved under two measures:

- Transformation of traditional school into a modern one;
- Higher education institutions and research & development as the driving forces in the development of a knowledge-based society.

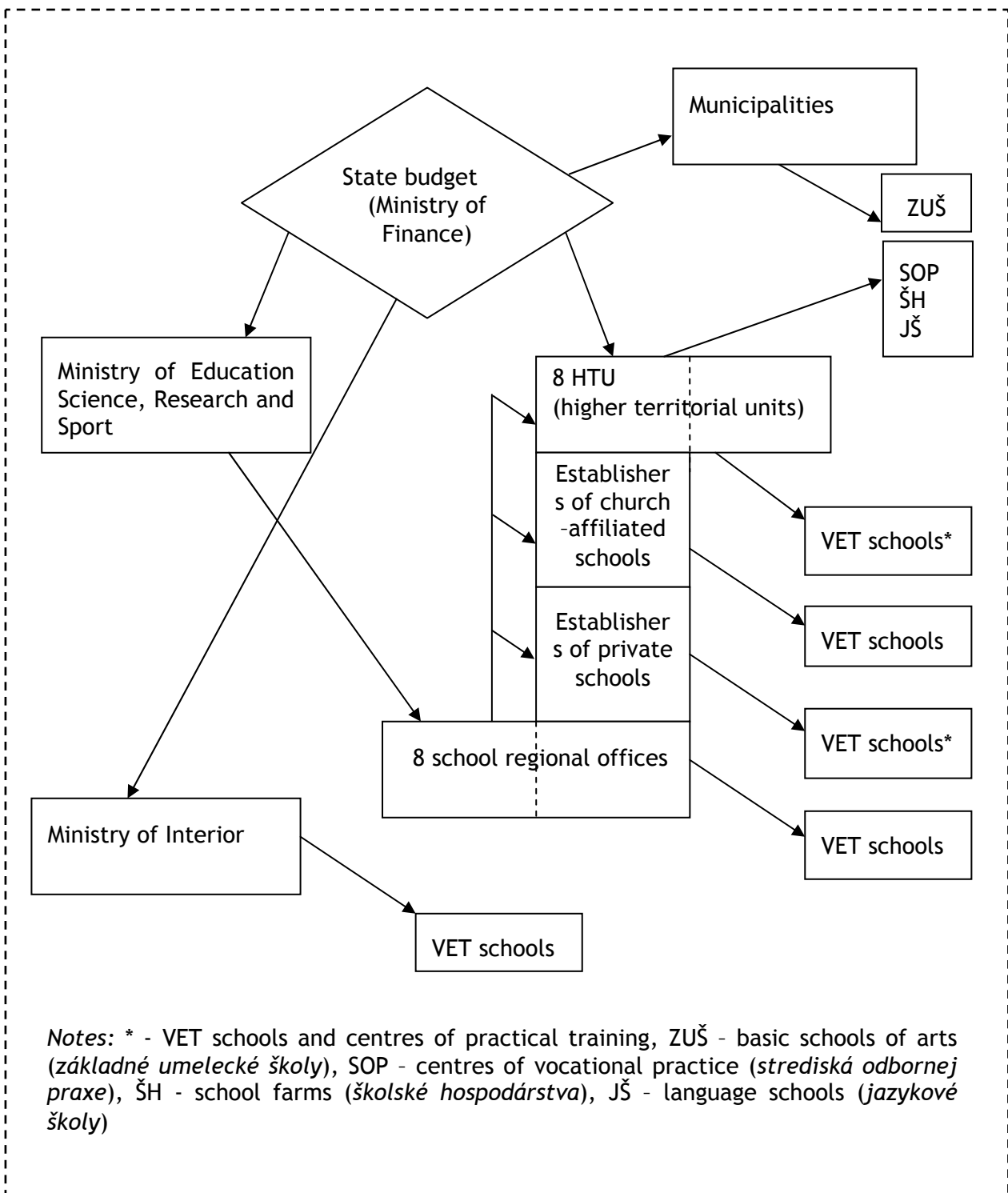
Higher education institutions can also apply for both the development of infrastructure and the support of research and development from the European Regional Development Fund and Operational Programme Research and Development managed by MŠVVaŠ.

FUNDING UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON TERTIARY VET

BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR FUNDING AND FUNDING FLOWS

From 2005, fiscal decentralisation came fully into force through the redefinition of the income tax revenue. Although centrally collected, the essential part of income tax goes from the Ministry of Finance (MF, *Ministerstvo financií*) directly to self-governing bodies, higher territorial units (VÚC, *vyššie územné celky*) and municipalities, to cover their expenditures: 70.3 % was earmarked for municipalities, 23.5 % for self-governing regions and 6.2 % out of the total income tax remained with the state as a reserve. Municipalities and regions also became responsible for setting tax rates for some other taxes (of which the property tax was the most important for municipalities and the tax from automotive vehicles for self-governing regions). As a rule, the directly collected income is just about the 20 %, while the transferred part of the personal income tax is about the 80 % of all tax income of both types of self-governing bodies. The financial crisis and subsequent economic downturn caused a harsh decrease in collecting personal income tax. As a consequence vulnerability of this model of decentralisation has been again visible: Self-governing bodies insisted on compensation from the state budget for a decreased income from personal taxes. Nevertheless, the decentralisation reform created a new architecture of funding. The following Chart 1 is depicting bodies responsible for funding and funding flows in regional schooling, within which funding VET is highlighted.

CHART 1. FINANCIAL FLOWS IN INITIAL SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON TERTIARY VET



The decentralisation reform differentiates between the so-called original and transferred competences in state administration. Original competences are to be borne by the budget of self-governing bodies and two arrows in the Chart 1 starting from the “State budget” and ending in “Municipalities” and “8 HTUs” indicate this.

With regard to the transferred competences self-governing bodies are entitled to require additional funding from the state budget. Financing secondary VET institutions belongs to transferred competences, and therefore self-governing regions (and equally other establishers of schools) are entitled to receive additional contribution from the state

budget. Thus, the mainstream flow funding secondary VET starts at the Ministry of Finance (state budget) and goes via the budget chapter of the MŠVVaŠ to its regional school offices (KŠÚ, *krajské školské úrady*) where funds are distributed to respective establishers. Major establishers are self-governing regions (higher territorial units). Other establishers are regional school offices themselves (they are establishers of a few institutions that are not suitable for being maintained by the self-governing region due to their trans-regional impact), church and religious denominations; and finally diverse private subjects (e.g. company limited).

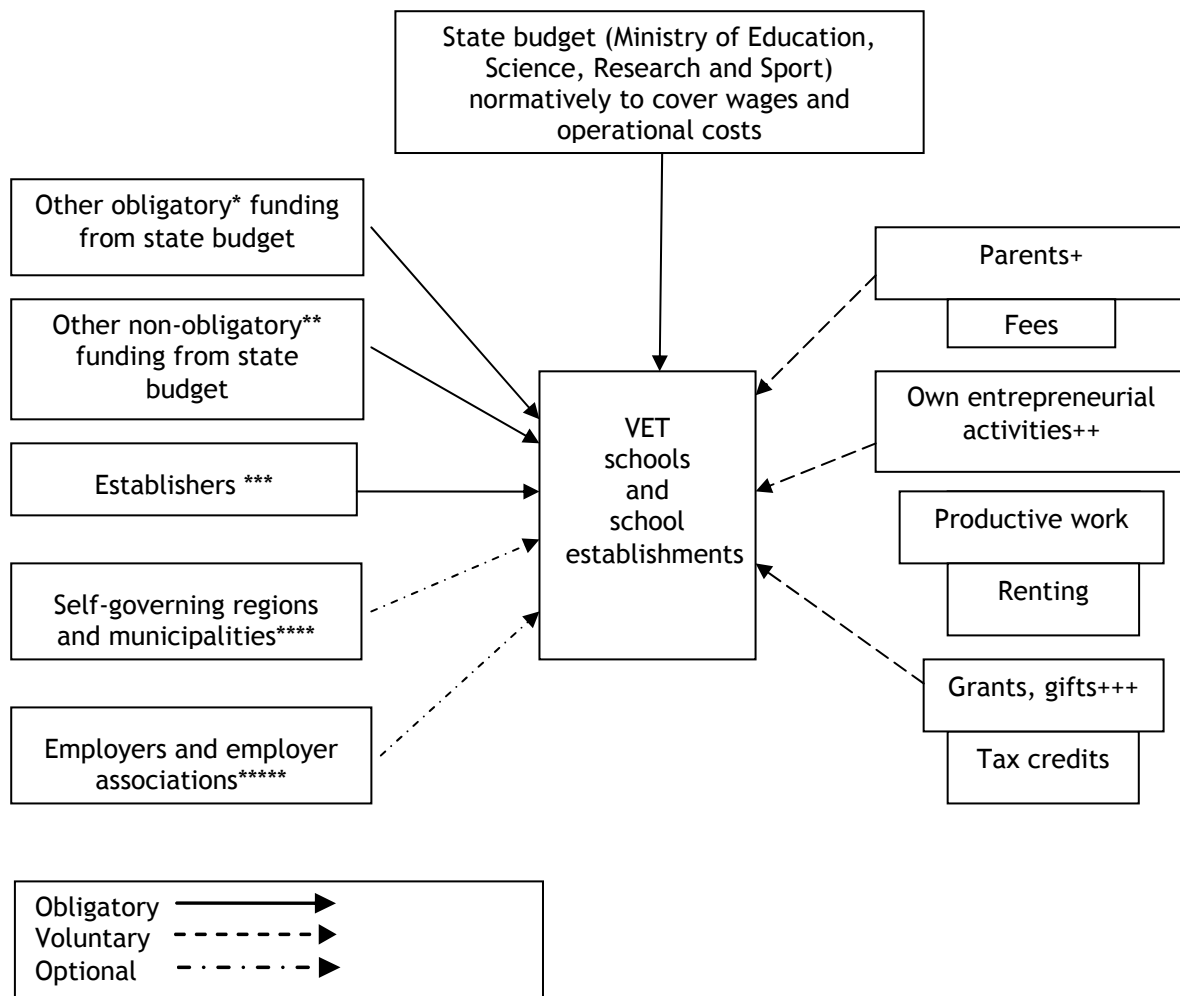
Of course, this chart only depicts the most important funding flow (from the state budget), but there are also other sources of funding IVET. Some VET schools (predominantly former secondary vocational schools offering blue-collar workers training) earn from productive work of students and another important source of means comes via school-affiliated NGOs. As visible from the chart above, there are also other institutions (that can be categorised as VET related) funded directly from self-governing regions (language schools (JŠ, *jazykové školy*), centres of vocational practice (SOP, *strediská odbornej praxe*) and school farms (ŠH, *školské hospodárstva*)); and funded directly by municipalities (basic schools of arts (ZUŠ, *základné umelecké školy*)). Since 2008 also non-state basic schools of art have been funded by municipalities from means aimed at original competences (and inflowing from income tax). Municipalities in fact do not finance secondary IVET per se. Nevertheless, basic schools of art offer training regardless of the age of interested person and some upper secondary age students can be trained there. This is why Chart 1 also depicts this flow.

