



# **Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills**

## **Full Country Report - Slovakia**

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**Independent national experts network in the  
area of adult education/adult skills**

**Full country report - Slovakia**

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## 1.0 COUNTRY OVERVIEW (STATISTICAL ELEMENT TO BE INSERTED BY ECORYS FROM UPDATED COUNTRY OVERVIEW)

### 1.1 Employment rate – entire population

**Table 1.1: Evolution of employment rate - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data**

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
<b>EU-28 average</b>	:	67.9	68.6	68.6	68.4	68.4	69.2	70	71	75% of the 20-64 year-olds in employment	72
<b>Member State</b>	63	64.5	64.6	65	65.1	65	65.9	67.7	69.8		

*Source:* Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code lfsa\_ergaed, last updated 25 April 2017.

*Explanatory note:* This table compares the average employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in a given Member State over the period 2000-2016 to EU targets and average, including the EU2020 target, national 2020 targets and the average EU employment rate for 2016.

#### - Comparison to EU2020 target

The employment rate is 69.8% in Slovakia, in comparison with the EU-2020 target of 75%.

#### -Comparison to National 2020 target

The national target for 2020 is set at 72%, i.e. slightly below the EU target of 75%. The employment rate currently stands below both the national and the EU-2020 target.

The employment rate in Slovakia has been slowly growing over the past years towards the National 2020 target and the trends are positive. It is a realistic prospect that this target will be achieved.

#### -Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016

In 2016 the employment rate in Slovakia was 69.8% compared to a EU average of 71%. Therefore the national rate stands just under the EU-28 average, but not by a significant portion (1.2 percentage points).

*-Evolution over time*

The employment rate in Slovakia has been slowly growing over the past years and the trends of growth are positive. There has been consistent growth over time, except for a fluctuation in 2013 (0.1 percentage point decrease). The overall increase in employment rate, is due to the long-term position of Slovakia among lower performing countries when it comes to the performance of the labour market<sup>1</sup>. Also, according to the Slovak Statistical Office, the economic growth contributed to the maintenance of positive trends on the job market in the course of all year 2016.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 Participation rate – entire population

**Table 1.2: Evolution of participation rate in education and training - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data**

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	<a href="#">EU 2020</a>	<a href="#">National 2020</a>
<b>EU-28 average</b>	:	9.6	9.3	9.1	9.2	10.7	10.8	10.7	10.8	-	-
<b>Member State</b>	:	4.6	3.1	4.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	15% of adults in lifelong learning (LLL)	

*Source:* Participation rate in education and training by sex and age (%), Eurostat code trng\_lfse\_01, last updated 25 April 2017.

*Explanatory note:* This table compares the participation rate in lifelong learning of adults aged 25-64 to EU data over the period 2000-2016.

<sup>1</sup> Lubyová, M., Štefánik, M. and coll. (2015). *Trh práce na Slovensku 2016+* (Job market in Slovakia 2016+), Slovak Academy of Sciences and Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia, p. 12. [http://www.proq.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download\\_files/novinky/Monografia\\_Lubyova\\_Stefanik\\_a\\_kolektiv\\_naweb.pdf](http://www.proq.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download_files/novinky/Monografia_Lubyova_Stefanik_a_kolektiv_naweb.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Slovak Statistical office (March 2017), *Zamestnanosť 2016* (Employment rate 2016), Bratislava, Slovakia. [Zamestnanosť podľa Výberového zisťovania pracovných síl \[pr0002qs\]](#)

*- Comparison to EU2020 target*

Slovakia continues to be one of the EU countries with the lowest participation rate in education and training of adults. At 2.9%, the rate is far below the EU target of 15%.

*-Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016*

With a participation rate of 2.9% in 2016, Slovakia is also far below the EU average of 10.8%. Only Romania and Bulgaria have lower participation rate out of the EU countries.

*-Evolution over time*

- There has been a slow decrease in participation rate over the past 10 years, from 4.6% in 2005 to 2.9% in 2016. This reflects:
- stagnation in the policy area of adult education and missing tools, such as source of information on adult learning, financial mechanism supporting the adults interested in further education, validation of further education, conditions for better placement on the job market (explained in the 2016 country report)
- low awareness within the general public of the possibilities and importance of adult education for improvement of their quality of life
- deterioration of quality of education in Slovakia in general, as shown in the PISA and PIIAC results.

### 1.3 Trends for low qualified adults

#### 1.3.1 Share of low qualified adults

**Table 1.3: Share of low-qualified adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016**

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>EU-28 average</b>	:	30.6	27.3	26.6	25.8	24.8	24.1	23.5	23
<b>Member State</b>	16.2	12.1	9	8.7	8.3	8.1	9	8.6	8.1

*Source:* Population by educational attainment level, sex and age (%), Eurostat edat\_ifse\_03, last updated 25 April 2017.

*Explanatory note:* this table compares the percentage of the population with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) in 2016 to the EU-28 average for 2016 and the period 2000-2016.



*-Comparison to EU-28 average*

The share of low-qualified adults has been in well below the EU average over the long-term. The share was 8.1% in 2016 compared to 23% in 2016 (almost three times lower). Slovakia, together with Lithuania and the Czech Republic thus belong to the most educated populations in the EU-28.

*-Evolution over time*

The percentage of the population with low qualifications in Slovakia has been slowly decreasing over time. The level has fallen from 16.2% in 2000 to 8.1% in 2016, that is, it has halved over a period of 16 years. According to the national strategy for employment (up until 2030), the education attainment of population will continue to grow nationwide. The biggest increase will be among the population with tertiary education while the share of population with the low qualification will decrease.<sup>3</sup>

*1.3.2 Employment rate of low skilled adults*

**Table 1.4: Employment rates of low skilled adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016**

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>EU-28 average</b>	:	55.7	53.8	53.4	52.7	52	52.6	53.2	54.3
<b>Member State</b>	30.2	26.3	29.7	30.3	30.7	31.3	32.7	34.4	37.2

*Source:* Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code lfsa\_ergaed, last updated 25 April 2017.

*Explanatory note:* This table compares the employment rates of those with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) to the EU average over the period 2010-2016.

*-Comparison to EU-28 average*

The employment rate of low skilled adults in Slovakia has consistently been lower than the EU-28 average. It has increased over time, reaching 37.2% in 2016 while the EU-28 average was 54.3% in the same year.

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<sup>3</sup> Vaňo, B. (2014). *Populačný potenciál pre trh práce v okresoch SR do roku 2030* (Population potential for job market in Slovak regions by 2030), Institut for Research of Labour and Family in the framework of the national project: National strategy for employment, Bratislava, Slovakia, p.7.  
[http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/NSZ/nsz\\_6.pdf](http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/NSZ/nsz_6.pdf)

- *Evolution over time*

In 2000, the employment rate of low-skilled adults stood at 30.2%, then dropping to 26.3% by 2005, then increasing to 37.2% in 2016.

The positive development in employment overall however hides the fact that the employment rate of the particularly vulnerable group, the low-skilled workers, has persistently been among the lowest among EU Member States.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Education and Training Monitor 2016, even though the early school leaving rate remained low at 6.9 % in 2015, while the EU average was 11%, the rate continued to increase in Slovakia from its lowest level of 4.7 % in 2010. Since 2013 it has exceeded the national Europe 2020 target (of 6%). Targeted measures are needed in view of the very low employment rate for those without upper secondary education<sup>5</sup>.

Both, the low-skilled adults as well as early school leavers mostly concern the Roma population.

1.3.3 *Participation rate of low skilled adults*

**Table 1.5: Participation rate of low skilled adults – EU average in comparison to national average**

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>EU-28 average</b>	:	3.7	3.9	4	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2
<b>Member State</b>	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

*Source:* Participation rate in education and training by sex and educational attainment (%), Eurostat code and trng\_lfse\_03, last updated 25 April 2017.

*Explanatory note:* This table compares the participation rate in lifelong learning of adults aged 25-64 with low qualification levels (ISCED levels 0-2) to EU data and over the period 2000-2016.

-*Comparison to EU-28 average*

The participation rate of low-skilled adults in Slovakia remains below the measurable level by Eurostat. The degree to which the rate compares with the EU-28 is not therefore easy to determine exactly.

<sup>4</sup> Lubyová, M., Štefánik, M. and coll. (2015). *Trh práce na Slovensku 2016+ (Job market in Slovakia 2016+)*, Slovak Academy of Sciences and Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia, p. 23.  
[http://www.prog.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download\\_files/novinky/Monografia\\_Lubyova\\_Stefanik\\_a\\_kolektiv\\_naweb.pdf](http://www.prog.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download_files/novinky/Monografia_Lubyova_Stefanik_a_kolektiv_naweb.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> EC, Education and Training Monitor 2016 – Country Analysis. Slovakia (November 2016), Brussels, p.3.  
[https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-sk\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-sk_en.pdf)

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*-Evolution over time*

The variation in the participation rate of low-skilled adults in Slovakia over time, is difficult to determine given the lack of data availability.

There is some scattered evidence of participation in training by low-skilled adults, such as in courses to attain the lower secondary education (so-called second chance courses provided by primary schools under the responsibility of regional governments)<sup>6</sup> or courses facilitated by the Labour Offices.

Out of 12 national projects funded by ESF (currently implemented by the Central Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family) only one provides funds for training of the unemployed, which is called project RE-PAS. Other national programmes are focused mainly on the provision of financial means to create jobs, maintain jobs, and to support the mobility of employees, etc<sup>7</sup>. There seems to be no basis for improvement of this participation rate in the near future.

The data collection might improve, though. The project monitoring report templates in the Human Resources Operation Programme contains a table collecting very detailed data on the participants of the education programmes within projects. There is hope therefore that more accurate review and analysis might be possible in the future.

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<sup>6</sup> In years 2011-2015 there were 141 second-chance-courses with 654 participants. The number of participants decreased over time, from 641 year in 2011 to 223 in 2015. (In: Kešelová, Daniela, *Integrácia mladých ľudí s nízkym vzdelaním na trh práce: vzdelanie druhej šance* (Labour market integration of low-educated young people: the second-chance education). Institute for Research of Labour and Family, Bratislava 2016. p.34.

[http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2016/Keselova/vu\\_integracia\\_mladych\\_ludi\\_s\\_nizkym\\_vzdelanim\\_2016\\_keselova.pdf](http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2016/Keselova/vu_integracia_mladych_ludi_s_nizkym_vzdelanim_2016_keselova.pdf)

<sup>7</sup>Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family / Web information about national projects implemented.

[http://www.upsvar.sk/europsky-socialny-fond/narodne-projekty-v-programovom-obdobi-2014-2020.html?page\\_id=521401](http://www.upsvar.sk/europsky-socialny-fond/narodne-projekty-v-programovom-obdobi-2014-2020.html?page_id=521401)

## 2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM

### 2.1 Main features and a concise summary of historic development

**Table 2.1 Number of participants in formal education and training by level of education and age**

	Age 20-24	Age 25+	Total
Level of education (i.e. basic, vocational, higher)			
Primary	15	0	15
Lower secondary	599	329	928
Upper secondary	5873	4013	9886
Post-secondary non-tertiary education		6282	
Short-cycle tertiary education		681	
Bachelor's or equivalent level		44847	
Master's or equivalent level		0	
Doctoral or equivalent level		8418	

*Source: Eurostat, Eurostat database table "Pupils and students enrolled by education level, sex and age (educ\_uoe\_enra02)", accessed 2017.08.21*

### 2.2 Historic development

The first big strategic document in the area of education after 1989 when the Communist regime finished, it was the '**National Programme of Education and Training in the Slovak Republic for the next 15 - 20 years**' (hereinafter referred to as 'Millenium') which was approved in 2001<sup>8</sup>. It outlined the basic principles for reforming the area of education and training, such as organisation of education, establishment and financing of schools, responsibilities for defining the national and school curricula, training of teachers as well as linkages of VET with the labour market.

