



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

Full Country Report – Czech Republic

Written by Milada Stalker
October - 2017



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Directorate E — Skills

Unit E.3 — VET, Apprenticeship and Adult Learning

Contact: Mantas Sekmokas

E-mail: EMPL-E3-UNIT@ec.europa.eu

European Commission

B-1049 Brussels

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

Full country report - Czech Republic

***Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union.***

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018

© European Union, 2018

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

For any use of materials which are not under the European Union copyright, permission must be sought directly from the copyright holder(s) indicated.

CONTENTS

1.0	COUNTRY OVERVIEW	6
1.1	Trends for the entire population	6
1.2	Trends for low qualified adults	8
2.0	BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM	12
2.1	Main features and a concise summary of historic development	12
2.2	Provision	14
3.0	ADULT LEARNING POLICIES.....	18
3.1	Context.....	18
3.2	Adult learning policy framework	23
3.3	National quantitative policy targets.....	31
3.4	Quality assurance.....	33
3.5	Future policy developments	34
4.0	INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS	39
4.1	Total investment in adult learning and change over time	39
4.2	Public national investment.....	39
4.3	EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF)	42
5.0	ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING POLICY	45
5.1	Develop learners' interest in learning	45
5.2	Increase employers' investment in learning	47
5.3	Improve equity of access for all.....	47
5.4	Deliver learning that is relevant	48
5.5	Deliver learning that is of high quality.....	49
5.6	Ensure coherent policy.....	50
6.0	STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADULT EDUCATION SYSTEM	51
6.1	Strengths	51
6.2	Weaknesses.....	51
7.0	FURTHER POLICY REFORMS AND ORIENTATIONS NEEDED.....	53
8.0	SUMMARY.....	54
9.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	56
	ANNEXES	61
	Annex 1: List of adopted legal acts, strategies, laws	61
	Annex 2: Inventory of policy interventions.....	65

1.0 COUNTRY OVERVIEW

1.1 Trends for the entire population

1.1.1 Employment rate – entire population

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

Geographical area	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	67.9	68.6	68.6	68.4	68.4	69.2	70	71	75% of the 20-64 year-olds in employment	75
Member State	70.9	70.7	70.4	70.9	71.5	72.5	73.5	74.8	76.7		

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 Czech Republic reached the EU 2020 target rate of 75% in 2016. This was due to both favourable economic conditions and the successful implementation of measures described in the Action Plan on Employment (such as retraining, work placements for the disabled and community service).

The high overall employability rate naturally coincides with the low unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) in the Czech Republic, which was only 3.2% according to the Eurostat data (March 2017), constituting the lowest level in the EU (compared to an EU average of 8.0 %).

The high employment rate could also be attributed to relatively low wages. The minimum monthly wage is around € 400 (€ 330.1 in 2015)¹. Only four countries in the EU-28 (BG, LT, RO and HU) have a lower minimum wage.

-Comparison to National 2020 target

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00155&plugin=1>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

The National 2020 target, which is also set out in the Employment Strategy, was identical to the EU2020 target and this goal was also met. The national goals such as the increase of the employment rate of women to 65% and of older workers (55-64 years old) to 55% were also met.

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

The EU-28 average was surpassed by 5.7 percentage points.

-Evolution over time

The overall employment rate in the Czech Republic has increased steadily since 2010.

1.1.2 *Participation rate – entire population*

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

Geographical area	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	9.6	9.3	9.1	9.2	10.7	10.8	10.7	10.8		
Member State	:	5.6	7.8	11.6	11.1	10	9.6	8.5	8.8	15% of adults in lifelong learning (LLL)	

Source: Participation rate in education and training by sex and age (%), Eurostat code trng_ifse_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.

-Comparison to EU2020 target

The Czech Republic with its 8.8% participation rate lags significantly behind the EU2020 target of 15%.

Overall participation is strongly linked to the overall availability of adult learning provision. Public expenditure on education in the Czech Republic is among the lowest in Europe. In 2015 it was 4.01% of GDP. As the EC study (EC, 2015) states, a one percentage point increase in public expenditure on education (as % of GDP) is associated with a 6 percentage point increase in the participation rate in adult education.

Although it is not the only reason why the participation rate in the Czech Republic is low, it deserves mention. Other explanations include the high percentage of the population with an attained education level of ISCED 3 and higher, the unwillingness of the population to

participate in or pay for adult education, and employers' lack of trust in the benefits of education, and refusal to free workers for adult education. (ČSÚ, 2010)².