The very important transferred competences of municipalities concern establishing basic schools (containing also lower secondary education). Flows to cover this and other non-VET activities are not depicted in the chart in order to make it easier to read.

SOURCE OF FUNDING

Sources of funding VET schools are depicted within Chart 2 below.

CHART 2. SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR REGIONAL VET SCHOOLS



Notes: * E.g. schools are supported on request to cover their need for officially recognised textbooks and costs of officially organised student competitions.

** Schools might receive means after successful application (via their establishers and regional school offices) for funding a development project elaborated in response to a call launched by the MŠVVaŠ to improve education (e.g. to improve ICT in education). Public schools might receive means for capital investment, however only extraordinarily; they can also require additional funding to meet specific issues as e.g. financing transport of students and wages of assistants to students with special needs.

*** Establishers might cofinance their schools from their budgets as regard current expenditures and are also responsible for capital investment. Private and church affiliated institutions were not entitled to claim capital investment from tax money. Public schools might receive means for capital investment from budgets of self-governing regions as establishers, and therefore from tax money, however this is not claimable.

**** Self-governments are not obliged to cofinance VET, but they could decide to do it even for schools that are not established/maintained by them.

***** There are no direct mandatory contributions to IVET from businesses to VET schools. Employers could contract students in VET school for the purpose of future employment and as a consequence to cofinance their VET accordingly. This is however quite rare and should be boost by new Act on VET No. 184/2009 Coll. (Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní).

+ Parents pay for school supplies and special textbooks (e.g. foreign language books printed abroad and considered by the school to be more appropriate than those available for free from the MŠVVaŠ). They are also usually required to contribute to the budget maintained by the Association of Parents (Rodičovské združenie) by a small lump sum about EUR 10 yearly. There are no detailed analyses of these marginal sources. Private schools are however entitled to charge parents with admission and tuition fees.

++ Schools can also earn from their own entrepreneurial activities. In case of public/state schools it is however regulated by the MŠVVaŠ, currently by the Methodological Guideline No. 12/2009-R of 27th August 2009 (Metodický pokyn č. 12/2009-R z 27. augusta 2009, ktorým sa určuje postup škôl a školských zariadení pri vykonávaní podnikateľskej činnosti), in force since 15th September 2009. Entrepreneurial activities cannot in any case harm education. VET schools offering ISCED 3C VET (typically former SOU) are entitled to earn from productive work of students. Schools very often rent facilities. Making use of earnings from renting premises and equipment are subjects of decision of establishers, and therefore public/state schools as a rule loose part of these earnings for the sake of the budget of establisher.

+++ All schools can apply for diverse grants from public or private grant giving programmes, and submit projects to earn from European structural funds and various sub-programmes of Lifelong Learning Programme, in particular the Leonardo da Vinci programme. Schools can also accept gifts from sponsors based on a deed of gift.

Sources of funding with respective shares are presented in the table below. As visible from this table, regional schools are dominantly state budget funded (94.94 %).

TABLE 85: SOURCES OF FINANCING REGIONAL EDUCATION IN 2010 (IN EUR AND %)		
INDICATOR	EUR	%
STATE BUDGET	1 274 319 113	94.94
MUNICIPALITIES AND HIGHER TERRITORIAL UNITS	14 842 811	1.11
RENTING SCHOOL FACILITIES	7 885 282	0.59
PROFIT FROM OWN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES	983 729	0.07
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARENTS TO COVER PARTIALLY COSTS RELATED TO MATERIAL CARE*	1 012 418	0.08
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARENTS TO COVER PARTIALLY EDUCATIONAL COSTS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS (INCLUDING TUITION FEES IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS)	12 385 279	0.92
CONTRIBUTIONS AND GIFTS	4 051 450	0.30
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ENTREPRENEURS AND ENTREPRENEURS' ASSOCIATIONS**	345 801	0.03
OTHERS (INCLUDING MEANS FROM STUDENTS' PRODUCTIVE WORK)	26 398 294	1.97
TOTAL	1 342 224 177	100

Source: MŠVVaŠ.

Notes: * contributions to meals and accommodation at facilities established by regional school offices (*krajské školské úrady*), ** new category introduced since 2009²⁷.

Contributions from entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs' associations were identified based on the Act No. 179/2009 Coll. amending the Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on Financing Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Establishments. This funding was intended to cover the costs of practical training required in addition to regular activities and therefore not covered by state budget via per capita normatives.

Contributions from businesses were redefined again based on the Act on VET No. 184/2009 Coll. amending Act No. 595/2003 Coll. on Income Tax (*Zákon č. 595/2003 Z. z. o dani z príjmov*). According to this regulation businesses can cover costs of students they are interested to employ in the future. Eligible costs (costs of meals, accommodation, travelling, medical and psychological testing required by specific professions, provision of work and protective equipment) are tax deductible provided there is a written agreement between a VET student and an employer on future employment. Businesses can also offer motivation stipends for these students amounting to 65 % of subsistence costs set by law and depending on his/her learning results. Furthermore, business can cofinance costs of practical training at centres of practical training or operational costs at SOŠ required in addition to regular activities and therefore not covered from the state budget via per capita normatives. Only such costs are tax deductible.

In comparison with 2009 means coming from the state budget increased from EUR 1,259,983,693 to EUR 1,274,319,113, while municipalities and higher territorial units contributions decreased from EUR 18,094,236 down to EUR 14,842,811. It is a consequence of the crisis and a related decrease in personal income tax yields. The fiscal decentralisation model in Slovakia is in essence based on physical person taxes and it is therefore very sensitive to changes in employment. As a consequence the state budget was forced to compensate for the decline of means available to self-governments (from physical person taxes) and to substitute missing means from self-government.

FUNDING MECHANISMS

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TYPES

Traditionally, there were two main types of upper secondary schools providing VET: secondary specialised schools (SOŠ, *stredné odborné školy*) and secondary vocational schools (SOU, *stredné odborné učilištia*). In the 2000s, main VET providers (SOŠ and SOU) were merging to form associated secondary schools (ZSŠ, *združené stredné školy*) and/or joined schools (SŠ, *spojené školy*). Since September 2008 all VET schools are categorised as secondary specialised schools (see parts 4.1 and 5.1).

Funding and overall regulation of VET schools has traditionally depended on the financial management type of the school. SOU were classified as contributory organisations whereby they were only co-funded by the state (due to their historical links with enterprises and

²⁷ See Table 47 in Slovakia: VET in Europe: Country Report 2009, where this means were subsumed under the category Contributions and gifts from entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs' associations.

the funding they used to receive from them and also due to ability to earn from own productive work). SOŠ were classified as budgetary organisations whereby they were almost purely tax money funded. Now it is up to the regional educational authorities to decide on the financial management type.

The most important difference in management was originally as follows: budgetary organisations were strongly linked to the state budget or self-governing region budget and were due to return their income to the state budget, while contributory organisations were not. Up to 50 % of their income is to be covered by own income and the rest from contribution from tax money. The most important difference affecting the accountancy of contributory organisations concerns depreciation, which is not applied within the accountancy of budgetary organisations.

As a rule, former SOU (being contributory organisations) were heavily dependant on earning additional means, i.a. by their practical activities seen as acquiring vocational skills and as a productive work. Schools delivering training for ISCED 3C students continue in this, as they can do both - improve their budgets as well as improve practical training.

Since January 2004, all primary and secondary schools (of respective category established for the purpose of budgeting, see Tables 6, 7, 8 in the Annex) have been predominantly funded through per capita funding (per student contributions from the state budget called in Slovakia “normatives”).

The following table details state budget funds earmarked for current expenditure and capital expenditure. It clearly indicates that the dominant share of funding from the state budget is allocated by normatives (per capita).

YEAR		2010		2009	
BUDGET LINE		EUR	%	BUDGET LINE	EUR
CURRENT EXPENDITURES TOTAL		1 264 807 070	99.25	1 246 055 461	98.89
OF WHICH	WAGES, INSURANCE, (ALLOCATED BY NORMATIVES)	976 970 453	957 955 639	957 955 639	76.03
	OPERATIONS(ALLOCATED BY NORMATIVES)	241 198 268	241 345 753	241 345 753	19.15
	OTHER (NOT BY NORMATIVES)	46 638 349	46 754 069	46 754 069	3.71
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES		9 512 043	0.75	13 928 232	1.11
STATE BUDGET TOTAL		1 274 319 113	100	1 259 983 693	100

Source: MŠVVaŠ.

CURRENT EXPENDITURES (FUNDING PER CAPITA)

Current expenditures of all schools regardless of type and ownership (i.e. also private schools) are subsidised from the state budget equally based on so-called “current normatives”. These normatives are composed of “wage normatives” and “operational normatives”. Tables 6, 7 and 8 in the Annex offer an overview of current expenditure

normatives²⁸. Details about construction of normatives and parametric changes within allocation formulae are set by the Regulation of the Government allowing every year to adjust to reflected needs. According to Regulation No. 598/2009 Coll. of 16th December 2009, which came into force since 2010, 27 categories of SOŠ were identified for financing in 2010. Derivatives from these normatives are used to stimulate specific policies, higher normative is applied for schools for minorities or for students with special needs integrated into mainstream school.

Two interesting components of operational normatives are depicted in Tables 9, 10 and 11 in the Annex, indicating means, quite modest indeed, available for improvement of quality of pedagogical work. For materials and equipment EUR 35.84 to 63.90 per capita are set for SOŠ (to indicate the contribution for “cheapest” and the most “expensive” studies) for 2010. Since 2008 the equivalent of 1.5 % of wages is available to cover continuing professional development of staff.

Regional school offices cannot redistribute funds received from the MŠVVaŠ. They must earmark the funds and pass them to establishers. Establishers receive means for VET schools and establishments (centres of practical training) calculated exactly according to per capita normatives, but they could partly redistribute them in case they maintain more of them. However, they obligatorily had to transfer to each school and establishment at least a part of per capita normatives set by the regulation of the government. It was 80 % of the wage normative and 75 % of the operational normative for mainstream schools and 50 % of both normatives for schools for students with special needs in the first year of the reform guaranteed by legislation. In 2009, it was at least 90 % of the wage normative and 80 % of the operational normative for mainstream schools and 85 % and 80 % respectively for schools for students with special needs.

In order to prevent from the hard impact of per capita funding to respective schools (predominantly small rural schools) a minimum guaranteed funding was originally envisaged for the first three years of the reform; i.e. 95 % of the previous year funding for current expenditures was guaranteed by the Ministry of Education. This measure was valid also in 2009 and 2010.