The Millenium programme deals also with the concept of lifelong learning and defines further education as encompassing VET (broadening and increasing of qualification, re-qualification, etc.) not only at school and training institutes, but also in companies and workplaces, as well as civic and socio-cultural education, pursued on the basis of personal interests. It links education with employment policy, and aims to develop cooperation among players in the areas of national economy and social and economic partners. In this area, it refers to the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning adopted in 2000.

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<sup>8</sup> [National Programme of Education and Training in the Slovak Republic for the next 15 - 20 years](#)

Regarding tertiary level education, the Millennium called for the diversification of education programmes, and multi-source financing – from state, employers and individuals. It also stressed the need for distance learning and use of ICT in education.

The Memorandum on Lifelong Learning and the Commissioner Reding's consultation process triggered a large discussion on implementation of the Memorandum in the first half of 2001. The results are included in the National report on the consultation process about the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning.<sup>9</sup> The complexity of the document seems to have set the framework for all major documents.

In 2004, 2007 and 2011 a number of strategies on lifelong learning were adopted as follows:

#### **2004 Framework Strategy on Lifelong Learning in the Slovak Republic**

This strategy is based on the Memorandum of Lifelong Learning, and is drafted in line with the strategic documents of Slovakia in the area of education and employment.

#### 2007 Strategy on Lifelong Learning and Guidance

The 2007 strategy responds to the EU target (Lisbon Strategy) to increase the participation of adult population in learning to 12.5%. At the time it was developed participation was 5% in Slovakia. It also responds to the need to link existing education subsystems, open them up to each other, and complement them with lifelong career guidance. The aim of the strategy is to address the needs of citizens, employers, public administration and training institutions, simplify access to education, and facilitate the acquisition of new qualifications and employment.

The Strategy includes a proposal for a system, goals, the analysis and financing of LLL and guidance, quality assurance as well as a mechanism for the validation of non-formal and information education. The most important aim was to offer quality education to all with the support of counselling services.

#### 2007 National Programme for Learning Regions

The aim of the 2007 National Programme was to link lifelong learning and the needs of regional labour markets by networking all relevant stakeholders in public administration, education and employment sectors and implementing projects.<sup>10</sup>

#### 2011 Strategy on Lifelong Learning

This strategy aimed to develop the competences of individuals to make them employable, and increase their ability to function in the society and pursue personal development.

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2608\\_2000\\_narodna\\_sprava\\_czv.pdf](http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2608_2000_narodna_sprava_czv.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2611\\_narodny\\_program\\_pre\\_uciace\\_sa\\_regiony.pdf](http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/2611_narodny_program_pre_uciace_sa_regiony.pdf)

Following the strategic documents, the legal acts on lifelong learning and further learning and other relevant acts were adopted.

#### 568/2009 Act on Lifelong Learning

This Act was based on an earlier one on Further Education 386/1997, which ensured the rights of citizens to access quality education during all their lives, defined types of further education and the main institutions involved, and the principles of accreditation of institutions and programmes.

The Act 568/2009<sup>11</sup> sets the basic legislative framework until today. It is described in more detail elsewhere in this document.

#### **61/2015 Act on Vocational Education and Training**

This Act is aimed mainly at secondary schools, and introduces a dual education system. However, it relates also to further education since VET schools can also become "Centres of Vocational Preparation" and provide training programmes in accordance with the Act on LLL.

The VET Act also sets out a system for coordinating VET – on a national level (ministries, regional governments, chambers and professional association, social partners), as well as at the regional level (regional government, regional branches of the labour office, of chambers and professional associations, representatives of employees and founders of secondary schools). The regions adopt their Regional Strategy of Education and Training in Secondary Schools. The strategies reflect the needs of labour market and provide for lifelong learning.

The adult education sector has been waiting for a new Act on lifelong learning and further education since 2014 when it was first mentioned by the Ministry of Education<sup>12</sup>. It is expected that the Act will unite various elements of adult learning and set the system for validation of results of education acquired in non-formal or informal ways.

The related strategic documents and legal Acts are mainly the Act on Employment Services, 5/2004, Employment Strategy, Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020.

The Act on Employment Services contains provisions for Education and Training for Labour Market (paras 44-47), and specifies the conditions of financing training programmes for unemployed as well as employed people.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.minedu.sk/9772-sk/dokumenty-a-predpisy/>

<sup>12</sup> Press Release *Rozvoj ďalšieho vzdelávania za podpory Memoranda o spolupráci* (Development of further education with the support of the Memorandum on cooperation.) Ministry of Education, National LLL Institute, 10 Dec 2014, <https://www.minedu.sk/12898-sk/rozvoj-dalsieho-vzdelavania-za-podpory-memoranda-o-spolupraci/>

The current actions in this area are driven mainly by the National Reform Programmes within the European Semester scheme, as well as the Programming Documents for the EU Funds over 2014-2020.

## 2.3 Provision

Further education as the 2009 Act on lifelong learning stipulates (being equivalent to adult education), and as part of lifelong learning, is all education following up to the level of education achieved in school education.

The goal of further education is:

- To supplement, update, extend or improve qualification obtained in school (ie formal) education;
- To obtain partial or full qualification,
- Satisfy interests and acquire competence to integrate into the civil society.

It is not possible to achieve a higher level of education by completing further education in the current system.<sup>13</sup>

The main providers of further education funded by public sources are VET schools and Labour Offices, universities. There are also other privately funded programmes delivered by Chambers of Commerce, training institutes and NGOs.

### 2.3.1 *Helps adults improve their Basic Skills*

Low levels of basic skills is often a consequence of early school leaving. However, the Slovak Republic has a strong tradition of formal school education and the proportion of population who drop out of initial education is therefore rather low<sup>14</sup>.

Early school leaving is not identified as a problem in Slovak society. However, the rate of early school leavers has been growing since 2010. In 2015, it was 6.9% according to Eurostat, which is now well above the national Europe 2020 target of 6%<sup>15</sup>.

There are courses designed for those who left initial education early. They are 10 month courses provided by primary or secondary schools to complete lower secondary education. However, these are individual initiatives rather than national solutions.

The number of early school leavers is especially high in the eastern regions of Slovakia, and in the regions with large Roma population. Marginalised Roma Communities will be supported

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<sup>13</sup> Based on Eurydice,

[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Adult\\_Education\\_and\\_Training](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Adult_Education_and_Training)

<sup>14</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main\\_Types\\_of\\_Provision](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main_Types_of_Provision)

<sup>15</sup> European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014. Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures. Eurydice and Cedefop Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

by several EU funded projects in 2017. They will include measures enabling successful completion by Roma pupils of the primary school and smooth transition to a secondary school, such as tutoring, mentoring, and scholarships.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.3.2 *Helps adults achieve a Recognised Qualification*

The most common way to obtain a certain level of education and qualification for adults, is to complete a course or study provided by schools – lower secondary education as mentioned above, secondary vocational education as will be mentioned further or secondary general education (ISCED 3A or 344) provided by some secondary comprehensive schools. Upper secondary level education is in general provided for professional/vocational purposes.

Apart from regular formal education provision, adults can obtain a recognised qualification mainly through accredited further education programmes., These programmes are provided by various further education institutions. The goal of the programmes is to support adults to supplement, update, extend or improve their qualifications, mainly needed for the pursuit of professional activities.

As stated in the Act on LLL, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic accredits further education programmes based on the approval of the Accreditation Commission for Further Education. All further education programmes with valid accreditation are registered in a database. Certificate of professional qualification is acquired through the examination in a competent educational institution. The examination process does not discriminate any applicant - required knowledge and skills can be acquired either through an accredited educational programme or in practice. Upon successful completion of the final examination, the applicant will obtain a certificate of partial or full qualification. (However, there are currently only approximately 29 accredited institutions, which can issue such certificates for concrete qualifications.) The acceptance of such certificate in practice may vary from employer to employer. In any case, it serves as a document that entitles a person to apply for a particular trade licence.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3.3 *Helps adults develop other knowledge and skills, not for vocational purposes.*

There are a range of providers and programmes that support adults to develop other knowledge and skills. Those which are (partially) publicly funded are the following:

- Universities of the Third Age, which have since 1990 spread from Comenius University in Bratislava to other higher education institutions and universities. These are important providers of special-interest education. Currently, the universities of the Third age are based at 17 universities and higher education institutions in 13 Slovak cities. Education programmes are prepared mainly for pensioners, however, due to increasing public demand the age limit for admission of students was lowered to 50, 45 and in some cases even 40. University of the Third Age teachers are usually university teachers who give lectures at University of the Third Age programmes

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<sup>16</sup> National Reform Programme 2017. <http://www.finance.gov.sk/en/Default.aspx?CatID=450>

<sup>17</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main\\_Types\\_of\\_Provision](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main_Types_of_Provision)



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almost for free. The focus of these study programmes usually corresponds with the universities' profiles, and the offer is based on the possibilities and conditions of the rectorate, and faculties. Financing comes from several sources, most commonly: the parent higher education institution, gifts, sponsors, and students themselves in the form of enrolment fees.

- Cultural-educational institutions such as the National enlightenment centre, Slovak national museum or Slovak national gallery also participate in adult education. In addition to their other activities, these institutions also organise lectures, debates and seminars that develop cultural awareness of the Slovak society. Similar activities are provided by regional enlightenment centres, cultural centres and libraries

Apart from the above, there is also a big offer of training programmes and courses for personal interests delivered by various small organisations, such as artwork, or languages. These are paid for by the participants.

Foreign language provision is provided by various institutions who offer a wide range of language courses and programmes. The majority of adult citizens attend foreign language courses in private or non-state institutions, and finance these activities themselves. Foreign language provision is often provided by employers, particularly in medium-sized and large enterprises with foreign shareholders, as well as in state and public services where education and performance improvement is obligatory<sup>18</sup>.

The third sector (NGOs and non-profit organisations) and business sector are becoming stronger and stronger providers of special interest adult education.<sup>19</sup>

*2.3.4 Facilitates Transition to the Labour Market for unemployed people or those at risk of unemployment (ALMPs)*

Provision of education and training for adults looking for work is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (further on MoLSAF SR). The two groups that are mainly targeted by active policy measures are the long-term unemployed and young jobseekers.

The Ministry adopted an action plan in November 2016 to implement various forms of support for the integration of long-term unemployed in the labour market. This includes individualised consultancy support that covers jobseeker profiling, and career guidance as well as an offer of education and requalification programmes. In 2017, two new national projects will be launched - Education of jobseekers and Education of young jobseekers, both projects have been allocated EUR 28.9 million until 2022 and EUR 30.9 million until 2019 respectively.<sup>20</sup>

Another measure that helps young people to find job quickly is the Youth Guarantee. Implementation of the National Plan of Youth Guarantee in Slovakia began in April 2014. The

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<sup>18</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main\\_Types\\_of\\_Provision](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main_Types_of_Provision)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Finance of the SR. (2017) *Národný program reforiem 2017* (National Reform Programme 2017), Bratislava, Slovakia.