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

The Czech Republic is 2 percentage points behind the EU-28 average. With the new ESF projects we can expect an increase in participation rate. The important question is whether this increase will continue after the termination of the EU support.

-Evolution over time

In 2011 the participation rate in adult education and training exceeded the EU average for the first time at 11.4% with a 3.9 percentage point increase in one year. In 2012 the rate dropped to 10.8 % and the decline continued until 2015. These figures show that the sudden growth was not the result of a fundamental change, but probably a result of projects implemented in Operational Programme Human Resources and Employability. This means that further support and the elimination of existing barriers is needed for a lasting effect in higher participation of adults in education.

In 2016 we see a slight increase, which is a good sign for future development.

1.2 Trends for low qualified adults

1.2.1 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
EU-28 average	:	30.6	27.3	26.6	25.8	24.8	24.1	23.5	23
Member State	13.9	10.1	8.1	7.7	7.5	7.2	6.8	6.8	6.6

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

² ČSÚ (Czech Statistical Office), (2010). *Další odborné vzdělávání zaměstnaných osob* (Further vocational education of employed) <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/dalsi-odborne-vzdelavani-zamestnanych-osob-dov-2010-f6lqgfmyn>

The ČSÚ study notes that many employers who employ under 50 people do not pay attention to adult education of their employees. Financial and employee time strain is the primary motive.

The Czech Republic has the second highest level of attainment of ISCED 3 (67.1% in 2016) and higher. Therefore the percentage of the population with low qualifications remains relatively low.

-Evolution over time

In the studied time period the percentage of the population with low qualifications decreased from 13.9 to 6.6%. This decrease is due mostly to older, less qualified workers leaving the workforce, and to a lesser degree due to upskilling in formal adult education, which has a long tradition in the Czech Republic.

1.2.2 *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
EU-28 average	:	55.7	53.8	53.4	52.7	52	52.6	53.2	54.3
Member State	47.2	41.2	43.2	42.2	40.4	41.8	43	41.9	45.1

Source: Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code ifsa_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 the Czech Republic (45.1%) falls behind the EU-28 average of 54.3%. Low skilled adults are traditionally difficult to engage. The low employment rate of low skilled adults is partially due to the fact that only 6.6% of the population attain education at only the ISCED 0-2 level.

Although active employment policy and many programmes and projects is aimed at this group, the increase is relatively slow.

-Evolution over time

No data were found to explain the changes in the employment rate of low skilled adults during the given period or the fact that the maximum level of 47.2 % was attained in 2000.

1.2.3 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
EU-28 average	:	3.7	3.9	4	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2
Member State	:	0.8	1.4	2.8	2.4	2.5	2.2	1.9	2.3

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

Despite measures taken, the participation rate of low qualified adults in education and training is below the EU-28 average. Unfortunately no information could be found to explain this phenomenon. According to D. Münich, author of the EEPO Review (EC, 2015a)³, the combined effect of several factors affecting the operation of network of public employment services (such as the reorganisation and break down of the IT system) caused central monitoring and data collection to be limited for 5 years, therefore none of the existing regular MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) or PES reports provide information on what share of low-skilled (or any other vulnerable group) of unemployed participate in retraining.

The low proportion of low qualified adults is, in some cases, due to the fact that employers prefer to support adult education for higher qualified workers. Meanwhile, workers with low levels of formal education, who have the most to gain from adult education, rarely take part in it. Participation in adult education of workers with tertiary education is 8 - 10 times higher.

Current estimates, e.g. outputs from the project PŘEKVAP (FDV, 2015)⁴, project a reduction in demand for low qualified workers. These workers will face more competition on the labour market.

This is particularly disturbing considering that the 20-24 age group, which will be active on the labour market for the next 40 years, has an almost twice as high proportion of

³ EC, (2015a). EEPO Review Spring 2015: Upskilling unemployed adults The organisation, profiling and targeting of training provision

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2265&furtherNews=yes>

⁴ FDV, (2015). *Předvídání kvalifikačních potřeb: koncept – metody – data. Část 3. Čtvrtá průmyslová revoluce a zaměstnanost. Výstup projektu Předvídání kvalifikačních potřeb (PŘEKVAP).* (Forecasting of skills needs: Concept-methodology-data. Part 3. Fourth Industrial Revolution. Output of the project PŘEKVAP) <https://koopolis.cz/sekce/knihovna/407-prekvap-predvidani-vyvoje-trhu-prace-a-zkvalitnovanivystupu-tohoto-predvidani>

people whose highest education is elementary education as the age group 45-53, which will be leaving the labour market over the next 20 years.