A specific internal measure of the MŠVVaŠ regulates the process of negotiation between the ministry and establishers of schools and establishments to correct errors in the input data. Furthermore, to support transparency, regional school offices have to publish on their websites the costs allocated for wages, insurance and levies, and purchase of goods and services for all institutions in the region.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

The capital investment is sensitive to the state budget capacity and the limits set by the fiscal policy of the Ministry of Finance. Although normatives had to be originally set in cooperation between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education also for capital investments, after fiscal decentralisation capital expenditures are to be covered as a rule

²⁸ For data in 2005 and 2006 see *Slovakia: Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2008*.

by establishers. Only extraordinarily (e.g. in case of emergency), capital expenditures can be covered from the state budget from the budget chapter of the MŠVVaŠ. Thus, only public/state schools can be funded from the tax money (however not from the earmarked stream coming to higher territorial units via the MŠVVaŠ and regional school offices, but from income tax means inflowing directly from the state budget (Ministry of Finance). Schools' requirements have exceeded available means for a long period. Thus, a modernisation debt has been even officially proclaimed. Representatives of self-government criticise the fact that they were given responsibility for regional educational institutions that had been in very bad conditions with regard to equipment and facilities.

CHANGES OCCURRING

The first legislative norm introducing the financing of regional schools based on allocation formulae was Act No. 506/2001 Coll. Originally aimed at introducing a "per capita" funding, it was changed in the parliament to "per class" funding as a consequence of lobbying of representatives of little rural schools, predominantly schools with the Hungarian language of instruction. A new Act No. 597/2003 Coll. finally introduced a per capita funding and increased the importance of self-governing bodies in financing and distributing funds for regional schools, as they were also made responsible for establishing and maintaining schools.

Details about numbers of categories of institutions with equal allocation of means, construction of normatives and parametric changes within allocation formulae are set annually by the Regulation of the Government. Originally there were only 4 allocation categories of SOŠ and one category for SOU. Later, a number of categories expanded and there were 24 categories of SOŠ (including also former SOU) envisaged and 25 finally set for 2009; and 27 categories of SOŠ were identified for financing in 2010. Some overview of changes is also visible from Tables 6, 7 and 8 in the Annex.

A working group was created in 2010 to prepare an amendment of Act No. 597/2003 Coll. A reduction of number of allocation categories is envisaged for the future as some categories cover a low number of institutions. Similarly many tiny changes aimed at refinement of financing. A positive improvement is e.g. a more clear regulation of the so-called "development projects" to be submitted by employers of schools (and other eligible bodies) funded from the state budget, established within the amendment of this act in the pipeline. As a novelty it will be possible to ask for funding for renewal of equipment, or development of entrepreneurial skills, or promotion of VET. Nevertheless, there is a serious limit - respective calls must be launched by the MŠVVaŠ and funding must be secured. Thus, the critical problem, a renewal of equipment, will hardly be solved, as employers' support of IVET will remain without substantial change. As a rule employers are not contributing directly to IVET, as there is no apprenticeship in Slovakia. Furthermore, contracts between trainees in SOŠ and employers about their future working contracts allowing for recognition of some VET costs as tax deductibles for future employers are still very rare. A little improvement was visible after adoption of the Act on VET in more clear regulation concerning tax deductibles related to eligible costs for the sake of trainees with the aforementioned links with employers. No contributions to improve quality of learning in VET schools (e.g. for new equipment) are however classified as tax deductibles and no improvement in this issue is expected in the future either. Thus, employers can substantially contribute to improving learning environment in VET schools by gifts. The only instrument to stimulate such cofinancing VET was the tax credit allowing to channel 2 % of the physical person tax or corporate tax i.a. to schools (via an affiliated NGO) based on a free choice and decision of tax payers. Unfavourable development concerning this measure (see part 10.1) pushing employers to donations and gradually reducing the tax credit itself is however disappointing for schools.

FUNDING TERTIARY EDUCATION

BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR FUNDING

The most important body responsible for funding public higher education is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport that is responsible for all levels of education. There are also other minor players funding higher education institutions from state budget money. The Ministry of Health (MZ, *Ministerstvo zdravotníctva*), the Ministry of Interior (MV, *Ministerstvo vnútra*) and the Ministry of Defence (MO, *Ministerstvo obrany*) support tertiary state schools specific for respective sectors: healthcare, police, military (see part 4.1). There are no regional tertiary education institutions and therefore regional players play only a limited role (see Chart 3).

MŠVVaŠ can also offer contributions to private schools, after informing and receiving comments from the Higher Education Council (RVŠ, *Rada vysokých škôl*), the Student Higher Education Council (ŠRVŠ, *Študentská rada vysokých škôl*), the Slovak Rectors Conference (SRK, *Slovenská rektorská konferencia*) and approval of the government.

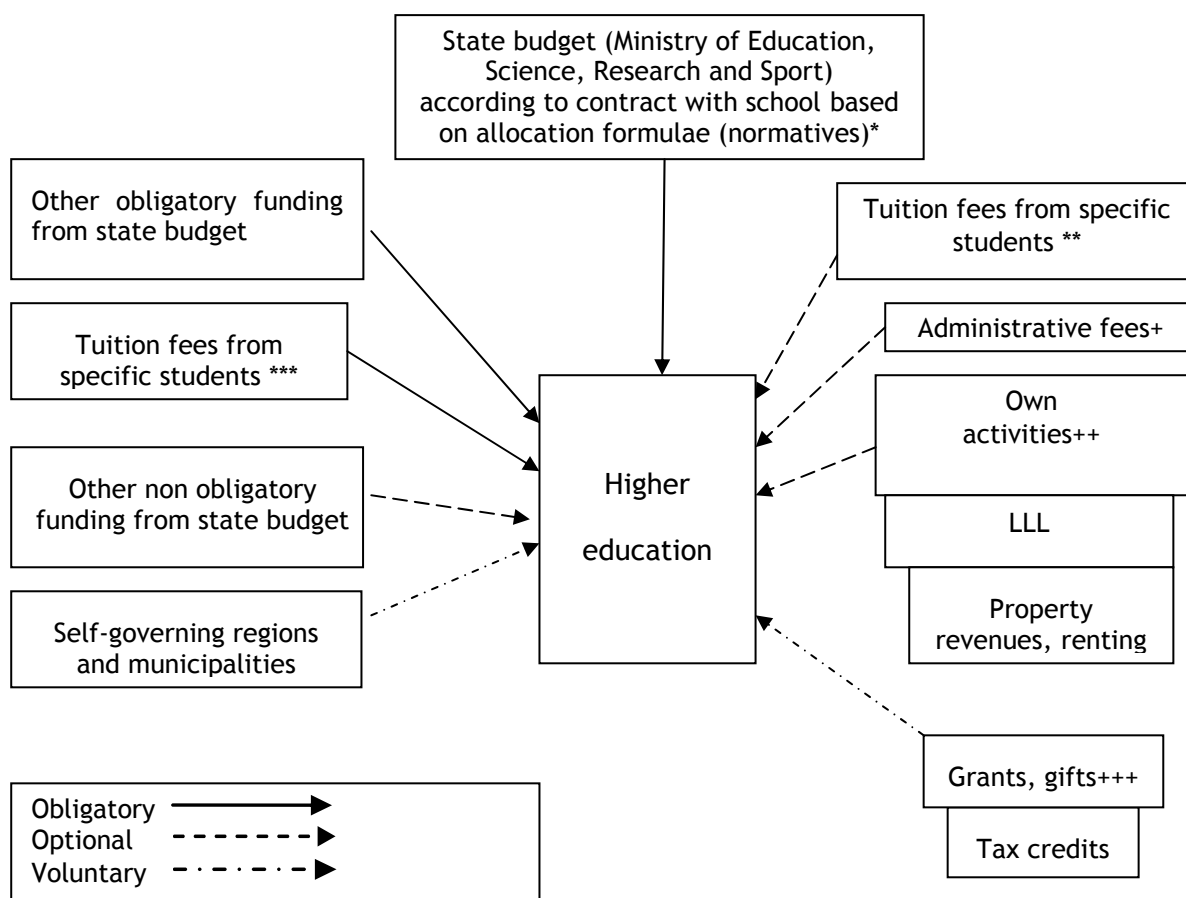
SOURCE OF FUNDING AND FUNDING FLOWS

Budgets of public higher institutions are composed of contribution from state budget (contract with MŠVVaŠ) and their own earnings. A contract between the respective institution and the MŠVVaŠ specifies amounts offered for respective activities according to programmes (e.g. education, research, etc.) based on allocation formulae and budgeting procedures agreed between the MŠVVaŠ, the Slovak Rectors' Conference and the Higher Education Council.

In addition to funding from the MŠVVaŠ representing a dominant part of their budgets schools have also to earn from other sources. Public higher education institutions are legal entities that in contrast to regional schools are also owners of their facilities. It means that in addition to earning from research grants, lifelong learning courses offered to interested paying people, services to businesses and other entrepreneurial activities they can also earn from selling buildings they do not consider useful anymore. Higher education institutions also used to earn from the aforementioned 2 % income tax allocation mechanism.

In public and state schools tuition fees are not required from full-time students, however they are required from part-time students. From the 2008/2009 academic year there were two categories of part-time students. Those covered by the contract with the Ministry of Education and therefore entitled for free studying, and students "over quota" paying tuitions. These students passed admission, however with worse ranking, but were offered to study for fee. Furthermore, students over 26 years of age and those studying longer than officially set by the programme were made payable. Furthermore, students studying in two programmes can study for free just in one on them.

CHART 3. FINANCIAL FLOWS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING OF HIGHER EDUCATION



*Notes: * or from other ministries budget (Ministry of Health (Ministerstvo zdravotníctva), Ministry of Interior (Ministerstvo vnútra), Ministry of Defence (Ministerstvo obrany) for state school specific for respective sectors: healthcare, police, military); MŠVVaŠ can also offer contribution to private schools, after informing and receiving comments from the Higher Education Council, Student Higher Education Council (Študentská rada vysokých škôl), Slovak Rectors Conference and approval of the government.*

*** over-quota part-time students, non EU countries citizens.*

**** full-time students studying in more programmes, or exceeding standard length of study.*

***** There are diverse semi-independent grant giving schemes financed from state budget, income from these grants is important not just to cover research and remuneration costs but also as important entry for allocation formulae influencing volume of their next year contracts with the MŠVVaŠ.*

+ costs of entrance procedures, fees for issuing diverse documents, etc.

++ In addition to already indicated LLL activities and property revenues also revenues from intellectual property, from own financial funds and other activities complying with main mission of schools.

+++ All schools can apply for diverse grants from public or private grant giving programmes (i.a. of large companies), and submit projects to earn from European structural funds and various sub-programmes of the Lifelong Learning Programme. Schools can also accept gifts from sponsors based on a deed of gift.