<http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197>

principle is to provide a young jobseeker either with job placement, training or practical placement within 4 months after finishing school or becoming unemployed. The findings from the European Court of Auditors show that sampled countries of Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Portugal and Slovakia made only limited progress in implementing the guarantee and neither country was able to take care of young jobseekers within four months.<sup>21</sup>

The Act on Employment Services makes allowances for the education of registered jobseekers. Training that prepare jobseekers for the labour market is provided by the competent Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. This training is either provided in the form of accredited educational programmes, or as programmes that focus on the development of communication, computer, management, social, entrepreneurial and language competencies.

Training programmes that prepare jobseekers for the labour market can also take place in the form of EU-funded national and pilot projects. Job seekers may also arrange their training for the labour market themselves. The jobseeker is entitled to an allowance of up to 100% of eligible costs, and up to a maximum of 600 euro if the training leads to employment. To support the education for requalification, project RE-PAS (requalification, opportunity and cooperation) was set up and it has been running since October 2014: Jobseekers choose the type of occupational activity which they want to train in. They also choose the training provider and if approved by the Labour Office, they register for training. RE-PAS programme serves as a guarantee for an educational institution that the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family will really finance the training.<sup>22</sup>

Some criticism of ALMPs in terms of using training as a measure came is included in the evaluation report on active labour market policies. According to the report, the education and training for the labour market is one of the tools that are not used sufficiently.<sup>23</sup> This is despite the finding that there is more than 72% probability that the person who receives training can find employment within two years from completion of the training. The main reason for underuse of this instrument were low capacities at the labour offices for personalised counselling, direct contact and activation of job seekers. This has changed recently with the new internal organisational structure of Labour Offices and capacity building of Labour Offices staff.

### 2.3.5 *Opens up Higher Education to adults*

According to the Act 131/2002 on universities (higher education), anybody who has completed secondary education can apply for university study.

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<sup>21</sup> European Court of Auditors: <http://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/NewsItem.aspx?nid=8265>

<sup>22</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main\\_Types\\_of\\_Provision](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Main_Types_of_Provision)

<sup>23</sup> Bořík Vladimír, Caban Matúš: *Pilotné hodnotenie dopadov vybraných opatrení aktívnej politiky trhu práce APTP* (Pilot Evaluation of Impacts of Selected Measures of the ALMPs), MPSVR SR, ÚPSVR, 2014, pg. 28. [www1.employment.gov.sk/ESF/new/get\\_file3c2f.zip?id=3178](http://www1.employment.gov.sk/ESF/new/get_file3c2f.zip?id=3178)

Many universities offer also external and distance learning. The students pay for this form of study.

The numbers of regular university students fell in period 2008 - 2015. This trend is expected to continue until 2019 to the number of 135 000 students at all levels of the university study. In 2008 the number of students at all levels of university study was approx. 230 500 students. The numbers of graduates will fall until 2022 and then slightly increase.<sup>24</sup> This fall can be explained by demography trends, and by the fact that a large number of students leave to study abroad, notably to the Czech Republic.

The number of students in external form of study has also been falling. The offer now prevails over the demand.<sup>25</sup>

Regarding higher education in the future, and efforts to achieve the national target of 30% people with higher education, the 2017 National Reform Program says: Systemic support will be given to the expansion of professional study programmes particularly within bachelor's programmes. An option of liberal/interdisciplinary model of studies will be introduced. These two steps aim to lead to increase of people interested in the first degree of tertiary education which is not so popular in Slovakia. Instruments to increase affordability of higher education for groups with economic barriers and for groups with specific needs will be made more targeted.<sup>26</sup>

The forms of study mentioned earlier in this section lead to an education degree. The universities also provide study programmes that do not lead to a qualification, via Centres of Further Education and/or Universities of Third Age, as well as various seminars for the public.

### 2.3.6 *Enables adult employees to develop their work-related skills*

The provision of non-formal work-related training for those in employment is encouraged but is supported in a limited capacity. Individuals can get some days off for study and the companies can apply for funding according to the Act on Employment Services.

A significant part of adult education takes place at the workplace and is paid for by the employer (with a possibility to obtain financial subsidies, for example from European sources). This mostly includes the development of specialisations, upskilling of employees, or re-qualification. Bigger companies and businesses often have their own teachers and trainers.

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<sup>24</sup> Lubyová, M., Štefánik, M. and coll. (2015). *Trh práce na Slovensku 2016+* (Job market in Slovakia 2016+), Slovak Academy of Sciences and Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia.  
[http://www.prog.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download\\_files/novinky/Monografia\\_Lubyova\\_Stefanik\\_a\\_kolektiv\\_naweb.pdf](http://www.prog.sav.sk/fileadmin/pusav/download_files/novinky/Monografia_Lubyova_Stefanik_a_kolektiv_naweb.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Nejedlý, Tomáš: *Externé štúdium ubúda. Kde sa dá študovať za peniaze?* (External study diminishes. Where can one study for fee)? <https://www.etrend.sk/ekonomika/externe-studium-ubuda-kde-sa-da-studovat-za-peniaze.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Finance of the SR. (2017) *Národný program reforiem 2017* (National Reform Programme 2017), Bratislava, Slovakia.  
<http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197>

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Smaller businesses often opt for employee participation in (accredited) educational programmes in further education institutions.

Work-related training is provided mainly by non-school educational institutions, private educational institutions, company institutes, professional and trade union associations, chambers of commerce etc. A large part is covered by training required by law in certain professions.

The system is complemented by growing efforts to provide career guidance, such as the CVANU national project – development of further education system and career guidance for employed people through increasing its quality<sup>27</sup>.

In the last few years, the allocation of resources for provision of further education has decreased significantly. The last opportunity for financing of demand-driven projects from the ESF was in 2010. 87.5% of employers financed work-related training from their own resources, 58.3% used also the EU grant schemes.<sup>28</sup> Within the Programming Period 2014-2020 it was as late as in 2017 that there was opened a call for demand-driven projects focusing on lifelong learning. The call was opened within the Operational Programme Human Resources and was titled “Don´t disqualify”.

### 2.3.7 Other (if any)

Slovakia's share of graduates of vocational education is the highest in OECD (nearly 70%), but the link between the secondary vocational education, work experience, and the labour market is weak. There is also a skill mismatch at a tertiary level in some industries (e.g. IT). The current system does not have a sufficient statistical database of employment and skills of graduates.<sup>29</sup>

In June 2016 Slovakia joined the Governance of EU Skills Anticipation and Matching Systems project covered by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). This is the agency's third country review on skills governance.

Following a request of the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, Cedefop engages in this work to help those in charge of education, employment and other policies reach broad agreement on a medium-term policy agenda to strengthen the national skills anticipation and matching system.

The project will assess skills required by the labour market and monitor employment of graduates in the labour market. The aim is to develop a system that provides comprehensive

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<sup>27</sup> National Project *Further Education and Guidance for Adults as a Tool of Better Employability on the Labour Market* implemented by National Lifelong Learning Institute, 2013-2015. [www.cvanu.sk](http://www.cvanu.sk) (Celoživotné Vzdelávanie Ako Nástroj Uplatniteľnosti – Lifelong learning as a tool of employability)

<sup>28</sup> Gramata, Ján, Kmeť, Peter: *Vzdelávanie a trh práce* (Education and the Labour Market), A study in the framework of National Project National Strategy on Employment. Institute for the Research of Labour and Family 2014. [http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/NSZ/nsz\\_5.pdf](http://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/NSZ/nsz_5.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Finance of the SR. (2017) *Národný program reforiem 2017* (National Reform Programme 2017), Bratislava, Slovakia.

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information about the skills and employment of graduates in secondary and tertiary schools in the labour market. <sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cedefop lunches skills Governance review in Slovakia. Press Release, 26 June 2017, <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/cedefop-launches-skills-governance-review-slovakia>

### 3.0 ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

#### 3.1 Context

The system of adult learning in Slovakia is fragmented, and is currently developing in several streams. It is governed mainly by the Strategy on Lifelong Learning from 2011 and the Act on Lifelong Learning (Act on LLL) from 2009<sup>31</sup> which has been amended several times. Adult education/learning is usually referred to as "further education".

There are no clearly identified national funds for adult learning, and most of the adult learning activities are funded privately, or through EU funds, and this is further described in section 4.

Further education is provided by schools (secondary schools and higher educational institutions, such as the "university of third age") and non-school educational institutions (mainly private educational institutions, company institutes, professional and trade union associations, non-governmental institutions, libraries and cultural centres).

Many of the training providers are members of the Association of Institutions of Adult Education in the Slovak Republic (AIVD SR, member of the European Association for the Education of Adults - EAEA), the Slovak Academic Association for Lifelong Learning, Association of Language Schools, or the Association of Universities of the Third Age in Slovakia.

There are several platforms that list the courses and training programmes on offer<sup>32</sup>. A new instrument is the EPALE Platform which is a multilingual open membership community for teachers, trainers, researchers, academics, policy makers and anyone else with a professional role in adult learning across Europe.

##### *3.1.1 Distribution of responsibilities regarding adult learning*

The main national actors here are:

- Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sport. It sets out the main legal and policy framework. The main practical activities are centred around the accreditation of education programmes and the information system of further education;
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family / Central Labour Office with its regional branches. It adopts and implements measures to combat unemployment, support employment and social inclusion via mainly national projects funded through EU funds. The projects often contain AL activities (e.g. re-qualification) and are implemented in the regions;

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<sup>31</sup> information on this page is taken from Zákon č. 568/2009 Z.z. Zákon o celoživotnom vzdelávaní a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov (Legal act 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong learning as amended)  
[http://www.szsk.sk/content/szk/files/legislativa/568\\_2009\\_Zz\\_v20150901.pdf](http://www.szsk.sk/content/szk/files/legislativa/568_2009_Zz_v20150901.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> [www.education.sk](http://www.education.sk) (linked with [www.kurzy.sk](http://www.kurzy.sk), [www.skolenia.sk](http://www.skolenia.sk)), [www.eduworld.sk](http://www.eduworld.sk)

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- National Institute for Lifelong Learning. Established in 2010, it implements the national Strategy for lifelong learning, as well as counselling and transfer of innovations into the educational policies of the SR.<sup>33</sup>

The AL policy is formulated at the national level. The concept of AL policy as such is not developed at the regional level.

Regional government at the level of upper-tier territorial units is obliged to take care of the multi-faceted development of its territory and its inhabitants' needs. In the area of adult education and training, it mostly means the creation of conditions for the development of further education in the respective self-governing regions. Similarly, self-governing municipalities are expected to create conditions for health care provision, education, culture, education activities, leisure activities in arts, physical culture and sport.<sup>34</sup>

However, there are also regional activities in this area, albeit not recognised by name AL (the terminology that is used includes further education, continuous education, re-qualification). They are included in chapters on Employment or Human Resources within the regional Social and Economic Development Plans. Here the main goals are to create opportunities for labour force to qualify and re-qualify to be able to stay on the job or find a new one.<sup>35</sup> This is often done in cooperation with regional VET schools and employers, and it might be included in the Regional Strategy for Education and Training in Secondary Schools.