Women are a vulnerable group on the labour market. They are underemployed and have a lower level of IT (digital) literacy. They are also less likely to go into technical fields, which are in demand on the labour market and which projections state will be even more so in the future. The acceleration of technological changes and structural skills supply and demand imbalances will most likely lead to an increase in the number of people who cannot adapt in time and threatens to lock them out of the labour market. Further increases in the already high long-term unemployment rate would be socially damaging (SPD, 2016)⁵.

-Evolution over time.

The rate in lifelong learning of adults aged 25-64 with low qualification levels in the Czech Republic rose significantly between 2005 and 2011 by 2% (from 0.8% to 2.8%). This can be attributed to interventions supported by the ESF. Over the last six years (from 2011 to 2016) the rate has been relatively static with a noticeable drop in 2015, which could be explained by the delay in implementation of projects and interventions supported by the ESF (the Operational Program Employment). In general, the participation rate has moved less than 1 percentage point in both the Czech Republic and the EU-28 average.

⁵ SPD (Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic), (2016). *Sladování nabídky a poptávky na současném trhu práce* (Harmonisation of the current labour market supply and demand): https://www.socialnidialog.cz/images/stories/Dovednosti_cely_dokument.pdf

2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features and a concise summary of historic development

The exact translation of the word learning (učení se) in combination with adult is not used in Czech terminology and policy making and that makes it difficult to grasp the concept of adult learning in its true meaning. The most common Czech term is další vzdělávání (further or continuing education) or possibly vzdělávání dospělých (adult education).

The adult education sector in the Czech Republic is very heterogeneous. Responsibility for adult education is split between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. There is no one overarching legal framework.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is responsible for adult education, in particular concerning qualifications. The main tool for making the link between prior learning and adult education is the Act 179/2006 Sb. on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results (further the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL).

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs focuses on adult education mainly as a tool for supporting employability. The legal base includes the Act 435/2004 on Employment and the Labour Offices provide counselling and retraining with a particular focus on the long-term unemployed and those with low levels of qualifications.

Government policies address state-regulated adult education, which is funded by public sources. Most adult education is privately funded (usually by employers) and is subject to the influence of supply and demand. There are a wide range of institutions that provide adult education, including universities and secondary vocational schools, as well as private providers. There are more and more private companies that train their own employees as trainers. There are also lifelong learning centres, which are usually groups of secondary schools providing adult education.

Adults have the opportunity to gain vocational qualifications, which are part of the National Register of Qualifications and are publicly accessible at www.narodnikvalifikace.cz. These qualifications reflect the activities and skills of occupations as currently demanded by the labour market. Exams are conducted by authorised entities. These are mostly upper secondary vocational schools (95 %), but in some cases the authorised entity is a company.

In the last ten years, schools were encouraged to provide adult education as well as initial education. The projects UNIV 1-3 helped to establish centres of lifelong learning in every region. Usually these centres are groups of several schools. They offer adult education, career guidance and vocational qualifications exams. Although public schools are encouraged to provide adult education, the majority of education institutions for adults are private.

Adult education is not regulated; no licence or prescribed qualification is required for the establishment of education institutions for adults. Therefore the creation of the vocational

qualification “teacher/trainer for adults” was supported by educators. Adult learning and education (Andragogy) is a study programme at universities.

The Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD) unites more than two hundreds of for-profit education institutions. It cooperates with ministries and participates in the development of strategies, legislation, etc. AIVD is represented in the National Council for Qualifications.

Subjects of courses provided by the market are not monitored or statistically recorded. Nevertheless, data is collected as regards retraining courses provided by the Labour Offices. The most sought after courses are security personnel, sport massage, cook, tour guide and florist.

Since retraining courses are financed from the ESF and the state budget, the quality of education programmes are assessed by a Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports commission. Programmes offered by the Labour Offices as retraining courses must have an accreditation.

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	7	0	7
Lower secondary	1,062	250	1,312
Upper secondary	34,455	19,956	54,411
Post-secondary non-tertiary education		0	
Short-cycle tertiary education		228	
Bachelor's or equivalent level		50,771	
Master's or equivalent level		47,352	
Doctoral or equivalent level		23,317	

Source: Eurostat, Eurostat database table "Pupils and students enrolled by education level, sex and age (educ_uae_enra02)", accessed 2017.08.21

2.2 Provision

Adult education (the Czech equivalent to adult learning is not used in the Czech terminology) and vocational training is provided by elementary and upper secondary schools, higher education institutions, employer organisations, public administration and local government and their educational institutions, non-profit organisations, professional and commercial entities.