FUNDING MECHANISMS

In essence, funding is based on per capita principle; however sophisticated allocation corrections are applied. Means from the state budget for respective schools are composed of two components. The first component refers to the number of students. The second component refers to the volume and quality of research. The research component is sensitive to the volume of funding the respective school was able to win in the competition for research and development grants, and to the number and value of publications that are priced according to agreed categories. These two components influence the allocation of the resources from the state budget earmarked for wages. In 2010 the respective share was 60 % of the total income from contracts referring to the number of students and 40 % according to the success in competition in research and development and publications (increasing respectively in comparison with previous years).

The most important inputs influencing an inflow of means from the state budget, in addition to the number of students attracted to enter the school, are quality of staff (corresponding to career levels), quality of research measured by numbers of publications in specific categories and by research projects conducted. The means are calculated based on coefficients of pedagogical and economic demandness, of which the first is represented by the ratio of students per staff considered appropriate for the respective study branch and the second estimates the operational costs of delivery of the respective studies in comparison with the study of law (considered least costly and having Index 1).

In the higher education segment, holding a PhD is the minimum requirement for considering teacher to be qualified. Schools are financially punished having teachers without PhDs as they do not receive full remuneration for teachers without a PhD within the contract with the MŠVVaŠ. Furthermore, the Accreditation Commission carried out a “comprehensive accreditation of activities of higher education institutions” (according to § 84 of Higher Education Act No. 131/2002 Coll.). Within this process numbers of professors and associate professors were taken into account together with other already agreed criteria for reclassification of higher education institutions into universities and two categories of non-university higher education institutions. Out of 20 assessed public universities twelve universities fail to meet university status accreditation requirements. They were given a one-year period to eliminate their shortcomings. However, financial bonuses for universities, originally already envisaged for funding from the state budget in 2010, have not been applied.

CHANGES OCCURRING

To prevent from chasing after numbers of students (stimulated by per capita principle) and concentrating on education extensively disregarding research and development a correction to recognise research activities of schools were applied. The impact of the number of students is reduced by the increased influence of research related data. In 2010 the respective share of the total income from contracts with MŠVVaŠ according to the success in competition in research and development and publications was 40 % (increasing from 20 % in 2007, 30 % in 2008 and 35 % in 2009).

The aforementioned practice with two categories of part-time students was ruled discriminatory by the Constitutional Court, and subsequently all part-time students starting their studies in the 2011/2012 academic year will be made payable.

Financial bonuses for universities originally already envisaged for funding from the state budget in 2010 have not been applied.

In contrast to original expectations “comprehensive accreditation” process was stopped and not expanded to private institutions. The “comprehensive accreditation” has been declared not strong enough to make a difference among schools. Based on indicators, the “comprehensive accreditation” signalled to all failing schools how to rectify their problems and reach the best status, regardless of “real” quality. This process again indicated the weakness of the managerial practice based on externally imposed indicators and subsequently led to abolishment of financial incentives for schools with the best results, and at the end harmed the traditional universities with a long history of good practice.

10.3 FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

10.3.1 PUBLIC FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS TO FINANCE CVET

There are no public funding schemes and mechanisms to finance CVET as there are no explicit measures set in support of fostering access to CVET, except those funded from ESF and as a rule specifically targeted - in particular to increase employability. The data presented in the table below represents the distribution of sources of financing CVET resulting from a CVET providers’ survey conducted on an annual basis by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (ÚIPŠ, *Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva*). These data only allow for identification of major contributors; the highest share in financing CVET came from EU funds, followed by private companies and trainees.

TABLE 87: DISTRIBUTION OF SOURCES OF FINANCING OF CVET* IN 2010 (IN EUR AND %)		
TYPE OF SOURCES	EUR	%
TRAINEES	12 407 557.12	8.61
PRIVATE COMPANIES	14 694 347.83	10.20
PUBLIC SECTOR	5 904 500.85	4.10
OF WHICH: LABOUR OFFICES	3 400 163.46	2.36
MUNICIPALITIES	739 299.66	0.51
SELF-GOVERNING REGIONS	1 458 880.76	1.01
OTHER SOURCES	306 156.97	0.21
STATE BUDGET	10 180 062.20	7.07
FOUNDATIONS	825 117.87	0.57
EU FUNDS	99 285 444.44	68.91
OTHERS	784 232.40	0.54
TOTAL	144 081 262.71	100

Source: ÚIPŠ.

Note: * Data from well-disciplined institutions and at the same time the most important providers (in total 6,465 institutions were addressed, 1 198 responded of which 596 declared provision of education in 2010 and 560 submitted data on financing); data does not cover part-time studies in formal education, respective data is collected by annual reporting of IVET institutions.

In the light of a low data on participation of 25-64 olds in education and training (only 2.8 % in both 2009 and 2010 and permanently below 5 % since 2003, according to Eurostat), there have been increased discussions about funding schemes and mechanisms to support CVET/LLL, however, with no results.

10.3.2 PUBLIC-PRIVATE COST-SHARING

There are no substantial public-private cost-sharing funding schemes and mechanisms applied, except the already cancelled (but in 2010 still valid) tax incentives for training of specific medical staff and quite simple tax incentive for employers within enterprise training (costs of training of employees is tax deductible).

The Strategy of Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance (*Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva*) adopted in 2007 suggested the introduction of financial tools for development of LLL (in its measure 8.15), however without any concrete proposal of financial scheme. MŠVVaŠ subsequently commissioned a study to identify appropriate financing scheme based on international experience. As a consequence tax incentives and learning vouchers were suggested in § 27 of the draft act on LLL from early 2009, but they were finally rejected under the pressure of Ministry of Finance and they were not included in the final wording of Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on LLL.

Thus, there is no political support for introduction of tax incentives for individuals suggested by experts, not to speak about other more sophisticated instruments (such as vouchers, individual learning accounts, loans, saving schemes or human capital contracts).

There is only one example when the government adopted a measure based on tax relief disregarding the criticism of the National Bank of Slovakia and the Ministry of Finance. In the light of the brain drain of medical staff to better paying EU countries the government decided to adopt a measure prepared by the Ministry of Health (MZ, *Ministerstvo zdravotníctva*) aimed at the stimulation of continuing professional development of medical staff in order to fill the gap of specialists. The measure was valid from 1st January 2008, thus tax deduction applied for the 2008 fiscal year (with tax reporting deadline 31st March 2009) for the first time. This act enabled medical doctors, dentists, nurses and obstetric nurses/midwives to include the costs of their continuing training (set and accredited by the Ministry of Health) into tax deductibles. As a consequence of the 19 % income tax rate, the spending of trainees was reduced by about one fifth. Nevertheless, this measure was among first victims of the crisis and a subsequent austerity package. 2010 was the last fiscal year trainees could apply this deduction (within the 2011 tax paying procedure).

Similarly, there is no political support for introduction of fiscal incentives for employers. Low corporate tax (19%) is considered by Ministry of Finance a strong incentive for employers leaving them more means to allocate for CVET if needed.

Learning accounts and vouchers were discussed only academically with no serious debate among decision makers. Saving schemes and loans aimed at VET are not in place either. On the other hand, governments are still positive for quite non-transparent co-financing of training of employees or future employees offered within a state aid to attract new investors.

The VET Development Fund established in 2010 backed by Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on VET (*Zákon č. 184/2009 Z. z. o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave*) was dominantly aimed at supporting secondary IVET, with the option to support also part-time studies and CVET offered by VET secondary schools. It is however not based on a “train or pay” principle. It was expected that VET Fund would collect means from voluntary donations from national

and international entities, while contributions from state administration authorities were forbidden. Not surprisingly, VET Fund is still dysfunctional having no means; and therefore it is expected that it will be abolished.

10.3.3 COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT TO FINANCE CVET

There are no cost-sharing schemes involving employers and employees into cooperation. There are no specific training funds created on the basis of collective bargaining and there are no regular CVET related training leaves. There is no genuine policy concerning payback clauses. There is only a framework regulation set by the Labour Code: An employer may conclude an agreement with an employee containing “the type of costs and their total sum which the employee shall be obliged to repay to the employer if he/she do not fulfil his/her commitment to remain in the employment relationship with the employer for the duration of the agreed period. This agreed period is maximum 5 years and the maximum amount of reimbursement of costs shall not exceed three quarters of the total cost. Some changes concerning training leaves and payback clauses can be expected in 2011 as a Labour Code amendment is envisaged.

In response to the crisis the national authorities decided to support CVET of employed people in order to prevent from their dismissal. Large amounts of resources were reallocated within the ESF to cofund retraining of employed, and similarly, a substantial increase could have been seen in a number of placements within the Graduate practice (see Table 88 in part 10.4).

10.3.4 REACHING THE GROUPS AT RISK THROUGH FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS

There are no funding schemes and mechanisms targeted at groups at risk except the tools used within the active labour market policies dominantly focusing on the unemployed (see Table 12 in the Annex).

10.4 FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) tools (see part 6.5 for specification) were funded by the state budget and by the European Social Fund within the so-called national projects addressing disadvantaged groups. Respective policies were designed and managed by the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, *Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny*) with an execution decentralised to respective labour offices.

Since 2004, a state-managed network of 46 Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family headed by the ÚPSVaR and labour market polices became regulated by Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (*Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti*). As a rule, there is no discrimination according to ownership of subjects providing employment services agreed with labour offices and covered from the ALMP central budget. Similarly, there is no discrimination according to ownership concerning access to contributions and other benefits in support of employment. Nevertheless, there is a lot of space for respective labour offices to bypass official rules, if they wish to do so. Decisive influence of political parties and local players cannot be excluded as the decision process can be hardly strictly regulated. On the other hand, improving transparency rules make any case of positive or negative discrimination a subject of public debating as media enjoy commenting of any example of disorder.

Active labour market policies were covered from the state budget via the ÚPSVaR as well as from the European Social Fund. The list of active labour market policies related to the

respective paragraphs (see the explanation below the table) of the Act on Employment Services and their results in 2004 to 2010 are offered in Table 12 in the Annex. In the following table, only the most relevant policies are presented in time series since 2004.

TABLE 88: ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES IN 2004, 2008, 2009 AND 2010								
ALMP TOOLS	PEOPLE AFFECTED				BUDGET ASSIGNED (IN EUR)			
	2004	2008	2009	2010	2004	2008	2009	2010
§ 46	27208	12143	17924	8824	5455898.5	3725446.92	5841204.64	3034974.09
§ 47	- *	13863	29921	20381	- *	8501069.87	30642710.81	17483907.28
§ 48B	- *	1693	1066	466	- *	401026.46	251399.11	125396.74
§ 51	14462	7451	11764	21176	5152065.6	4815714.30	10989976.03	20005283.85
TOTAL **	273354	264801	208016	251966	50789976.9	123688504.51	162181943.50	190438447.16

Source: ÚPSVaR.