A strong AL element can be found in implementation measures of Act 336/2015 from 11 November 2015, relating to support for less developed regions in Slovakia<sup>36</sup>. The Action Plans adopted for 13 less developed regions in Slovakia include vocational education for adults provided by higher vocational schools in the regions, aiming to reduce the unemployment rate. The Action Plans are currently being put into practice.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.1.2 Major national socio-economic strategies governing the provision of Adult Learning

According to the **Government Programme for its term 2016-2020** in Further Education, there are plans to:

- Prepare a new act on LLL and validation of results of further education by introducing system changes to increase its quality, participation of adults in further education, and opportunities to acquire qualification in further education;

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<sup>33</sup> Národný ústav celoživotného vzdelávania (NÚCŽV, National Lifelong Learning Institute) <http://www.nuczv.sk/o-nas/profil-organizacie> (accessed 17/10/2016)

<sup>34</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Distribution\\_of\\_Responsibilities](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Distribution_of_Responsibilities)

<sup>35</sup> Jendeková, M., Cigánová, K. (2014) Country report, AINova, project REGIONAL, 539389-LLP-1-2013-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GMP [http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP\\_Slovakia\\_en.pdf](http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP_Slovakia_en.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Zákon č. 336/2015 Z.z. z 11. novembra 2015 o podpore najmenej rozvinutých okresov a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov (Legal act 336/2015 z 11.11.2015 about support for less developed regions) <http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2015-336>

<sup>37</sup> Government News on *Priority a výzvy v najmenej rozvinutých okresoch východného Slovenska* (Priorities and challenges in the least developed regions of Eastern Slovakia), <http://www.nro.vlada.gov.sk/aktuality/priority-a-vyzvy-v-najmenej-rozvinutych-okresoch-vychodneho-slovenska/>

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- Create conditions for a functioning system of recognitions of qualifications;
- Support the environment for recognition of results of non-formal education and informal learning via the National System of Qualifications including the amendments of relevant laws;
- Ensure regular monitoring of changes and development of skills necessary for 21<sup>st</sup> century in order to better design further education programmes.<sup>38</sup>

The documents adopted within the European Semester framework, namely **Country Specific Recommendations and National Reform Programmes**, provide actions plans targeted at adult education policies, especially in relation to employment policies and measures.

**The National Strategy on Employment until 2020** in section 4.7. Promotion of the supply side of the labour market through qualifications for better employment outlines the main challenges on the labour market and states a strategic priority - better preparation of graduates for work, facilitation of their transition into the workforce, creating dual VET, development of appropriate skills, personal and educational development in the context of lifelong learning, adapting the education and skills requirements to the labour. Better monitoring of needs in area of skills and better recognition of qualifications will bring a greater synergy between the education and work. It stresses the fact that lifelong learning is an essential precondition for maintaining employability, and effective links between formal, non-formal and informal learning and teaching are basis for effective lifelong learning.<sup>39</sup>

**Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020** does not explicitly deal with adult education, however it is a framework document dealing with a target group of many employment policy measures, including education (for example second chance education programmes for early school leavers).

## 3.2 Adult learning policy network

### 3.2.1 A summary of major developments/ changes since 2010

The updated Strategy for LLL (until 2020) was adopted in 2011, as well as was an Action Plan for period 2012-2014. The implementation of the Action Plan was reviewed in 2016.

The priorities of the Strategy for lifelong learning<sup>40</sup> are:

- Developing individuals' attitude and motivation for lifelong learning. (Comment: Already the children at primary schools are supposed to be made familiar with the LLL concept);
- Closing the gap between the profiles of graduates and the labour market demands. (Comment: This gap remains);

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<sup>38</sup> Government Programme at <http://www.vlada.gov.sk/programove-vyhlasenie-vlady-sr-na-roky-2016-2020/>

<sup>39</sup> National Employment Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2020 at <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/national-employment-strategy-slovak-republic-until-2020.pdf> , p. 56

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/1899.pdf>



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- Counselling services for adults. (Comment: Recently a lot of effort is put in this - Labour Offices should provide this service, also specialised centres were established under project CVANU<sup>41</sup>);
- Raising the level of individual competencies, such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship, languages, digital literacy, and active citizenship. (Comment: on the level of AL, no measures are adopted);
- Financing of further education. (Comment: no schemes have been developed, there are some proposals to be included in the new Act on AL).

The Strategy is accompanied by an Action Plan. It has four priorities: 1. Attractive lifelong learning; 2. Education relevant for the labour market and integration into society; 3. Accessible counselling services; 4. Access to lifelong learning.

The funds for implementation of the Action Plan would come from the state budget, alternatively from EU project funds.

According to the Strategy, the pursuit of its priorities was supposed to be monitored by means of measurable indicators, an evaluation of which was scheduled for the end of 2015, 2017 and 2020<sup>42</sup>. The first report on the implementation of tasks from the Strategy for LLL was adopted by the Government in January 2016. It was prepared in a form of short comments on the individual measures, and no indicators were used.

No new strategic documents for adult education were adopted since then. Some current initiatives in the area of adult education are framed by programming documents of the EU funds for 2014-2020. The following national objective has been defined for the area of education and training, employment and labour market and social inclusion within the Operational Programme Human Resources (OPHR): *"To support the development of human resources and lifelong learning and their full integration into the labour market to improve their social situation"*.

Within its Axis (1) Education, Investment Priority (4) Non-formal Education it reads: *"Improvement of equal access to LLL for all age groups in formal and non-formal education and informal learning and increase of knowledge, skills and capabilities of workforce, support to flexible education through guidance in selection of occupation and certification of gained competences"*<sup>43</sup>. A specific goal is then to increase quality and efficiency of LLL, with the focus on key competences and improvement of qualifications.

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<sup>41</sup> National Project *Further Education and Guidance for Adults as a Tool of Better Employability on the Labour Market*, 2013-2015

<sup>42</sup> EC, EACEA, Eurydice, (Sept. 2015) Slovakia, Developments and Current Policy Priorities (accessed 17/10/2016) [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Developments\\_and\\_Current\\_Policy\\_Priorities](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Developments_and_Current_Policy_Priorities)

<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR, section EU Funds, (2014), Operačný program Ľudské zdroje na programové obdobie 2014-2020 (Operational Programme Human Resources, Programming Period 2014-2020), 2014SK05M0OP001, ISBN 978-80-89125-19-7, pg.50 <http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/operacny-program-ludske-zdoje/>

Comparing the priorities of the European Agenda for AL 2015-2020 and priorities of the OPHR as well as the launched national projects, the priority areas are:

- *Governance*. There is visible coordination among social, educational and economic sectors, for example in support for dual education, and action plans for less developed regions. The financing is substantial, and comes mainly from ESF;
- *Supply and take up*. There are adult learning and requalification programmes prepared under the national projects for those most in need, including the less developed regions and support to long-term unemployed including marginalised Roma communities;<sup>44</sup>
- In this programming period, it appears that the priority *Flexibility and access* is going to be improved by the funding of national projects oriented on unemployed;
- The priority *Quality* is less elaborated in the current initiatives or other policy documents.

### 3.2.2 Main legislative act(s) governing the provision of adult learning

The Act on LLL from 2009 defines the following issues:

- Further education following upon the finished level of formal education, comprising: i) further vocational education; ii) re-qualification; iii) continuing education; and iv) special-interest education. These forms do not encompass the further/continuing education regulated by specific rules for certain professions, such as doctors and health workers, teachers, and lawyers;
- Accreditation of educational programmes of further education by the Ministry of Education;
- Rules and procedures for the verification and validation of further education, for achieving partial or full qualification. The institutions running accredited programmes can apply at the Ministry of Education for a licence to validate the results of adult education. Certification and evaluation of vocational qualifications can be undertaken through an exam at the accredited institution. Currently an adult learner can validate their knowledge and skills only in 29 occupations;
- The National System of Qualifications (NSQ), which was completed in 2015. It describes the qualifications in Slovakia and how to obtain them, via formal, non-formal and informal education. It is the cornerstone for validation of results from informal and non-formal learning. The recognition of professional experience is important for employers, as well as for obtaining a trade licence in some cases. The Slovak Trade Licence Act specifies that for some regulated professions, the person wishing to be granted a trade licence has to satisfy the conditions for professional capacity and

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<sup>44</sup> Specifically for education of MRC we can find information only about education of teachers and teacher's assistants and their knowledge of Roma language or dialect of local community in the strategy for Slovak National Roma Integration. In: Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration 2020, material elaborated by the Office of Plenipotentiary for Roma communities and approved by the Slovak government on January 11, 2012 under the number 1/2012, pg. 30 (Stratégia SR pre integráciu Rómov do 2020, Materiál bol schválený uznesením vlády SR č. 1/2012 dňa 11. januára 2012 a vypracovaný Úradom splnomocnenca vlády pre rómske komunity, str. 30) [www.minv.sk/?romske-komunity-uvod&subor=160449](http://www.minv.sk/?romske-komunity-uvod&subor=160449)

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competency.<sup>45</sup> The NSQ is linked to the National System of Occupations (NSO). The NSO contributes to the process of monitoring of the labour market, by displaying the current and future demands of the labour market;

- An information system of further education, detailing accredited further education programmes are accessible via the web page<sup>46</sup> of the Ministry of Education. In September 2017 there were 3950 programmes listed;
- A system of monitoring and forecasting training needs for further education.

The Ministry of Education collects data on programmes, numbers of participants, funding, etc. Providers of accredited programmes are obliged to report, others are invited to report. The statistics serve mainly to monitor the active providers of AL, and the list of providers is forwarded for example to Labour Offices for further use in job counselling. The NSO should also serve this purpose. However, there is no systemic forecasting at the moment, nor systematic collection of data;

- Control of the fulfilment of accreditation conditions, and adherence to requirements for licenses to verify professional competence. This is done in a limited way by the Ministry of Education.
- Other legal acts relevant for provision of adult learning are the:
- Act 5/2004 on Employment Services; and
- Acts regulating certain professions and their continuing education.

### *3.2.3 Main strategies*

The Strategy on LLL from 2011 is described in Section 3.2.1.

### *3.2.4 Main implementing acts*

The Strategy on LLL was accompanied by an Action Plan for 2012-2014, No new documents on adult education were developed since.

The programming documents adopted for the Operational Programme Human Resources could be regarded as implementing acts.

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<sup>45</sup> European Commission; Cedefop; ICF International (2014). European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2014: country report Slovakia.  
[http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2014/87077\\_SK.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2014/87077_SK.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> <http://isdv.iedu.sk/EligibleInstitutions.aspx>

### 3.3 National quantitative policy targets

**Table 3.1 Targets linked to Adult Learning in broader economic policies/LLL strategies/framework or implementing act**

General information		Progress toward target		
Target (target figure and date to be achieved by)	Adoption date (e.g. 31/03/2018)	Initial value (at date of adoption)	Current value	Summary of progress against target

No such targets were set.

### 3.4 Quality assurance

Quality assurance as a concept and ambition or aim has been present in all LLL documents since the Framework Strategy for LLL in 2004. However, it has not been put into practice yet. The elements of quality assurance cover: accreditation of programmes, certification of institutions and providers, professional profiles of teachers and trainers, and career counselling.

The training providers have no obligation to obtain certification or accreditation of their programmes. However, the set of accreditation criteria constitute certain standard. The Association of Institutes of Adult Learning leads debates on how to assess the quality of institutions, programmes and lecturers.

The NSQ and NSO<sup>47</sup> systems were completed as results of national projects in 2015, and are basis for improvement of adult education quality. They both help to define what occupations are on the job market, and what qualifications linked to them, are needed. The training programmes can then be linked to the description of qualifications, qualification standards, as well as training and then testing or validation of results. The key tools for validation of adult education are in place, but they are not fully functional, and not all qualifications listed in NSQ have a validating institution assigned to them.

The linking of National qualification framework with the European one is very important. Continuous revision and update of the NQF is precondition for the efficient validation of non-formal education and informal learning, to guarantee of the quality comparable with formal education, and with adult education in other European countries.