2.2.1 *Helps adults improve their Basic Skills*

Publicly funded courses for adults aiming to improve their basic skills are provided by elementary schools. They focus on the attainment of basic education (základní vzdělání; ISCED 244, lower secondary education). For details, see the following section 2.2.2 Helps adults achieve a Recognised Qualification.

As far as adult education in the Czech Republic is concerned, attention is paid almost exclusively to vocational or professional education therefore courses on literacy and numeracy are not common. There is no indication that publicly funded programs aiming to improve literacy and numeracy exist apart from ESF projects and interventions. These ESF interventions aim to develop basic and soft skills, ICT skills and socio-economic skills in people who are disadvantaged and/or vulnerable on the labour market. For example, there is a call No. 75 for submitting project proposals within the current Operational Programme Employment (OPE) intending to support the development of basic skills (literacy, numeracy and ICT skills) in disadvantaged groups to achieve better employability. The target groups are persons with a low level of qualification, handicapped persons, older persons, long-term unemployed and parents on paternal leave. Each target group is supported by EUR 2-3 million.

2.2.2 *Helps adults achieve a Recognised Qualification*

Publicly funded courses for adults to attain basic skills at lower secondary education level are open to persons who dropped out of compulsory attendance at a basic school (základní škola) before completing it. The number of such persons is generally relatively small in the Czech Republic (around 5 % of a given cohort, including dropouts from special basic schools). Therefore, the number of persons attending courses for attaining basic education is also small, in the year 2014/15 there were 365 students.

Both basic schools and the upper secondary schools (střední školy) can organise courses aimed at acquiring elementary education with a focus on basic skills. To provide these courses the upper secondary school in question must be authorised by the regional authority.

Courses for acquiring the basic education level are either full time, with the number of hours decided by the school in accordance with the national curricula for basic education, or distance learning. Distance learning is organised as autonomous study supplemented by up to 180 consultation hours in a school year. The length of the course is determined by the school principal based on the level of prior education of the learner, for a maximum

of one school year. A successful learner who passes a basic education course receives a certificate that enables studying at upper secondary schools. A certificate can be obtained without attending a course by passing an exam.

Achieving the Maturita certificate (the Czech leaving certificate allowing to apply for study at higher education institutions) is possible under the same conditions as in initial education as well as by distance learning or combined study. That means an applicant must have finished lower secondary education and pass an entry exam. This national standardised exam in Czech and Maths was introduced in 2017. Only students who reach a certain number of points (60%) can study at 4-year programmes ending with the Maturita exam. Head teachers are responsible for admission decisions, which are often based on availability (capacity of schools). They can also recognise prior learning of applicants. The Maturita exam has a standardised part which is made up of Czech and either English or Math and a specialised part of at least three subjects selected by the student.

Accredited courses enabling adults to gain a recognised vocational qualification outside the formal school system are provided by accredited providers. Approved qualifications and their assessment standards are listed in the National Register of Qualifications (www.narodnikvalifikace.cz). For further details see sections 2.2.6 and 3.2.1.2.

2.2.3 Helps adults develop other knowledge and skills, not for vocational purposes

Provision of non-formal education for adults that is not directly related to work is offered, for example, in state and private language schools and in a dense network of art schools which are partially publicly funded.

Educational programmes for adults are provided by not-for-profit organisations and community centres as well.

There is a rich selection of courses provided by private for profit providers. The largest and most respected association of private education providers is AIVD (Asociace institucí vzdělávání dospělých) with more than 200 members. It was established in 1990 and since then it supports its members to improve quality of adult education. The most comprehensive website offering courses for adults is Educicity (<http://www.skoleni-kurzy-educicity.cz/kurzy>) with tens of thousands of courses.

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

Retraining courses are intended for employment seekers (unemployed) registered at the Labour Office's branches, or such courses are prepared for employees of an employer who is - for example - changing their manufacturing process.

If a course organised by an upper secondary school or a tertiary professional school is to be recognised as retraining for registered unemployed persons it has to be by agreement

with the relevant Labour Office branch. Retraining courses are provided by private education organisation as well. The fields of offered retraining courses are influenced by the labour market needs in a given region.

Retraining is one of the tools of the active employment policy. The general objective is employability, with the concrete aim of preparing unemployed or vulnerable groups of adults for a certain job by supplying them with certain skills.

For further details, see sections 2.2.6 and 3.2.2.

2.2.5 Opens up Higher Education to adults

Any person regardless of age has a right to apply for admission to any HEI provided he/she fulfils the entry requirements, namely passing the Maturita exam (obtaining a Maturita school leaving certificate, see section 2.2.2) and in most HEIs an entrance exam. The majority of students in higher education study in public HEIs, which are generally free of charge.