Notes: EUR 1 = SKK 38.796 as of 31st December 2004; 2008 and 2009 data offered in EUR by the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

§ 46 Education and training for the labour market of the unemployed job seekers and employed job seekers, § 47 Education and training for the labour market of employee, § 48b Provision of benefits during training for the labour market and preparation for assertion at the labour market of disabled citizen, § 51 Contribution for the graduate practice.

* not implemented.

** including also additional tools listed in the act.

A gradual decrease in training for the labour market in the share of total ALMP investment till 2006 is visible, followed by a slight improvement till 2009 and ending with a dramatic decrease in 2010. At the same time, an increase in funding education and training of employees (§ 47) aimed at improving the employability and prevention from unemployment of the already working people can be seen below with a huge increase of its share in the crisis year 2009, followed again by a dramatic decrease in 2010. The only instrument enjoying a gradual increase is Graduate practice (§ 51).

Two instruments, Gradual practice and Education and training of employees (the second one despite a significant decrease compared to 2009), are dominant.

TABLE 89: DISTRIBUTION OF VET RELEVANT ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES MEANS IN 2004 TO 2010 (%)							
ALMP TOOLS	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
§ 46	10.7	10.6	2.1	2.5	3.01	3.60	1.59
§ 47	0.0*	0.0*	0.8	9.1	6.87	18.89	9.18
§ 48B	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.0*	0.32	0.16	0.07
§ 51	10.1	13.5	5.4	3.3	3.89	6.78	10.50
TOTAL **	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: ÚPSVaR.

Notes: § 46 Education and training for the labour market of the unemployed job seekers and employed job seekers, § 47 Education and training for the labour market of employee, § 48b Provision of benefits during training for the labour market and preparation for assertion at the labour market of disabled citizen, § 51 Contribution for the graduate practice.

* not implemented.

** including also additional tools listed in the act and visible in the Table 13 in the Annex.

The ESF Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources and the Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3 in years 2004-2006 (finally lasting till May 2009) are followed by the Operational Programme Education and Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion for the 2007-2013 programming period.

The Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources addressed all regions except the Bratislava Region that was covered by the Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3. Thus, twin national projects were implemented to address two eligible territories in parallel. The same practice is applied also within Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion. Within this operational programme twin projects targeting the Bratislava Region (Objective Regional competitiveness and employment) and the rest of Slovakia (Objective Convergence) are also elaborated.

The national projects aimed at education and training are expected to continue. A new bunch of national projects was designed for the new ESF programming period. Some of them with a direct impact on VET are presented in the following table.

TABLE 90: TOTAL BUDGETS (ESF AND STATE BUDGET MEANS) ALLOCATED TO VET RELEVANT NATIONAL PROJECTS OF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION			
NATIONAL PROJECT/ MANAGING INSTITUTION	DURATION	VALID EXCEPT BRATISLAVA REGION (EUR)	VALID FOR BRATISLAVA REGION (EUR)
NP VIII-2 NATIONAL SYSTEM OF OCCUPATIONS IN SLOVAK REPUBLIC/ EDUCATION CENTRE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FAMILY	2009 - 2012	11 352 320.00	819 890.00
NP XIV-2 SYSTEM FOR SURVEYING EMERGING AND VANISHING WORKING POSITIONS AND FORECASTING LABOUR MARKET NEEDS/ CENTRE OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FAMILY	2009 - 2012	3 005 745.88	230 509.16
NP XII-2 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEMIC DEEPENING OF WORKERS' QUALIFICATION/ CENTRE OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FAMILY	2009 - 2012	8 208 962.06	415 907.63
NP XXI-2 INDICATORS AND SYSTEM FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFICIENCY OF ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICY MEASURES/ EDUCATION CENTRE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FAMILY	2009 - 2010	346 034.16	59 956.71
EDUCATION AS THE TOOL OF MODERN AND PRO-CLIENT ORIENTED STATE STATISTICS/ STATISTICAL OFFICE	2010 - 2013	786 301.00	94 293.96
NP III-2/A EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE LABOUR MARKET/ CENTRE OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND FAMILY	2011 - 2012	10 000 000.00	-

GRADUATE PRACTICE	2011	18 491 600.00	-
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Source: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MPSVR, Ministerstvo práce, sociálních věcí a rodiny), Managing Authority for OP Employment and Social Inclusion.

Very urgently needed are results from two projects that are expected to have systemic impact: National Project VIII-2 aimed at the development of the National System of Occupations, and the National Project XIV-2 aimed at forecasting labour market needs. National Project XXI-2 is expected to improve assessment of active labour market policies and its results are crucial for monitoring the impact of policies and suggestions for corrections as well as respective amendments of the Act on Employment Services. This is also very relevant for CVET and labour market training organised by labour offices, as the efficiency of this training, cofinanced from the ESF within the earlier programming period, has been disputed. National Project III-2/A, which focuses on labour market training, can also benefit from results of this project as it is important to reduce the deadweight in provision of this training: to improve targeting on relevant groups and to focus training on appropriately identified skills.

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Ministry of Education of the SR - legislation

<http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=2791>

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family - employment services

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National Strategic Reference Framework SR (Národný strategický referenčný rámec SR) <http://www.nsrr.sk/>

State educational programmes (štátne vzdelávacie programy):

<http://www.siov.sk/statne-vzdelavacie-programy/9411s>

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Accreditation Commission of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (Akreditačná komisia Ministerstva školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu, AK MŠVVaŠ) <http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=639>

Accreditation Commission of the Slovak Republic Government (Akreditačná komisia vlády Slovenskej republiky, AK) www.akredkom.sk

Accreditation Council for Continuing Training of Pedagogical and Professional Staff (Akreditačná rada Ministerstva školstva Slovenskej republiky pre kontinuálne vzdelávanie pedagogických zamestnancov a odborných zamestnancov) <http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=5602>

Association of Adult Education Institutions in the SR (Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR, AIVD) www.aivd.sk

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny, ÚPSVaR) www.upsvar.sk

Employment Institute (Inštitút zamestnanosti) www.iz.sk

Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva, ÚIPŠ) www.uips.sk

Institute for Labour and Family Research (Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny, IVPR) www.sspr.gov.sk

Integrated System of Typal Positions (Integrovaný systém typových pozícií, ISTP) www.istp.sk

Ministry of Education of the SR (Ministerstvo školstva SR, MŠ) www.minedu.sk

Ministry of Finance of the SR (Ministerstvo financií SR, MF) www.finance.gov.sk

Ministry of Health of the SR (Ministerstvo zdravotníctva SR, MZ) www.health.gov.sk

Ministry of Interior of the SR (Ministerstvo vnútra SR, MV) www.minv.sk

Ministry of Justice of the SR (Ministerstvo spravodlivosti SR, MS) www.justice.gov.sk

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR (Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, MPSVR) www.employment.gov.sk

The National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní, NÚCEM) www.nucem.sk

National Institute for Education (Štátny pedagogický ústav, ŠPÚ) www.statpedu.sk

Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology (Výskumný ústav detskej psychológie a patopsychológie, VÚDPaP) www.vudpap.sk

Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (Slovenská akademická asociácia pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu) www.saaic.sk

State Institute of Vocational Education (Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania, ŠIOV) www.siov.sk

Statistical Office of SR (Štatistický úrad SR, ŠÚ SR) www.statistics.sk

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Websites addressing education related issues:

www.iedu.sk/Stranky/default2.aspx

www.burjanoskole.sk

www.uspesnaskola.sk

www.dobraskola.com

www.skolainak.sk

11.3 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIVD	Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých v SR (Association of Adult Education Institutions in the SR)
AK	Akreditačná komisia vlády Slovenskej republiky (Accreditation Commission of the Slovak Republic Government)
AK MŠVVaŠ	Akreditačná komisia Ministerstva školstva (Accreditation Commission of the Ministry of Education)
ALMP	Active labour market policy
AZZZ	Asociácia zamestnávateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky (Federation of the Employers' Association of Slovakia)
CQAF	Common Quality Assurance Framework
CVET	Continuing vocational education and training
CVTS	Continuing Vocational Training Survey
DPŠ	Doplňujúce pedagogické štúdium (complementary pedagogical study)
EQARF	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET
ENQA-VET	European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualification Framework
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
G	Gymnázium (grammar school)
GDP	Gross domestic product
HEI	Higher education Institution
ICT	Information communication technology
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISTP	Integrovaný systém typových pozícií (Integrated System of Typal Positions)
IVET	Initial vocational education and training
IVPR	Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny (Institute of Labour and Family Research)
JŠ	Jazyková škola (language school)
KOV	Klasifikácia odborov vzdelania (classification of education branches)

KOZ	Konfederácia odborových zväzov (Confederation of Trade Unions)
KŠÚ	Krajský školský úrad (Regional School Office)
KZAM	Klasifikácia zamestnaní (classification of occupations)
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LLL	Lifelong learning
LLP	Lifelong learning programme
MF	Ministerstvo financií (Ministry of Finance)
MPC	Metodicko-pedagogické centrum (Methodological-Pedagogical Centre)
MPRV	Ministerstvo pôdohospodárstva a rozvoja vidieka (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)
MPSVR	Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family)
MŠ	Ministerstvo školstva (Ministry of Education)
MŠVVaŠ	Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport)
MV	Ministerstvo vnútra (Ministry of Interior)
MVRR	Ministerstvo výstavby a regionálneho rozvoja (Ministry of Construction and Regional Development)
MZ	Ministerstvo zdravotníctva (Ministry of Health)
NACE	Nomenclature générale des activités économiques (General Classification of Economic Activities of the European Community)
NEC	National Europass Centre
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NSQ	National System of Qualifications
NÚCEM	Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní (National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements)
OP	Operational Programme
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QMS	Quality management system
R&D	Research and development

RÚZ	Republiková únia zamestnávateľov (National Union of Employers)
SAAIC	Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (Slovenská akademická asociácia pre medzinárodnú spoluprácu), LLP National Agency
SITES	Second Information Technology in Education Study
SKK	Slovak crown (currency)
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SOP	Sectoral Operational Programme
SOP	Stredisko odbornej praxe (centre of vocational practice)
SOŠ	Stredná odborná škola (secondary specialised school)
SOU	Stredné odborné učilište (secondary vocational school)
SPD	Single Programming Document
SPV	Stredisko praktického vyučovania (centre of practical training)
SR	Slovak Republic
SŠ	Spojená škola (joined school)
ŠH	Školské hospodárstvo (school farm)
ŠIOV	Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania (State Institute of Vocational Education)
ŠPÚ	Štátny pedagogický ústav (National Institute for Education)
ŠÚ	Štatistický úrad (Statistical Office)
UOE	UNESCO, OECD, Eurostat
ÚIPŠ	Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva (Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education)
ÚPSVaR	Ústredie práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny (Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family)
VÚDPaP	Výskumný ústav detskej psychológie a patopsychológie (Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology)
ZMOS	Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska (Association on towns and municipalities of Slovakia)
ZSŠ	Združená stredná škola (associated secondary school)
ZŠ	Základná škola (basic school)
ZUŠ	Základná umelecká škola (basic school of arts)

ANNEX

TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTORS (IN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AND %)												
NACE CATEGORY REV. 1.1	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
AGRICULTURE INCLUSIVE FISHING (A+B)	125.3	5.8	109.8	5.1	105.1	4.7	100.8	4.4	99.3	4.2	98	4.0
INDUSTRY INCLUSIVE CONSTRUCTION (C-F)	829.0	38.3	846.6	39.0	858.9	38.8	892.6	38.8	928.0	39.4	960.6	39.5
SERVICE (G-Q)	1 208.3	55.8	1 210	55.8	1 248.6	56.3	1 306.4	56.8	1 329.6	56.4	1 375.1	56.5
UNKNOWN	1.9	0.1	4.1	0.2	3.8	0.2	1.9	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.0
TOTAL EMPLOYED	2 164.6	100	2 170.4	100	2 216.2	100	2 301.4	100	2 357.3	100	2 433.8	100

Source: Statistical Office (ŠÚ, Štatistický úrad), LFS annual data.