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<sup>47</sup> National system of qualifications and National system of occupations SIOV (State Institute for VET), (2015), Národná sústava kvalifikácií, Národná sústava povolání , <http://www.kvalifikacie.sk/casto-kladene-otazky>

Quality assurance in the area of further education is provided mainly through the accreditation process of further education programmes.<sup>48</sup>

The accreditation process is overseen by the Accreditation Commission for Further Education, an advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. The Accreditation Commission validates educational institutions' capability to provide educational programmes, and recommends that the Ministry issue a certificate of accreditation for an education programme if the requirements are met.

In addition, according to the Statutes, the Accreditation Commission for Further Education:

- Evaluates and monitors the quality of the accredited educational activities provided;
- Provides expertise in the area of further education for central and regional state and self-governing authorities;
- Makes proposals to the ministry on actions to be taken in this area;
- Authorized persons are Ministry employees and professionals on areas of educational content authorised by the Ministry to perform monitoring activity.

All institutions providing accredited forms of education are obliged to perform evaluations concerning compliance with legal regulations and other rules related to provision of accredited programmes.

Certificate of accreditation of an educational programme in further education is issued for five years and is not transferable. Monitoring is carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport SR.

### 3.5 Future policy developments

In March 2017 the Ministry of Education published a draft text of the new comprehensive National Programme for Education and Training (so-called *Learning Slovakia*)<sup>49</sup>, and opened a public discussion.

The previous National Programme for Education and Training in Slovakia was adopted in 2000 under the title *Millennium*. Although it dealt primarily with formal education, there was a part dedicated to further education. It proposed to define a system of further education, provide second chance education and requalification, motivate people towards LLL, include schools in provision of further education, stimulate cooperation of training providers with the companies, and provide for quality assurance in accreditation and certification.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> The text following in this section is based on EC, EACEA, Eurydice, Slovakia, Quality Assurance (accessed 1/10/2017)  
[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Quality\\_Assurance\\_in\\_Adult\\_Education\\_and\\_Training](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:Quality_Assurance_in_Adult_Education_and_Training)

<sup>49</sup> Ministry of Education SR (2017), *Návrh Národného programu rozvoja výchovy a vzdelávania UČIACE SA SLOVENSKO* (Draft of National Programme on Education and Training, Learning Slovakia, )  
[http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/6987\\_uciace\\_sa\\_slovensko.pdf](http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/6987_uciace_sa_slovensko.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> Ministry of Education SR (2001), *Národný program výchovy a vzdelávania v Slovenskej republike na najbližších 15-20 rokov (projekt Milénium)*, (National programme on Education and Training in the Slovak Republic, (project Milenium) UV-5272/2001

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The new National Programme will cover long-term (10 years) goals in education and training at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Processing of comments and the adoption of the Programme by the Government was expected by end of August 2017.<sup>51</sup>

Chapter 3 of the National Programme titled Vocational Education and Training includes a section 'Support to Further Education of Adults'. It calls for i) an analysis of reasons of low participation rate of adults in LLL and ii) identification of the areas of training that would support employability. In these areas it proposes to introduce financial support schemes for individuals ("individual education accounts") as well as for companies (25% tax deductions).

An Action Plan<sup>52</sup> for 2017 for the National Programme has also been drafted. The measures related to adult education includes the audit of personnel and methodological capacities to anticipate the needs of the job market and do graduate tracking, draft proposal of alternatives for co-financing of lifelong learning including all relevant actors (state budget, social partners, employers, individuals), and preparation of a pilot version of PIAAC online testing. However, the implementation of the Action Plan is unclear since the main document is still not adopted.

A new Act on LLL is envisaged. In 2014 the first draft of the main structure was prepared, under the working title *Further Education and Validation of Results in Further Education and Informal Learning*. The draft was prepared in wider partnership with employer associations, trade unions, universities and the Academic Association of Further Education. It covered the following points: certification of training providers, accreditation of training programmes, validation of results of further education and informal learning, monitoring and forecasting of training needs, counselling, financing of further education, and the control of accreditation and certification processes. The work on the act stopped and has not resumed yet.

The Slovak Republic is negotiating support with OECD for drafting the National Skills Strategy.<sup>53</sup>

Under the auspices of the Vice-Prime Minister for Informatisation and Investment, a strategy for implementation of Agenda 2030 on sustainable development is being drafted. This strategy is meant to be a comprehensive and overarching document setting the main development priorities of Slovakia. The National Investment Plan, which will follow the strategy, will specify the funding of priorities.<sup>54</sup>

The Agenda 2030 strategy will also inform a new draft of an integrated policy of regional development and of the regional development strategy up to 2030. In 2018, consideration will be given to the adoption of an amendment to the regional development support Act. An effective regional development monitoring system will be implemented in order to assess the

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<http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=13020>

<sup>51</sup> The process of adoption might be further delayed due to the new situation at the Ministry of Education – a new Minister has just been appointed. Minister Lubyová comes from the Academy of Sciences and has been involved in adult education research.

<sup>52</sup> Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR (2017), *Akčný plán Národného programu rozvoja výchovy a vzdelávania* (Action Plan of the National program for development of education and training), Bratislava, Slovakia. <https://www.minedu.sk/akcny-plan-nprvv-na-rok-2017/>

<sup>53</sup> Based on the verbal information from the staff of the Ministry of Education.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.vicpremier.gov.sk/index.php/investicie/agenda-2030/index.html>

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effectiveness of regional policies. In order to effectively reduce regional disparities, an Act on the Support of Lagging Regions was adopted in 2015. Action Plans for these regions contain provisions for training, for strengthening the links between the labour market and school specialisations in order to increase employment. The support will cover more regions (17) and the administrative procedures to apply for projects will be simplified.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Národný program reforiem 2017

#### 4.0 INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS

It is difficult to access precise figures as there are several overlapping implementation streams.

The EC portal on European Structural and Investment Fund data contains the figures for the 2014-2020 programming period. The total allocation for Slovakia is 15.3 million from the EU budget. 890 million will be allocated to the Education and Vocational Training theme. The data is gathered until 2015 and no projects are listed under this theme yet.<sup>56</sup>

#### 4.1 Total investment in adult learning and change over time

Table 4.1 summarises public expenditure on education in Slovakia, according to the Education and Finance Ministries.

**Table 4.1 Public expenditure on education in Slovakia compared to EU-28**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*	2016*
SK, % of GDP	3.5	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.8
SK, EUR million	2 320.3	2 687.9	2 812.8	2 912.4	2 941.0	2 928.5	3 121.3	-	-
EU-28, % of GDP	5.0	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.0	5.0	4.9	-	-

NB: \*Data for 2015 and 2016 are forecasts.

Source: Education ministry, finance ministry; Eurostat, table gov\_10a\_exp; extracted on 4.7.2016<sup>57</sup>

This data is validated by the Education and Training Monitor 2015 Slovakia, according to which the country spends about 5% of its GDP on education (public expenditures), which is in line with the EU average.

There are investments from private sector to professional education, in-service training, and the continuous education of employees. Adult learning that is oriented on personal development is mostly financed from private resources, occasionally by foundations, (community) grant programmes and regional and local government.

According to the 2016 Report on Implementation of the Strategy for LLL from 2011, financing of the adult and further education (non-formal education) is, in comparison to formal

<sup>56</sup> cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/SK#

<sup>57</sup> Cedefop (2016). Vocational education and training in Slovakia: short description. Luxembourg: Publications Office pg. 30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/831200>



education, very under-resourced. The state together with local governments significantly lags in financing further education behind self-financing participants and employers. National funding does not reach half of what is paid by individual persons. It is felt most by the groups of low-skilled and non-qualified who state that price is the biggest obstacle in their further education. The Report recommends introducing a financial support scheme for participation in further education which would motivate citizens for education<sup>58</sup>.

The issue of high costs of further education is partially tackled by employment policy measures, for example various national projects including training provision.

## 4.2 Public national investment

**Table 4.2 Breakdown of public national investment**

Title of public investment source	Source of funding	Amount of funding	Targeted number of participants		Targeted level of provision	Start/ end date

This data is not available.

## 4.3 EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF)

### 4.3.1 Structural fund support planned as part of 2014-2020 financial framework

According to the data on financial support to the Member States between 2014 and 2020 (available in July, 2016 for the European Commission from Operational Programmes for the European Social Fund), the planned financial support from the European Union for the investment priority is mostly directly targeting adult learning. For investment priority 10.3 – Enhancing access to lifelong learning, the funding is €55 million.

In the Partnership Agreement, the allocation for Thematic Goal *Investments into Education and Training* for 2014-2020 is €1,407,671,723. Budget for the Operational Programme Human Resources<sup>59</sup> for the same period is €2,204,983,517.<sup>60</sup> The fourth priority from among the priorities within Priority Axis Education will contribute to the development of lifelong learning and increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning, including support for

<sup>58</sup> Ministry of Education SR, (2016), Správa o stave implementácie úloh vyplývajúcich o stratégie celoživotného vzdelávania 2011, (Report on the state of implementation of the tasks following from LLL strategy 2011), material presented at the government meeting on January 13, 2016, UV-43505/2015

<sup>59</sup> In OP HR there are **six priority axes** in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy: 1) education, 2) youth employment initiative, 3) employment, 4) social inclusion, 5) integration of marginalised Roma communities, and 6) technical facilities in communities with a presence of marginalised Roma communities.

[https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/esf/op-ludske-zdroje/op-hr\\_en-version-final.pdf](https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/esf/op-ludske-zdroje/op-hr_en-version-final.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> Office of Government SR (2014), Partnerská dohoda SR (Partnership Agreement for Slovakia 2014-2020) <http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/operacne-programy>

acknowledging the results of education. This priority represents 2.50% of the total OPHR allocation, ie €55 million.

Adult learning is supported through other Operational Programmes, such as Effective Public Administration, Integrated Regional Operational Programme financed from ESF and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The NRP 2016 mentions how the funding is used to support national employment projects in the period 2014-2020 that are partially oriented also on adult education and training<sup>61</sup>: for example, for the requalification of jobseekers, acquisition of skills of young people, in-job training, graduate practice, subsidised jobs, support of persons with disabilities, support for those aged 50+, and women returning to work after maternity leave.

A special attention is paid to the Roma communities, and the improvement of their living conditions, integration into the job market with the help of tools supporting development of localities, creating jobs, solving social problems, and increasing the quality of community services.<sup>62</sup>

The share of expenditure on Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) tools in Slovakia represents about 0.17% of GDP, well below the EU average (0.42%). The effective drawing of EU funds could, however, increase this share to 0.25% of GDP by 2018:<sup>63</sup> *Expenditure on employment services related to professional and information-counselling services for the unemployed in Slovakia are among the lowest in the EU countries*.<sup>64</sup>

#### 4.3.2 *EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF) provided as part of 2007-2013 financial framework*

Even though the sums for expenditure as of 30 July 2016 for 2007-2013 programming period<sup>65</sup> are available, it is difficult to estimate the sum which was used for adult education, because it was financed from several Operational Programs.