TABLE 2: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTORS (IN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AND %)						
NACE REV.2	2008		2009		2010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
ALL NACE ACTIVITIES TOTAL	2 433.8	100	2 365.8	100	2 317.5	100
A AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING	96.3	3.96	84.9	3.59	75.0	3.24
B MINING AND QUARRYING	14.1	0.58	10.9	0.46	13.9	0.60
C MANUFACTURING	639.9	26.29	565.2	23.89	530.0	22.87
D ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	29.9	1.23	30.7	1.30	27.0	1.17
E WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	35.2	1.45	33.4	1.41	31.1	1.34
F CONSTRUCTION	257.6	10.58	257.2	10.87	258.3	11.15
G WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	292.3	12.01	312.7	13.22	306.3	13.22
H TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE	158.4	6.51	151.3	6.40	145.4	6.27
I ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	107.6	4.42	107.1	4.53	103.6	4.47
J INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	45.8	1.88	48.8	2.06	55.9	2.41
K FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	55.5	2.28	50.0	2.11	47.8	2.06
L REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	13.0	0.53	13.0	0.55	13.8	0.60
M PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	76.5	3.14	82.0	3.47	75.4	3.25
N ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	60.2	2.47	58.6	2.48	59.5	2.57

O PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL SECURITY	167.0	6.86	178.4	7.54	189.0	8.16
P EDUCATION	164.0	6.74	162.0	6.85	165.0	7.12
Q HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	151.2	6.21	149.8	6.33	157.1	6.78
R ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	24.6	1.01	28.7	1.21	26.8	1.16
S OTHER SERVICE ACTIVITIES	38.6	1.59	35.2	1.49	31.2	1.35
T ACTIVITIES OF HOUSEHOLDS AS EMPLOYERS	5.7	0.23	5.1	0.22	4.8	0.21
U ACTIVITIES OF EXTRATERRITORIAL ORGANISATIONS AND BODIES	0.7	0.03	0.8	0.03	0.9	0.04
NO RESPONSE	0.3	0.01	0.3	0.01	0.3	0.01

Source: ŠÚ, LFS annual data.

TABLE 3: EMPLOYMENT BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN 2004 - 2010 (IN THOUSANDS)							
TOTAL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
		2 170.4	2 216.2	2 301.4	2 357.3	2 433.8	2 365.8
WITHOUT SCHOOL EDUCATION	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2
ISCED 2	110.3	102.6	107.0	105.9	109.9	92.8	91.4
ISCED 3C (CoA)	728.1	700.5	738.7	756.6	769.4	739.7	696.5
ISCED 3C (WITHOUT CoA)	48.7	55.8	56.2	61.3	60.5	57.3	55.4
ISCED 3A (MSLC) + CoA	111.9	115.5	120.6	123.7	126.0	105.3	81.7
ISCED 3A (MSLC) GEN	95.9	97.8	100.8	101.7	103.6	100.8	98.6
ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET	746.7	778.5	788.6	822.3	857.4	842.4	828.1
ISCED 5B	16.9	21.1	22.7	18.4	19.5	20.1	16
ISCED 5A - Bc	9.6	12.5	15.2	20.2	24.7	36.4	43.9
ISCED 5A - M	299.5	326.8	345.7	341.8	356.1	362.8	398.2
ISCED 6	2.9	5.2	5.9	5.6	6.6	8.2	7.7

Source: ŠÚ, LFS annual data.

Notes: CoA - Certificate of Apprenticeship (výučný list), MSLC - "Maturita" School Leaving Certificate (vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške) GEN - general education stream, VET vocational stream.

Bc- Bachelor, M- master.

TABLE 4: UNEMPLOYMENT BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN 2004 - 2010 (IN THOUSANDS)							
TOTAL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
		480.7	427.5	353.4	291.9	257.5	324.2
WITHOUT SCHOOL EDUCATION	-	0.2	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1
ISCED 2	115.5	116.0	99.0	85.2	71.6	66.1	72.3
ISCED 3C (CoA)	187.8	161.6	133.8	106.4	93.4	119.9	148.7
ISCED 3C (WITHOUT CoA)	11.8	8.2	8.9	7.5	4.8	7.2	11.1
ISCED 3A (MSLC) + CoA	22.9	21.1	17.6	11.0	11.5	18.5	19.0
ISCED 3A (MSLC) GEN	15.9	14.5	10.5	10.2	8.6	14.9	14.8
ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET	106.4	86.7	69.8	55.4	52.0	78.6	94.1
ISCED 5B	2.1	1.9	0.7	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.9
ISCED 5A - Bc	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.2	3.1	5.3
ISCED 5A - M	17.8	16.3	11.5	13.3	12.7	14.4	21.4
ISCED 6	-	-	-	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2

Source: ŠÚ, LFS annual data.

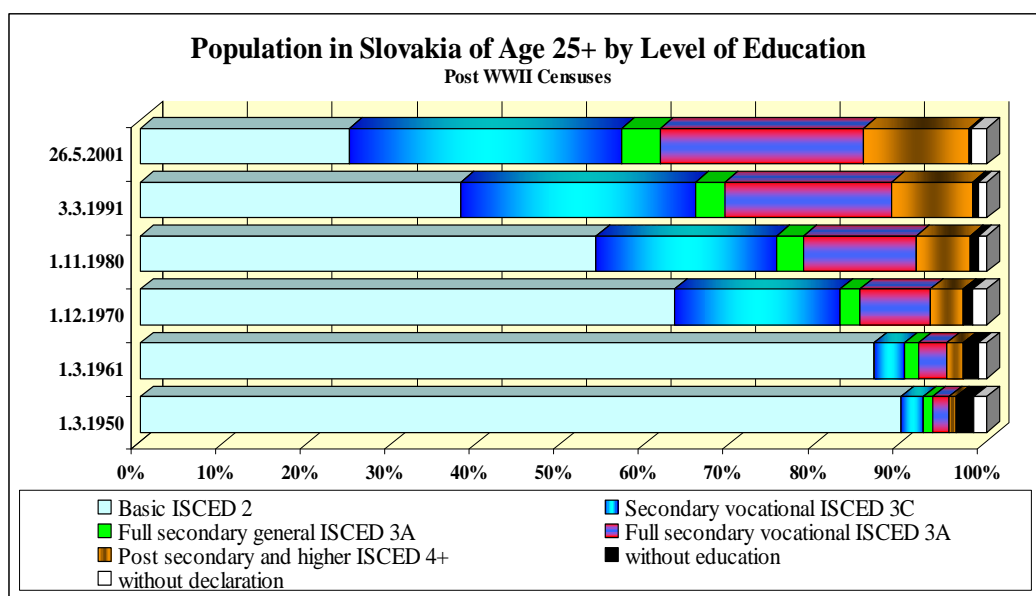
Note: CoA - Certificate of Apprenticeship (výučný list), MSLC - "Maturita" School Leaving Certificate (vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške) GEN - general education stream, VET vocational stream.

Bc- Bachelor, M- master.

TABLE 5: UNEMPLOYMENT IN 2003 - 2010							
YEAR	UNEMPLOYED (LFS, EUROSTAT)	UNEMPLOYED (4Q LFS)		DISPOSABLE REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED (31 ST DECEMBER)		REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED (31 ST DECEMBER)	
	RATE (%)	NUMBER	RATE (%)	NUMBER	RATE (%)	NUMBER	RATE (%)
2003	17.6	458 200	17.4	413 086	15.6	452 224	16.7
2004	18.2	455 100	17.1	342 294	13.1	383 155	14.6
2005	16.3	407 600	15.3	293 801	11.4	333 834	12.9
2006	13.4	319 000	12.0	240 567	9.4	273 437	10.7
2007	11.1	275 300	10.3	207 863	8.0	239 939	9.2
2008	9.5	234 400	8.7	218 920	8.4	248 556	9.5
2009	12.0	374 600	13.9	335 490	12.7	379 553	14.3
2010	14.4	377 300	13.9	334 903	12.46	381 209	14.19

Source: ŠÚ (LFS), ÚPSVaR.

DIAGRAM 1



Source: ŠÚ.

TABLE 6: CURRENT EXPENDITURE NORMATIVES PER STUDENT IN 2004, 2007 AND 2008 (IN EUR**)**

SCHOOL CATEGORY***	WAGE NORMATIVE			OPERATIONAL NORMATIVE (MINIMUM)			NORMATIVE TOTAL (MINIMUM)**		
	2004	2007	2008	2004	2007	2008	2004	2007	2008
REGULAR ZŠ	409.0	593.1	661.2	98.2	152.5	169.1	507.2	745.7	830.3
REGULAR G	490.5	720.8	803.5	99.8	156.0	174.3	590.2	876.8	977.8
SOŠ	682.6	926.0	1032.2	103.6	161.5	182.8	786.2	1 087.4	1 215.0
CA	682.6	752.1	838.4	103.6	156.8	175.6	786.2	908.9	1 014.0
SOŠ OF HEALTH	792.5	1 228.6	1 369.6	105.8	169.6	195.2	898.2	1 398.2	1 564.7
SOŠ OF ART	792.5	1 418.9	1 581.6	105.8	174.6	203.0	898.2	1 593.5	1 784.6
CONSERVATORIES	1 707.9	2 702.9	3 013.0	123.8	209.0	255.7	1 831.7	2 912.0	3 268.7
SOU AND U	746.7	1 079.1	1 202.8	120.6	190.5	213.2	867.4	1 269.5	1 416.0
SPV	309.3	419.5	467.6	96.2	147.9	162.0	405.5	567.4	629.6
G, SOŠ FOR DISABLED	1 056.6	1 482.8	1 652.9	142.5	201.3	229.7	1 199.2	1 684.1	1 882.6
SOU FOR DISABLED	1 056.6	1 791.7	1 997.3	142.5	209.6	242.4	1 425.0	2 001.3	2 239.7
OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOLS	1 056.6	2 045.8	2 280.5	142.5	216.4	252.8	1 425.0	2 262.2	2 533.3

Source: Ministry of Education (MŠ, Ministerstvo školstva).

Notes: * In case of SOU and U without practical training normatives were only 394.5 and 505.8 respectively.

** Sum of two normatives (wage and operational); the range in operational normatives (only minimum is presented in the table) is in detail regulated according to specific variables (one of variables was represented by eight climate categories with different heating requirements), the maximum normative was higher in each category by EUR 22.3 in 2004 and 21.6. in 2005. In 2006, it represented EUR 24.5, however in case of special schools normatives varied more (also depending on the category of disability) with maximum EUR 5 721.8.

*** ZŠ - basic schools (základné školy). G - grammar schools (gymnázia). CA - Commercial academies. U - vocational schools (učilištia). SPV - centres of practical training (strediská praktického vyučovania); ZŠ and G data are presented for the sake of comparison, special ZŠ for disabled and G specialising on sports are not included.

**** 2004 data according to the exchange rate EUR 1 = SKK 41.16 as of 31st December 2003; 2007 data according to the exchange rate EUR 1 = SKK 34.573 as of 29th December 2006, 2008 data according to the exchange rate EUR 1 = SKK 33.603 as of 31st December 2007.

TABLE 7: CURRENT EXPENDITURE NORMATIVES PER STUDENT IN 2009 (IN EUR)			
SCHOOL CATEGORY***	WAGE NORMATIVE	OPERATIONAL NORMATIVE (MINIMUM)	NORMATIVE TOTAL (MINIMUM)**
REGULAR ZŠ	833.50	212.28	1045.78
REGULAR G	957.08	216.94	1174.02
CONSERVATORIES	3 422.74	363.10	3785.84
SOŠ - CATEGORY 1	1 199.67	226.09	1425.76
SOŠ - CATEGORY 2	1 509.88	237.79	1747.67
SOŠ - CATEGORY 3	1 418.44	234.34	1652.78
SOŠ - CATEGORY 4	1 490.17	267.03	1757.20
SOŠ - CATEGORY 5	1 530.01	283.53	1813.54
SOŠ - CATEGORY 6	1 490.17	297.02	1787.19
SOŠ - CATEGORY 7	1 569.38	270.02	1839.40
SOŠ - CATEGORY 8	1 577.82	285.33	1863.15
SOŠ - CATEGORY 9	1 636.89	302.56	1939.45
SOŠ - CATEGORY 10	1 789.43	301.50	2090.93
SOŠ - CATEGORY 11	1 882.63	281.83	2164.46
SOŠ - CATEGORY 12	1 721.26	245.77	1967.03
SOŠ - CATEGORY 13	1 740.38	261.48	2001.86
SOŠ - CATEGORY 14	1 797.76	278.63	2076.39
SOŠ - CATEGORY 15	1 807.32	293.99	2101.31
SOŠ - CATEGORY 16	1 778.63	307.90	2086.53
SOŠ - CATEGORY 17	1 852.11	250.70	2102.81
SOŠ - CATEGORY 18	1 831.98	294.92	2126.90
SOŠ - CATEGORY 19	1 976.26	270.37	2246.63

SOŠ - CATEGORY 20	2 050.63	288.17	2338.8
SOŠ - CATEGORY 21	1 955.01	299.56	2254.57
SOŠ - CATEGORY 22	1 962.23	269.84	2232.07
SOŠ - CATEGORY 23	2 214.69	309.36	2524.05
SOŠ - CATEGORY 24	2 180.26	323.04	2503.3
SOŠ - CATEGORY 25	1 029.95	219.70	1249.65
SPV	528.46	200.77	729.23
G, CONSERVATORIES FOR DISABLED	1 887.86	282.03	2169.89
SOŠ FOR DISABLED	2 390.43	300.99	2691.42
OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOLS	2 621.96	309.71	2931.67

Source: MŠ.

Note: For school category abbreviations see Table 6 above. According to the Regulation of the government No. 630/2008 Coll., as amended, each category comprises the exactly listed number of study/training branches delivered at SOŠ, e.g. the study branch coded 6317 6 Commercial academy is the only branch listed in Category 25, study branch 2679 4 Mechanic-mechatronic worker is the only branch in Category 9. The highest number of branches is included in Category 1.

TABLE 8: CURRENT EXPENDITURE NORMATIVES PER STUDENT IN 2010 (IN EUR)			
SCHOOL CATEGORY***	WAGE NORMATIVE	OPERATIONAL NORMATIVE (MINIMUM)	NORMATIVE TOTAL (MINIMUM)**
REGULAR ZŠ	852.85	216.39	1 069.24
REGULAR G	982.31	221.28	1 203.59
CONSERVATORIES	3 496.00	376.50	3 872.50
SOŠ - CATEGORY 1	1 225.34	230.48	1 455.82
SOŠ - CATEGORY 2	1 542.20	242.45	1 784.65
SOŠ - CATEGORY 3	1 448.81	238.92	1 687.73
SOŠ - CATEGORY 4	1 522.06	271.78	1 793.84
SOŠ - CATEGORY 5	1 562.76	288.36	1 851.12
SOŠ - CATEGORY 6	1 522.06	301.87	1 823.93
SOŠ - CATEGORY 7	1 602.98	274.83	1 877.81
SOŠ - CATEGORY 8	1 611.59	290.21	1 901.80
SOŠ - CATEGORY 9	1 671.92	307.53	1 979.45
SOŠ - CATEGORY 10	1 849.04	314.23	2 163.27
SOŠ - CATEGORY 11	1 922.93	286.93	2 209.86
SOŠ - CATEGORY 12	1 758.10	250.62	2 008.72
SOŠ - CATEGORY 13	1 777.64	266.39	2 044.03
SOŠ - CATEGORY 14	1 836.24	283.65	2 119.89

SOŠ - CATEGORY 15	1 846.01	299.07	2 145.08
SOŠ - CATEGORY 16	1 816.71	313.01	2 129.72
SOŠ - CATEGORY 17	1 891.76	255.68	2 147.44
SOŠ - CATEGORY 18	1 871.20	300.03	2 171.23
SOŠ - CATEGORY 19	2 018.56	275.51	2 294.07
SOŠ - CATEGORY 20	2 094.53	293.42	2 387.95
SOŠ - CATEGORY 21	1 996.86	304.77	2 301.63
SOŠ - CATEGORY 22	2 004.24	274.96	2 279.20
SOŠ - CATEGORY 23	2 262.09	314.80	2 576.89
SOŠ - CATEGORY 24	2 226.93	328.51	2 555.44
SOŠ - CATEGORY 25	1 031.42	223.15	1 254.57
SOŠ - CATEGORY 26	1 225.34	245.52	1 470.86
SOŠ - CATEGORY 27	1 238.66	291.15	1 529.81
SPV	539.77	204.56	744.33
G, CONSERVATORIES FOR DISABLED	1 946.08	287.81	2 233.89
SOŠ FOR DISABLED	2 453.17	306.98	2 760.15
OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOLS	2 704.77	316.49	3 021.26

Source: MŠ.

Note: For school category abbreviations see Table 6 above. For 2010, study branches in SOŠ were reallocated into 27 categories.

SCHOOL CATEGORY	MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, ETC.					CONTINUING TRAINING OF PEDAGOGICAL STAFF			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2005	2006	2007	2008
REGULAR ZŠ	14.2	16.4	17.6	22.0	24.6	2.3	2.4	3.0	9.9
REGULAR G	15.8	18.3	20.6	24.8	27.7	2.8	3.2	3.6	12.1
SOŠ	19.6	22.7	24.3	29.3	32.7	3.8	4.1	4.6	15.5
CA	19.6	18.3	21.2	25.5	28.5	2.8	3.3	3.8	12.6
SOŠ OF HEALTH	21.8	27.8	29.8	35.9	40.1	5.1	5.4	6.1	20.5
SOŠ OF ART	21.8	31.0	38.1	40.0	44.7	5.9	7.4	7.1	23.7
CONSERVATORIES	39.8	46.1	56.4	68.0	75.9	9.6	11.9	13.5	45.2
SOU AND U	20.9	24.2**	25.9	32.6	36.5	4.2**	4.4	5.4	18.0
SPV	12.2	14.1	15.1	18.3	20.4	1.7	1.8	2.1	7.0
G, SOŠ FOR DISABLED	27.0	24.1	44.1	41.4	46.3	6.0	7.5	7.4	24.8
SOU FOR DISABLED	27.0	24.1	44.1	48.2	53.8	6.0	7.5	9.0	30.0

OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOL	27.0	24.1	49.3	53.7	60.0	6.0	8.9	10.2	34.2
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Source: MŠ.

Notes: * means out of total normatives per student intended for direct funding of learning environment.

** In SOU and U not offering practical training normatives were reduced - only 15.1 and 2.0, respectively.

No means were specified for staff training in 2004. Since 2008 equivalent of 1.5 % of wages is available to cover continuing professional development of staff compared to 0.5 % in previous years. For school category abbreviation explanation and exchange rates see the Table 6 above.

TABLE 10: FUNDING OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT* IN 2009 (IN EUR)		
SCHOOL CATEGORY	MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, ETC.	CONTINUING TRAINING OF PEDAGOGICAL STAFF
REGULAR ZŠ	30.94	12.50
REGULAR G	33.74	14.36
CONSERVATORIES	89.76	51.34
SOŠ - CATEGORY 1	39.26	17.99
SOŠ - CATEGORY 2	46.30	22.65
SOŠ - CATEGORY 3	44.22	21.28
SOŠ - CATEGORY 4	45.86	22.35
SOŠ - CATEGORY 5	46.76	22.95
SOŠ - CATEGORY 6	45.86	22.35
SOŠ - CATEGORY 7	47.66	23.54
SOŠ - CATEGORY 8	47.85	23.66
SOŠ - CATEGORY 9	49.19	24.56
SOŠ - CATEGORY 10	52.65	26.85
SOŠ - CATEGORY 11	54.77	28.24
SOŠ - CATEGORY 12	51.11	25.82
SOŠ - CATEGORY 13	51.54	26.11
SOŠ - CATEGORY 14	52.84	26.97
SOŠ - CATEGORY 15	53.06	27.11
SOŠ - CATEGORY 16	52.41	26.68
SOŠ - CATEGORY 17	54.08	27.78
SOŠ - CATEGORY 18	53.62	27.48
SOŠ - CATEGORY 19	56.90	29.64
SOŠ - CATEGORY 20	58.59	30.76
SOŠ - CATEGORY 21	56.42	29.32

SOŠ - CATEGORY 22	56.58	29.43
SOŠ - CATEGORY 23	62.32	33.22
SOŠ - CATEGORY 24	61.53	32.70
SOŠ - CATEGORY 25	35.41	15.45
SPV	24.01	7.92
G, CONSERVATORIES FOR DISABLED	54.89	28.32
SOŠ FOR DISABLED	66.31	35.86
OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOLS	71.56	39.33

Source: MŠ.