It is difficult to evaluate the efficiency of individual projects as the reports and data are not available. The sustainability of projects is an issue, as it happens that many services, centres, or jobs cease to exist when a project finishes. Whereas Slovakia has done much to overcome social and economic differences, due to an insufficient monitoring and evaluation framework,

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<sup>61</sup> Ministry of Finance SR (April 2016), Národný program reforiem/ National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2016 <http://www.finance.gov.sk/en/Default.aspx?CatID=450>

<sup>62</sup> \* USVRK (the Office of Plenipotentiary for Roma communities), 21.9.2016, Monitorovacia správa plnenia stratégie Slovenskej republiky pre integráciu Rómov do roku 2020 za roky 2012, 2013, 2014 a 2015 (Monitoring report on performance of the Slovak Republic Strategy on Roma Integration by 2020 for the years 2012, 2013, 2013, and 2015) UV-26159/2016, <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-203321?prefixFile=m>

<sup>63</sup> Ministry of Finance SR (April 2016), National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2016 <http://www.finance.gov.sk/en/Default.aspx?CatID=450>

<sup>64</sup> Ministry of Finance SR (April 2016), National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2016, pg.28 [http://www.finance.gov.sk/Components/CategoryDocuments/s\\_LoadDocument.aspx?categoryId=8046&documentId=14511](http://www.finance.gov.sk/Components/CategoryDocuments/s_LoadDocument.aspx?categoryId=8046&documentId=14511)

<sup>65</sup> Office of Government SR (2016), Národný strategický referenčný rámec, Stav implementácie (National Strategic Reference Framework, State of Implementation) <http://www.nsrr.sk/cerpanie/>

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significant resources are likely to have been wasted on inefficient and/or ineffective social and employment policies<sup>66</sup>.

The website of the National Strategic Reference Framework ([www.nsrr.sk/cerpanie](http://www.nsrr.sk/cerpanie)) lists the allocated and spent budget from ESF/ Operational Programme Education up to end of December 2015, including the thematic areas as follows:

• Measure 2.1. Further education	107 492 358 EUR
• Measure 2.2. Further education in health service	17 618 607 EUR
• Measure 3.1. Education of Roma people	55 070 812 EUR
• Measure 3.2. Education of people with special needs	14 580 274 EUR
• Measure 4.2. Bratislava region - support for higher and further education	9 473 457 EUR

Only one project within these thematic areas was devoted directly to adult education – Increasing the quality of programmes and institutions of further education, including the system of compatibility and mutual links between formal, non-formal and informal education and increasing the adult participation in the further education programmes.<sup>67</sup>

The Evaluation Report on the Implementation Progress of OP concludes that the goal of support to further education is not sufficiently fulfilled. The large national projects focused only on further education for certain target groups (teachers and youth workers), and the number of demand-driven projects was very low.<sup>68</sup>

The report also offered a solution – to immediately prepare national and demand-driven EU funded project focusing on main system elements of further education, i.e. national system of qualifications, national qualification framework, career guidance centres, analysis of education needs and prognosis of skills for the labour market, etc.)

It is expected that the new Act on LLL will introduce a financial mechanism or directly co-finance training for certain qualifications. In the drafting phase there were discussions about introducing a rule in the Labour Code, requesting employers to provide employee education (e.g. set a number of days that should be spent on training) and urge them to pursue AL courses. The financing could be secured through setting up an Education Fund to which a certain percentage of the employee salary would be allocated,<sup>69</sup> or via vouchers or individual training accounts.

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<sup>66</sup> Kahanec M., Sedlakova M. (2016), Study on "The social and employment situation in Slovakia and outlook of the Slovak EU Presidency 2016", <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/studies>

<sup>67</sup> Operational Programme Education. <http://old.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=957>

<sup>68</sup> [Vyhodnotenie pokroku implementácie operačného programu Vzdelávanie z hľadiska relevantnosti a plnenia cieľov operačného programu - záverečná hodnotiacia správa](http://www.minedu.sk/hodnotiace-spravy-evaluation-reports/) (Evaluation Report on the Implementation Progress of OP Education from the Point of view of Relevance and Fulfilling the Aims of the OP), <https://www.minedu.sk/hodnotiace-spravy-evaluation-reports/>

<sup>69</sup> Jendeková, M., Cigánová, K. (2014) Country report, AINova, project REGIONAL, 539389-LLP-1-2013-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GMP [http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP\\_Slovakia\\_en.pdf](http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP_Slovakia_en.pdf)

#### **4.4 Effectiveness of investment**

There are no reports or data on the effectiveness of investment available.

However, the above-mentioned Evaluation Report on the implementation of Operational Programme Education also recommends, as regards Measure 2 (Further Education), that more attention is paid to project budgets and argumentation for budget lines by project applicants, to be able to verify the project effectiveness afterwards.

The information on implementation of ESIF in period 2014-2020<sup>70</sup> is available as of 31 July 2017. In the OP Human Resources, only 9.96% of the allocated funds have been actually spent and 44,38% were contracted. This is the result of delayed adoption of framework documents – Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes by the European Commission and subsequent delays in drafting of rules and manuals as well as opening the calls for projects. The Commission also has not accepted several project proposals for national projects in the area of education, which decreases the spending of ESF to date.

The data for the previous period is available on [www.nsrr.sk](http://www.nsrr.sk) but again, there are only figures, no evaluation reports.

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<sup>70</sup> <http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/informacie-o-implementacii-esif/>

## 5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING POLICY

The most recent and comprehensive AL policy document is the Strategy for LLL from 2011 and the Report on Implementation of this strategy adopted in January 2016.<sup>71</sup> In this section, the information from this Report is used to assess the activities implemented in the period 2007-2013, planned interventions in 2014-2020 and understand how they contribute to the AL system.

The Strategy for LLL is related to other strategic documents, in particular the employment strategy, the national regional development strategy, the national reform programme, the national programme for the increase of living conditions of persons with disabilities, the strategic framework for the protection of labour, active aging, gender equality, lifelong learning and counselling, MRC integration, report on search and fight against illegal work and employment, or to the upcoming strategy documents, for example; for poverty reduction, and the development of universities.<sup>72</sup>

The Strategy for LLL is implemented only on the national level; it is not implemented at regional or local levels.<sup>73</sup> However, its practical results are more visible at local and regional levels. Some actions related to adult learning are accompanying the activities planned to increase the employment e.g. the Action Plans for less developed regions. The main causes of low participation of the working population in the labour market include a low level of education, which has to be improved, and insufficient links with the labour market. It is expected that the information on the labour market needs will be collected by the National Institute for LLL and the knowledge-base of best practices in LLL will be built. There is a little evidence yet that this information is collected, it is probably done on an ad-hoc basis rather than systematically.

The following sub-sections assess the existing policy through the lens of the six key success factors for effective adult learning policy that have been identified in a recent study.<sup>74</sup>

### 5.1 Develop learners' interest in learning

In general, the quality of formal education in Slovakia is decreasing, we can see it in PISA and PIAAC assessments. The "negative" image of education is reflected also in non-formal

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<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Education SR, (2016), Správa o stave implementácie úloh vyplývajúcich o stratégie celoživotného vzdelávania 2011, (Report on the state of implementation of the tasks following from LLL strategy 2011), material presented at the government meeting on January 13, 2016, UV-43505/2015

<http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-195451?prefixFile=m>  
<sup>72</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR (March 2015), Národná stratégia zamestnanosti Slovenskej republiky do roku 2020 (National Employment Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2020) , <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/narodna-strategia-zamestnanosti-slovenskej-republiky-do-roku-2020.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> Jendeková, M., Cigánová, K. (2014) Country report, AINova, project REGIONAL, 539389-LLP-1-2013-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GMP [http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP\\_Slovakia\\_en.pdf](http://www.regionalproject.eu/pdf/CP_Slovakia_en.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Key success factors, indicating the strength of evidence (available in all languages): <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/policy-tool/key-success-factors>; Study "An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe": <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/final-report-20150817-en.pdf>

and adult learning. There is a lack of awareness raising activities explaining the importance of education, as well as a lack of discussions on important values for society. There is the low social status of teachers and these factors all express the attitude of political leaders towards education. Currently there is more attention paid to solving unemployment by support of job creation than by awareness raising, of benefits of learning in order to motivate adult learners.

Some policy papers<sup>75</sup> as well as practices raise the importance of providing guidance for learners about learning options. The number of information-counselling centres is gradually growing both at national and regional levels. These centres are run mostly by the public sector, but some also by private sector. Feedback and statistics from their work are not available yet.

The social partners, namely the trade unions, occasionally provide adult learning. The results of employer engagement in planning, promotion and recruitment of learners to adult learning is summarised in the research from 2014. Only a low percentage of surveyed companies (13.66%) have an educational policy and run education programmes for their employees systematically. 38.51% of companies only run compulsory training courses. The majority of companies provide courses for adults according to their current needs.<sup>76</sup>

## 5.2 Increase employers' investment in learning

It is important to develop key competences and vocational skills in AL, which can be used not only within one sector, but are transferable to other sectors as well. The definition of qualification standards for AL in cooperation of the Ministry of Education and employers is important in order to fit to the labour market needs. The cooperation between Volkswagen and the Slovak Technical University is a good example how to proceed in the future. However, to upskill and retrain the workforce by employers themselves is not included in the Strategy for LLL 2011, neither is financial support for such employers. Some craft occupations have elaborated qualifications and certified employers can validate these qualifications. This situation is rather rare, currently it only works for 29 occupations published in the Information System for Further Education run by the Ministry of Education.<sup>77</sup>

It can be expected that the investments of employers into AL will increase, once the existing NSQ and NSO are put into practice.

In 2015 a new Act on VET came into force. It introduced the system of dual education. The Act supports a smooth transition of students from education to the labour market and increases their employability. The employers benefit from preparing the students exactly for the positions and professions they need.<sup>78</sup> The Ministry of Education motivates employers to

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<sup>75</sup> SAAIC, (2014) Kariérne poradenstvo v Slovenskej republike, (Career counselling in Slovak Republic), Euroguidance, [://web.saaic.sk/nrcg\\_new/.%5Ckniznica%5C2014%5CEuroguidance\\_KP\\_Slovensko\\_2014.pdf](http://web.saaic.sk/nrcg_new/.%5Ckniznica%5C2014%5CEuroguidance_KP_Slovensko_2014.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Korenkova M. (2014), Influence of the Regional Differences on the Possibilities of Education of Employees in the Company (Vplyv regionálnych rozdielností na možnosť vzdelávania sa zamestnancov v podniku), IN:Sborník příspěvků XVII. mezinárodní kolokvium o regionálních vědách Hustopeče 18.–20. 6. 2014, pg.. 264-269 [http://is.muni.cz/do/econ/soubory/katedry/kres/4884317/48596005/032\\_2014.pdf](http://is.muni.cz/do/econ/soubory/katedry/kres/4884317/48596005/032_2014.pdf)

<sup>77</sup> <http://isdv.iedu.sk/Default.aspx>

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.minedu.sk/system-dualneho-vzdelavania/>

enter the process of vocational education and training in two ways: firstly, by making the vocational training compliant with employers' requirements and needs; and secondly, by providing tax incentives to employers.<sup>79</sup>

The take up of the opportunities provided by the new system was lower than expected from the side of the students. Only 1% of secondary vocational school students has joined dual education in the second year of its existence. One of the reasons is that schools are discouraged from joining the programme by reduced financial normatives. When their students enter the dual system, they spend less time at school, hence the school receives less money per student. The experience in the first year of the dual education system will be reflected in the upcoming amendment to the vocational education Act.<sup>80</sup>

The situation may improve with the help of the national project Dual Education which aims to increase the attractiveness and quality of VET. It runs from 2016 until Oct 2020, with allocation of 33 million EUR (total of EU and state budget sources) from the OP Human Resources.<sup>81</sup>

### **5.3 Improve equity of access for all**

To improve equality of access to adult education means also to improve access to information about AL and counselling. Counselling is relevant for all groups of citizens on all levels of qualifications. However, it is especially important for people with low or no qualification at all. In Slovakia, the difficult-to-engage groups and inactive and long-term unemployed are mainly the people from MRC. The Monitoring reports 2012-2015 on the fulfilment of the Slovak Strategy for the Integration of Roma until 2020 mention how much funds were used for activities attracting MRC for the job market, but there is no information about the types of activities. The usual methods of spreading the information, such as an information platform or a web page are not usable in case of low-skilled unemployed. There are several non-governmental organisations working as intermediary organisations in outreach to difficult-to-engage groups. Their engagement is usually successful but it is also not systematic.

This is also the finding of the World Bank analysis of PISA results. It finds that Slovakia's education system is one of the most inequitable education systems in the European Union. This is the most worrying finding of this report. Performance in PISA varies significantly in relation to the student's socioeconomic background. While it is not surprising to find disparities in countries between skills of students from rich and poor households, the gap between students from the top and bottom quintile in Slovakia is the equivalent to almost *four years* of schooling, significantly more than elsewhere in the EU. Performance also varies by type of school – between general secondary schools (gymnáziums) and vocational secondary schools. Slovakia's 15 year-olds from socioeconomically disadvantaged background are disproportionately represented in vocational schools, where aggregate

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<sup>79</sup>[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:National\\_Reforms\\_in\\_Vocational\\_Education\\_and\\_Training\\_and\\_Adult\\_Learning](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Slovakia:National_Reforms_in_Vocational_Education_and_Training_and_Adult_Learning)

<sup>80</sup> National Reform Programme 2017

<sup>81</sup> <http://www.dualnysystem.sk/Oprojekte.aspx>

performance is significantly behind that in the gymnaziums. While PISA data does not allow for a disaggregated analysis by ethnic background of students, Roma youth are likely to suffer disproportionately from the inequities in the education system stemming from socioeconomic disadvantages.<sup>82</sup>

Retraining of adults who left school early allows them to acquire qualifications for auxiliary or assistant jobs only. Collecting qualification units described in the national qualifications standards and national system of occupations, NSQ and NSO, should offer more effective future alternatives.

The Report on Implementation of Strategy for LLL comments on two more paths towards better access. One is through establishing a financial instrument for which a legislative framework is now being prepared. The other is establishment of a multi-media platform providing free education modules. The CVANU project has established such platform and piloted some courses. They are not freely available at the moment.

#### **5.4 Deliver learning that is relevant**

Learner disposition towards learning can be improved by gaining key competences which open up possibilities for personal development and increase flexibility on the job market, such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship, languages, digital literacy, and active citizenship. Key competences support the acquisition of fundamental social and civic values and help individuals to better function in society. The motivation for participation of adults in this type of education and training is important. However, increasing awareness of the benefits of learning in general and among less educated people, in particular, is missing. There is no specific measure for those with low education attainment levels and those that are currently unemployed.

There are two national projects launched in 2016 that include activities focused on vocational education of young unemployed aged up to 29 years, and for graduate practice. Project Re-pas from the previous period continues as a scheme for financing of requalification courses of unemployed adults. Despite the reorganisation of the Central Labour Office and improved access to training, there are still weaknesses in introducing individual support to the long-term unemployed and to vulnerable groups in order to attract them to learning.

The successful implementation of NSQ and NSO frameworks was supposed to increase the relevance of training by better matching it with the needs of employers. The NSO contains a register of occupations with the description of general and professional competencies required for a certain occupation, as well as the level within the Slovak Qualification Framework. The occupations were selected and defined in cooperation with employers to reflect the situation on the job market and specify which occupations are needed. This is important information

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<sup>82</sup> Slovak Republic. Skilling up the next generation. And analysisi of Slovak Republic 's performance in the Programme for International Student Assessment. World Bank Group, 2015.  
<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/329961467987873147/pdf/101563-WP-P152132-Box393264B-PUBLIC-PISA-Slovak-Republic-12022015.pdf>



for education and training institutions in order to provide relevant training programmes in the future.

The NSQ contains information cards for 1000 qualifications describing in detail the required qualification standards, standards for assessment and methodological / organisation guidelines for the assessment. Employers also took part in the process of describing the required qualifications. The benefit for the public is the fact that there are the rules for assessing and recognising one's skills and knowledge acquired in non-formal or informal way. The system has a potential to motivate people to take part in LLL as they may be rewarded in form of a new qualification obtained. From the point of view of the employers, this enables them to influence the education system – education outcomes and profiles of graduates to better match their needs.

These two systems still need to be linked, to specify what qualifications are needed for a certain occupation. They must be linked also with the information system of the Ministry on Education which contains the information on institutions competent for making assessments for individual qualifications. It is expected the new act shall stipulate how these systems are to be linked and further developed.

The completion of the National System of Qualifications is proposed as a national project in this programming period. Its part would be also the drafting of the new LLL Act. It seems that waiting for these two huge systems to be completed delays all other steps in the area of adult education.

### **5.5 Deliver learning that is of high quality**

At this point there is no policy focused on establishing a quality control framework for monitoring and evaluation of adult learning programmes. Overall, such a policy would be formulated by the Ministry of Education, Department of Lifelong Learning in cooperation with the National Institute for LLL. There have been calls from many experts and professionals for school education and initial teacher training to be reformed.

A comprehensive reform document (program Learning Slovakia) is now waiting for adoption. An alternative document, prepared by independent experts title It Makes Sense is also being prepared.

To develop a skilled adult workforce, training and continuous professional development is also a part of employment strategies, therefore the coordination with the Ministry of Employment is needed. So far their efforts have not been sufficiently coordinated.

### **5.6 Ensure coherent policy**

The National Institute for LLL was established to be the main coordinating body for LLL policies, on behalf of the Ministry of Education. As mentioned previously, LLL stands for adult/further education. In 2013 the Institute signed two important memoranda on

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cooperation - one with the associations of industries (for employers) and the other with the Comenius University, its Centre of Further Education and the Slovak Academic Association for Lifelong Learning. Both Memoranda aim at cooperation in identifying education and training needs, designing training programmes, recognising results of non-formal education, development of counselling for adults and drafting new laws. Apart from this, the Ministers of Education and Labour signed a cooperative memorandum on improving systems for preparing the labour force for the needs of the labour market.

This means that all the cooperation and coordination lines are in place. They enable the coordination of main policies relevant to LLL, namely school policies and employment policies.

The main bulk of activities in this regard is done in connection with strategic planning and implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). This also applies to the national and regional level. The LLL policy is formulated at the national level, there is no similar policy formulated at regional levels. However, there is always a chapter on human resources or LLL in the strategic documents for regional economic and social development. The regional initiatives however do not feed into a national one.

The National Institute for LLL is the body that should build databases and knowledge bases for adult learning. The data of various type are not available at the moment for solid policy making in this field.

The Academy of Sciences, the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences participates in a Horizon 2020 project titled ENLIVEN. Its aim is to design an innovative model and mechanism for support of discussion, drafting and evaluation of LLL policies with focus on the needs of young adults. The project runs from October 2016 till September 2019. Its results could inform the policy making in this area.

## 6.0 STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADULT EDUCATION SYSTEM

The following strengths and weaknesses are based on a literature review, discussions with experts, participation in professional events. The important external factors are:

- Existence of EU-wide initiatives in the area of AL;
- Availability of EU funds;
- The professional community platform on EPALE;
- Terminological inconsistency within the country, as well as towards the EU documents

### 6.1 Strengths

**Central institution.** There is the National Institute of Lifelong Learning (NÚCŽV) that oversees the implementation of the Strategy for LLL and career guidance. It was established in 2010 to cover the monitoring and forecasting of training needs, the validation of results of further education, and the administration of the NQF and NSQ. Technically, there is one central body that coordinates all elements of the AL system;

**Strong formal education system.** Thanks to strong formal education systems, Slovakia does not face the problem of basic literacy. The formal education system can provide a backbone also to provision of training needed for obtaining qualifications (and meet the needs of the labour market). However, the latest international assessments such as PISA, signal that the quality of the school system has decreased;

**Active stakeholders.** There is a shared will of actors to create a working and flexible system of AL. By actors we mean government agencies, providers, as well as social partners.

### 6.2 Weaknesses

- **Working system of non-formal/adult education.** There are strategic documents elaborated (even though in need of updating), relevant institutions in place, and tools for validation of results of non-formal and informal learning, NSQ and NSO are available. It appears that there are all main elements in place but they are not being implemented. What is missing is the modern legal framework. The new Act on LLL is planned only for 2018. Another barrier in rapid implementation of the non-formal education system is the formal education system. It is reluctant to admit that qualifications (validation) obtained through non-formal education might be equal to those from the formal system;
- **Regional and local structure of AL** is fragmented and not united by common underlying principles. The Labour Offices, vocational schools, regional enlightenment centres, they all pursue their lines of activities.
- **Statistics and evaluation of information.** There is partial statistical data collected but no regular analysis of data is available. Also, there are some registers of training providers, but no overall picture is available. Data on the impact of national projects is not available;

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- **Motivation to learn.** Overall, there is a low motivation to learn, especially among those, who need it most, the low skilled workforce. This is due to little recognition by employers through career promotion or increase in salary. Also, financial support or stimulation schemes for learning is absent. Not many people can appreciate the role of learning in their employment. To this effect, an effective information and awareness raising campaign is missing.

The AL policy is not on the top of the governmental agenda, hence it is not updated and modern, reflecting current needs. It is not even firmly anchored in the current reform documents. From among the AL dimensions, only the economic dimension is being pursued through implementation. The social, societal, active citizenship, and personal development are not developed and not funded.

## **7.0 FURTHER POLICY REFORMS AND ORIENTATIONS NEEDED**

As mentioned earlier, in the absence of a current Action Plan in the LLL/AL area, the OP HR in Priority Axis Education defines the priorities:

- Increasing adult participation in lifelong learning, with a particular focus on people who need to enhance and renew their skills, people with low education and skills. This increases their sustainability in the labour market and compliance with the labour market requirements;
- Designing the system of compatibility and communication between sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning (validation of results);
- Linking the education system to the labour market through newly created non-formal education programmes;
- Ongoing revision and updating of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications System.

All of these points are justified and are in line with findings of this report. However, only a few concrete projects have been prepared. Adult education should be balanced, and pursue all dimensions - economic, social, societal, as well as personal. Currently it appears that only the economic dimension is supported and other forms of AL oriented (such as in-service training, personal development or civic education) are not sufficiently supported.

A new LLL Act was envisaged, however the drafting stopped. It should anchor a flexible system, with a proper position for non-formal and informal learning. A follow-up to this is the functioning system of validation of results of non-formal and informal learning.

In order to make the National Qualification Framework compatible with the EQF, best European practices should be reflected, a common vocabulary and methods and tools for evaluation should be used, so that the results can be comparable at the European level.

An awareness raising campaign on the value of LLL is needed, emphasising its positive impact not only on employability of an individual learner, but also on self-fulfilment and health.

Improving the quality of AL is a pre-condition for increasing the value of AL.

If the AL system should support the employment measures, it must (be allowed to) flexibly respond to the needs of the labour market. These needs have to be identified, described and communicated. A functioning information system for collecting the feedback data as well as available programmes and training providers is needed. It should be connected with social statistics and labour market data. It will also feed the information to job counselling and career guidance centres together with the information from NSQ and NSO.

With regard to the employment policy that is so much interlinked with the AL in Slovakia, it appears important to deal intensively with the MRC issues.