Note: For category explanation see Table 7 above. For school abbreviations see Table 6 above.

TABLE 11: FUNDING OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT* IN 2010 (IN EUR)		
SCHOOL CATEGORY	MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, ETC.	CONTINUING TRAINING OF PEDAGOGICAL STAFF
REGULAR ZŠ	31.76	12.79
REGULAR G	34.71	14.73
CONSERVATORIES	92.05	52.44
SOŠ - CATEGORY 1	40.26	18.38
SOŠ - CATEGORY 2	47.48	23.13
SOŠ - CATEGORY 3	45.35	21.73
SOŠ - CATEGORY 4	47.03	22.83
SOŠ - CATEGORY 5	47.95	23.44
SOŠ - CATEGORY 6	47.03	22.83
SOŠ - CATEGORY 7	48.87	24.04
SOŠ - CATEGORY 8	49.07	24.17
SOŠ - CATEGORY 9	50.44	25.08
SOŠ - CATEGORY 10	54.48	27.74
SOŠ - CATEGORY 11	56.17	28.84
SOŠ - CATEGORY 12	52.41	26.37
SOŠ - CATEGORY 13	52.85	26.66
SOŠ - CATEGORY 14	54.19	27.54
SOŠ - CATEGORY 15	54.41	27.69
SOŠ - CATEGORY 16	53.75	27.25
SOŠ - CATEGORY 17	55.46	28.38
SOŠ - CATEGORY 18	54.99	28.07
SOŠ - CATEGORY 19	58.35	30.28
SOŠ - CATEGORY 20	60.08	31.42

SOŠ - CATEGORY 21	57.85	29.95
SOŠ - CATEGORY 22	58.02	30.06
SOŠ - CATEGORY 23	63.90	33.93
SOŠ - CATEGORY 24	63.10	33.40
SOŠ - CATEGORY 25	35.84	15.47
SOŠ - CATEGORY 26	40.26	18.38
SOŠ - CATEGORY 27	40.56	18.58
SPV	24.62	8.10
G, CONSERVATORIES FOR DISABLED	56.70	29.19
SOŠ FOR DISABLED	68.26	36.80
OU AND PRACTICAL SCHOOLS	74.00	40.57

Source: MŠ.

Note: For school category abbreviations see Table 6 above. For 2010, study branches in SOŠ were reallocated into 27 categories.

TABLE 12: FUNDING ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES IN 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009,2010

ALMP TOOLS	PEOPLE AFFECTED OR PLACES CREATED					BUDGET ASSIGNED (IN EUR)					AVERAGE CONTRIBUTION PER PLACE OR PER PERSON (IN EUR)				
	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010	2004	2007	2008	2009	2010
§ 32	- *	- *	3207	4901	6045	- *	- *	32567.42	49103.48	60009.86	- *	- *	10.2	10.0	9.9
§ 43(7)	- *	- *	524	736	1210	- *	- *	6266.65	7877.68	14460.87	- *	- *	12.0	10.7	12.0
§ 43(10)	- *	- *	129	1129	2555	- *	- *	1899.65	29303.43	83990.24	- *	- *	14.7	26.0	32.9
§ 43(11)	- *	- *	5	48	14	- *	- *	145.39	790.78	206.18	- *	- *	29.1	16.5	14.7
§ 46	27208	8890	12143	17924	8824	5455898.5	1923460.1	3725446.92	5841204.64	3034974.09	200.5	216.4	306.8	325.9	343.9
§ 47	- *	12537	13863	29921	20381	- *	7097743.8	8501069.87	30642710.81	17483907.28	- *	566.1	613.2	1024.1	857.9
§ 48B	- *	- *	1693	1066	466	- *	- *	401026.46	251399.11	125396.74	- *	- *	236.9	235.8	269.1
§ 49	5618	10038	12096	12870	15033	8250424.5	20647259.6	33516119.40	39383573.61	48217631.49	1468.6	2056.9	2770.8	3060.1	3207.5
§ 49A	- *	- *	65	250	266	- *	- *	33415.09	136392.95	145541.62	- *	- *	514.1	545.6	547.1
§ 50	1778	2550	1016	128	236	2823537.4	6241442.9	2502800.74	287325.18	510211.45	1588.0	2447.6	2463.4	2244.7	2161.9
§ 50A	- *	- *	820	1502	3112	- *	- *	2964567.08	5847572.15	12740461.69	- *	- *	3615.3	3893.2	4094.0
§ 50C	- *	- *	n.a.	437	383	- *	- *	n.a.	2732522.58	2049712.41	- *	- *	n.a.	6252.9	5351.7
§ 50D	- *	- *	- *	38197	30140	- *	- *	- *	2555404.23	2297832.15	- *	- *	- *	66.9	76.2
§ 50E	- *	- *	- *	6559	3408	- *	- *	- *	20822633.00	8504784.28	- *	- *	- *	3174.7	2495.5
§ 50F	- *	- *	- *	156	207	- *	- *	- *	143286.10	292412.26	- *	- *	- *	918.5	1412.6
§ 50G	- *	- *	- *	3	0	- *	- *	- *	2508.69	0.0	- *	- *	- *	836.2	0.0
§ 50H	- *	- *	- *	0	0	- *	- *	- *	0.0	0.0	- *	- *	- *	0.0	0.0
§50I	- *	- *	- *	- *	5376	- *	- *	- *	- *	18014552.28	- *	- *	- *	- *	3350.9
§50J	- *	- *	- *	- *	158	- *	- *	- *	- *	453524.41	- *	- *	- *	- *	2870.4
§ 51	14462	8937	13435	11764	21176	5152065.6	2526441.7	4815714.30	10989976.03	20005283.85	356.2	282.7	646.3	934.2	944.7
§ 52	219876	257299	166630	36459	51541	25414077.6	27624551.3	27768303.43	5729467.23	7861386.59	115.6	107.4	166.6	157.1	152.5
§ 52A	- *	- *	16599	3981	3967	- *	- *	13176775.64	4771247.67	471556.60	- *	- *	793.8	1198.5	1188.8

§ 53	51	- *	12311	16052	28909	11820.5	- *	1460378.97	4149691.89	8319328.39	231.8	- *	118.6	258.5	287.8
§ 53A	- *	- *	6	42	47	- *	- *	2726.32	30745.94	38544.22	- *	- *	454.4	732.0	820.1
§ 53B	- *	- *	n.a.	6521	16245	- *	- *	n.a.	37681.51	225892.19	- *	- *	n.a.	5.8	13.9
§ 54	- *	- *	8227	2274	11489	- *	- *	4261079.53	1607150.08	2154156.21	- *	- *	517.9	706.8	187.5
§55A	- *	- *	- *	- *	42	- *	- *	- *	- *	46630.00	- *	- *	- *	- *	1110.2
§ 56	138	862	739	1417	1631	359044.6	4926230.8	5241730.00	11284043.64	13793583.12	2601.8	5714.9	7093.0	7963.3	8457.1
§ 56A	- *	- *	189	297	316	- *	- *	104007.27	459186.28	717372.66	- *	- *	550.3	1546.1	2270.2
§ 57	107	389	337	439	599	275596.0	2496066.3	2471561.44	3580254.75	5071910.14	2575.7	6416.6	7334.0	8155.5	8467.3
§ 59	18	73	159	275	346	53850.9	356504.3	858177.52	1622146.69	2327023.01	2991.7	4883.6	5397.3	5898.7	6725.5
§ 60	- *	2674	6592	12668	17844	- *	3761704.0	11842725.42	9186743.37	11131870.88	- *	1406.8	1796.5	725.2	623.8
§ 110	4098	- *	- *	- *	- *	3269257.3	- *	- *	- *	- *	797.8	- *	- *	- *	- *
TOTAL	273354	304249	270785	208016	251966	50789976.9	77601404.9	123688504.51	162181943.50	190438447.16	185.8	255.1	456.8	779.7	755.8

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (ÚPSVaR, Ústredie práce sociálnych vecí a rodiny).

Notes: EUR 1 = SKK 38.796 as of 31st December 2004; EUR 1 = SKK 33.603 as of 31st December 2007; 2008 and 2009 data provided by ÚPSVaR, * not implemented.

§ 32 - Mediating employment (in particular contribution to travel costs of job seeker related with entry interview with employer), § 43(7) Contribution to travel costs of job seekers related with attendance in activities focused on guidance and counselling services for job seekers, § 43(10) Payment of accommodation, meals and travel costs for job seekers/interested in change attending activities focused on guidance and counselling services for job seekers that last more than three days, § 43(11) Contribution to services for families with children for job seekers/interested in change attending activities focused on guidance and counselling, § 46 Education and training for the labour market of the job seeker and person interested in employment, § 47 Education and training for the labour market of employee, § 48b Provision of benefits during training for the labour market and preparation for assertion at the labour market of disabled citizen, § 49 Contribution for self-employment, § 49a Contribution for adjusting to working conditions of disadvantaged job seeker, § 50 Contribution for employing a disadvantaged job seeker, § 50a Contribution to provide support in maintaining employees with low wages in jobs, § 50c Contribution to support creation and maintaining jobs in social enterprise, § 50d Contribution to support maintaining employment, § 50e Contribution to support creation of new jobs, § 50f Contribution to employee's wage, § 50g Contribution to support self-employment, § 50h Contribution to support self-employment in production of and trade in agricultural products, § 50i Contribution to support regional and local employment, § 50j Contribution to support employment for implementing flood-protection measures and for eliminating consequences of an emergency, § 51 Contribution for the graduate practice, § 52 Contribution for activation activity, § 52a Contribution for activation activities carried out through voluntary services, § 53 Contribution for commuting to work, § 53a Contribution for moving to work, § 53b Contribution for transport to work, § 54 Programmes and projects (focused on verification of newly implemented active labour market policy measures), § 55a Training and preparation for employment of disabled citizen, § 56 Contribution for establishing and maintaining the sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace, § 56a Contribution for maintaining a disabled citizen in job, § 57 Contribution for operating or performing self-employment to disabled citizens, § 59 Contribution for activities of the assistant at work, § 60 Contribution to cover operating costs of the sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace and employees' transport costs; § 110 of the older act on employment (387/1996 Coll.) subsidies for sheltered workshops and workplaces.

Source: ÚPSVaR.

Notes: ¹ 0.0015, ² 0.0001, ³ 0.0022, ⁴ 0.0049, ⁵ 0.0005, ⁶ 0.0015, ⁷ 0.0001

* *measure not implemented, n.a. data not available.....*