The key factors behind labour market gaps between Roma and non-Roma populations are low educational attainment and qualification, and widespread barriers, including outright

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discrimination in access to education, housing, health care and the labour market. According to the estimates of Institute for Financial Policy, the unemployment rate in Slovakia will stay high (around 12%) if the Roma labour force participation and employment do not increase. It was estimated that the aggregate unemployment rate could decline by as much as four percentage points, if Roma attained parity with the non-Roma population in terms of their employment rates. Support for marginalised Roma communities is therefore crucial; however, with mixed results so far.<sup>83</sup>

It would be useful if one of the national projects was used to analyse the area of adult education and draft the new act.

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<sup>83</sup> Kahanec M., Sedlakova M. (2016), Study on "The social and employment situation in Slovakia and outlook of the Slovak EU Presidency 2016". European Parliament, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/studies>

## 8.0 SUMMARY

Slovakia has experienced a remarkable increase in the employment rate, accompanied by a moderate decrease in the unemployment rate. Long-term unemployment is a key challenge for the Slovak labour market. The rate of long-term unemployment continues to be one of the highest in the EU. It particularly affects marginalised Roma communities, the low-skilled and young people.

The participation of adults in lifelong learning is low. The reasons are manifold: high participation in initial education (including VET), relatively little investment in training for the unemployed and lack of financial and non-financial incentives for adults to participate in learning.

The results of PISA and PIAAC indicate a decreasing quality of the school system.

The National Reform Programme, similarly to ESIF programming documents, substitute the action plans for the area of AL.

In response to CSRs in 2015 and 2016, the NRP 2016 and 2017 contains targeted ALMP tools that can enhance the employability and labour mobility of low-skilled and long-term unemployed, which are among the least employable groups in the labour market. Particular attention should be given to discrepancies between labour market needs and educational structure of low-skilled labour and the integration of a relatively large number of inactive people from MRC.

The MoLSAF SR adopted an action plan in November 2016 to implement various forms of support for the integration of long-term unemployed in the labour market. From 2017 the labour offices will start with profiling of jobseekers and personalised counselling including competency evaluation (bilan de competence). External services will be used to evaluate the skills of jobseekers. The financial allocation from the ESF to this project amounts to EUR 34.9 million.

A number of national projects have been initiated. Two from those launched in 2016 can be considered as being educational AL. They complement the Re-pas, training for requalification project, from the previous period. Others are aimed at reducing unemployment as well as helping women to become employed, or to remain employed.

From 2017, the if employment prospects of the long-term unemployed in the labour market will be improved by the education and requalification programmes (national projects *Education of jobseekers* and *Education of young jobseekers* with the financial allocation of EUR 28.9 million until 2022 and EUR 30.9 million until 2019). New projects will also be launched in 2017 to financially support job creation for long-term unemployed (national projects *The road to the labour market* and *RESTART* with a financial allocation of EUR 49.5 million and EUR 15.7 million until 2021 from ESF).

The AL system is governed by the Strategy for LLL from 2011 and the Act on LLL from 2009.

The Strategy for LLL was implemented mainly by three national projects, notably the CVANU project in 2013-2015 on the system of further education and job counselling for better employability, a national system of qualifications and a national system of occupations. Out of three dimensions of LLL, only the economic one is pursued, the social and personal dimensions are not supported.

The discrepancies in labour market needs and the workforce are addressed mainly via VET measures. Recently a dual education was introduced to increase the practical skills of students. This new approach could help also adult learners through offering a “*small certificate of apprenticeship*”, the possibility to validate the results of non-formal, and informal learning and obtain partial or full qualification.

It is argued that well targeted projects aimed at the large group of MRC who represent the most disadvantaged group, low-skilled and long-term unemployed would mean a considerable difference in the employment figures. Therefore a large amount of funds is required for improving the conditions of this group.

All main elements of an effective AL system need to be improved. Nevertheless, a lot has been done already, but it needs streamlining. There is a chance to do so with the new Act on LLL that is being prepared. The capacities of the National Institute for LLL should be strengthened so that the Institute is actually capable of fulfilling its ambitious tasks, rather than running projects as a core business.

The motivation to learn has not been a long-term priority. A real effort at all levels of education is needed to place additional value on the importance of education.

The investments to AL come from several sources, the largest being the EU funds, then private sources (employers and individuals) and national sources.

With the increased value assigned to education and learning, a functioning validation system with quality programmes, dual education working, various (tax/financial) incentives, employers will invest more in learning.

It requires strengthened institutional capacities as well as functioning information system on providers, programmes and needs. The system of information is partially in place.

There is a common understanding that “*Employers cite a lack of skills necessary for the labour market. Lifelong learning is insufficiently linked to the needs of employers; this includes their cooperation in the provision of education, the creation of its content and participation in counselling for adults. In many cases, lifelong learning (particularly non-formal and informal education) does not lead to acquiring the relevant outputs (degrees, qualifications) that are accepted by employers and thus the effect of education is lost since it does not realistically enhance one’s possibilities in the labour market.*”<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>OP HR at [https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/esf/op-ludske-zdroje/op-hr\\_en-version-final.pdf](https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/esf/op-ludske-zdroje/op-hr_en-version-final.pdf)



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Knowing the real needs of the labour market and responding to them is the first step towards quality AL. The NSO and NSQ, together with qualification standards and assessment criteria are ready to be applied in practice. There is experience with the accreditation process and control.

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## ANNEXES

## Annex 1: List of adopted legal acts, strategies, laws

Name	Date of adoption	Short description of content
Draft of <a href="#">Národný program rozvoja výchovy a vzdelávania - Učiace sa Slovensko</a> (National program for development of education and training - Learning Slovakia)	March 2017	A draft of the core reform document for the area of training and education for the next 10 years was published. It lays down the essential system changes and objectives which need to be attained in order to cope with the challenges posed by the Slovak school system. After public debate, the document was approved by the Slovak government in the first half of 2017. (was not approved). An action plan containing measures for the next two years will be developed based on the document. The level of implementation of action plans will be reviewed on an annual basis
<a href="#">Akčný plán na posilnenie integrácie dlhodobo nezamestnaných na trh práce</a> v SR (Action Plan on strengthening the integration of long-term-unemployed into the job market)	November 2016	The Action Plan complements the National Strategy on Employment and was prepared by the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with the Labour Office and the European Commission to support the employment policy. It aims at introducing several forms of support for integration of long-term unemployed into the job market, especially individualised counselling based on competency profiles of the unemployed, making partnerships with employers or other institutions for placement of unemployed.
<a href="#">Národný program reforiem</a> , National Reform Programme 2017	April 2017	There is no specific reference to the lifelong-learning/adult education policy or measure in the NRP 2017. The mismatch between the job market and secondary and tertiary education is dealt with though.
	March 2015	It governs the vocational education and training in secondary vocational schools and introduces a new system of dual education. The act defines types of secondary vocational schools, verification of

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<a href="#">Zákon o odbornom vzdelávaní a príprave</a> (Act on Vocational Education and Training)		<p>employer's eligibility to provide practical education in the system of dual education, and it provides legislative framework for dual education.</p>
<a href="#">Zákon o celoživotnom vzdelávaní</a> (Act on Lifelong learning)	<p>1 December 2009</p>	<p>Further education, as a part of lifelong learning, follows the level of education achieved in school education and is provided by further education institutions. The goal of further education is to supplement, update, extend or improve qualification obtained in school education; to obtain partial or full qualification, satisfy interests and acquire competence to integrate into the civil society.</p>
<a href="#">Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania a celoživotného poradenstva</a> (Strategy on Lifelong learning)	<p>2011</p>	<p>The priorities of the Strategy for lifelong learning<sup>85</sup> are: Developing individuals' attitude and motivation for lifelong learning; Closing the gap between the profiles of graduates and the labour market demands; Counselling services for adults; Raising the level of individual competencies, such as financial literacy, entrepreneurship, languages, digital literacy, and active citizenship; Financing of further education.</p>
<a href="#">Zákon o službách zamestnanosti</a> (Act on Employment Services)	<p>2004</p>	<p>It contains provisions on Education and Training for Labour Market (paras 44-47), specifying the conditions of financing training programmes for unemployed as well as employed people.</p>
<a href="#">Stratégia SR pre integráciu Rómov do roku 2020</a>  Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020	<p>11.1.2012</p>	<p>It does not explicitly deal with adult education, however it is a framework document dealing with a target group of many employment policy measures, including education (for example second chance education programmes for early school leavers).</p>

**Annex 2: Inventory of policy interventions**

Name of intervention	Source (with hyperlink)	Budget	Outputs	Which of the 6 building blocks for successful adult learning policies does it target? (tick all relevant)						Further details/description (purpose, duration, responsible entity etc.)
<p>(Plan to join) Governance of EU Skills Anticipation and Matching Systems project (CEDEFOP).</p> <p>In: Ministry of Finance of the SR. National Reform Programme 2017 <a href="http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>				Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	<p>External assessment of the system of anticipation of skills required by the labour market and monitoring of employment of graduates in the labour market The aim is to build a system providing comprehensive information about the skills and employment of graduates of secondary and tertiary schools in the labour market.</p>

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<p>The national project School open for all</p> <p>Allocation of EUR 25 million from ESF</p> <p>Improvement of inclusion of students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds Support of implementation of inclusive education within kindergartens, primary schools, informal education of children from MRC and the children outside the education system.</p> <p>In: Ministry of Finance of the SR. National Reform Programme 2017 <a href="http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>	Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	Methodology-pedagogical center is implementing this project during 2016-2020. 500 positions of assistant teachers and specialised staff (school psychologist, special education teacher, social pedagogue) will be created in 50 kindergartens and 130 primary schools.
<p>National project Education of jobseekers</p> <p>Allocation of EUR 28.9 million until 2022</p> <p>National project Education of young jobseekers</p> <p>Allocation of EUR 30.9 million until 2019</p> <p>The improvement of employment prospects of the long-term unemployed in the labour market by the education and requalification programmes</p> <p>In: Ministry of Finance of the SR. National Reform Programme 2017 <a href="http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>	Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	Projects are implemented by the Labour Offices..

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<p>National project Dual education and increasing attractiveness and quality of vocational education and preparation</p> <p>Allocation of 28 million EUR until 2020</p> <p>In: Ministry of Finance of the SR. National Reform Programme 2017 <a href="http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>	Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	Upcoming amendment to the vocational education law is foreseen. Activities aimed at promoting dual education and increasing the attractiveness and quality of vocational education and preparation
<p>National project The road to the labour market</p> <p>Allocation of 49.5 million EUR until 2021</p> <p>RESTART</p> <p>Allocation of EUR 15.7 million until 2021</p> <p>Projects to financially support job creation for long-term unemployed</p> <p>In: Ministry of Finance of the SR. National Reform Programme 2017 <a href="http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.finance.gov.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>	Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	Labour Offices  Projects to financially support job creation for long-term unemployed

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<p>Národný plán implementácie Záruky mladých v Slovenskej republike (National Plan of Youth Guarantee implementation in Slovakia). Update adopted in April 2014</p>	<p>Fosters learners' interest in learning</p>	<p>Employers' investment in learning</p>	<p>Improve equity of access for all</p>	<p>Learning that is relevant</p>	<p>High quality learning</p>	<p>Coherent policy</p>	<p>Implemented by Labour Offices</p>
<p>Included in the National Reform Programme 2014 <a href="http://www.mfsr.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197">http://www.mfsr.sk/Default.aspx?CatID=5197</a></p>							<p>It contains legislative reforms and project initiatives for 2014 – 2020 with the aim of an early intervention, activation and integration of the young people in the labour market.</p>

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