In addition to their regular study programmes, HEIs provide courses for lifelong education. These courses can be professionally oriented (e.g. in-service training of pedagogical staff) or are aimed at personal development, IT etc. Internal rules of individual institutions specify the conditions of such courses. Attendees of courses of lifelong education are either charged a fee or the courses are free.

Participants in lifelong education are not considered to be university students. However, according to the Higher Education Act, the HEI can recognise up to 60% of the credits necessary to obtain a degree, in the case that successful graduates of courses of lifelong education become students of regular accredited (degree) study programmes.

Some higher education institutions and commercial education agencies offer preparatory courses for entrance examinations for many fields of study for those applicants who were not admitted to regular study programmes.

Some HEIs also provide education programmes for senior citizens called the University of the Third Age, which are aimed at personal development. They are one semester, one year or three years long.

2.2.6 Enables adult employees to develop their work-related skills

Vocational education and training for adults is provided by some HEIs (see section 2.2.5), by most vocational schools, by employers and private education institutions.

The important tool for continuing vocational education and training is the National Register of Vocational Qualifications (NSK). The register is publicly accessible (www.narodnikvalifikace.cz) and is used for validation of non-formal and informal learning as stipulated by the Act on the Recognition of Further Education Results (further The Act on the VNFIL). Descriptions of qualification standards are used as a source for development of vocational education and training programmes in initial and continuing education,

because NSK qualifications are new, updated regularly and developed in close cooperation with stakeholders, namely employers. The NSK comprises eight qualification levels and is currently populated with 1160 vocational qualifications ranging between NSK/EQF levels 2 and 7. More than 150 000 adult learners have passed the exams and were awarded with certificate of vocational qualification.

Only courses and providers accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports can provide courses leading to a vocational qualification as defined in the National Register of Vocational Qualification (NSK). Retraining courses must prepare participants for passing a standardised exam, as defined in the NSK register, if a corresponding NSK qualification exists. Only the participants of accredited retraining courses and courses concluded by a professional qualification examination according to the Act on the VNFIL gain national certificates.

Professional development of Employees is part of the Labour Code which sets the rights and obligations for both employees and employers. Employees are required to maintain, extend and update their qualifications. Employers are obligated to provide training to the employees without relevant skills, or those transferred to another workplace or a new type of work for reasons on part of the employer. The employer is also obligated to assure a vocational practice to graduates who have less than two years of work experience. The employer is entitled to require the employee to develop their qualification (this involves maintaining and refreshing) and the employee is obligated to follow this.

The development of work-related skills among employees is currently supported by projects (e.g. POVEZ II and VDTP II) funded by ESF within the Operational Programme Employment. (For further details see section 5.4)

2.2.7 *Other (if any)*

Courses can be organised for very limited target groups where the welfare status is the admission requirement. These can be e.g. courses to help homeless persons to get out of their situation, or educational courses in prisons.

Education is a more or less regular element of the work of museums and galleries, including lectures or courses and exhibition commentaries. Public libraries organise a range of cultural and educational activities (lectures in different fields, exhibitions, courses, etc.). Community culture centres traditionally organise lectures and courses in different fields (including e.g. music courses, courses of foreign languages, and dancing and social department courses) according to people's interests.

Civic education is usually provided by non-governmental and non-profit associations and institutions. There is no national strategy or financial framework for its development. The resulting problems are poor sustainability and fragmentation of activities. They often consist of many short-lived projects, whose outputs, although often interesting and of high quality, do not have a follow up (COV, 2013).

3.0 ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

3.1 Context

3.1.1 *Distribution of responsibilities regarding adult learning*

Act 2/1969 on the Establishment of Ministries and Other Central Bodies of Public Administration of the Czech Republic (the Competency Act) states that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports coordinates activities of ministries, other central bodies of public administration and professional chambers...“in areas of awarding qualifications within the system of adult education as defined in the act on validation of results of further education”. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the central body for employment relationships, workplace safety, employment and retraining, collective bargaining, wages, pensions, health insurance, social care, work conditions for women and youth, legal protection of those on maternity leave, family and childcare, care for citizens with special needs and other issues related to wages and social policies.

Insufficient communication between the two ministries responsible for adult education has, in the past, led to duplicate projects and significantly different approaches. Therefore, to ensure the success of efforts by both ministries, it was necessary to increase the level of cooperation and agree on a division of responsibilities within the field of adult education.

In 2009, such a division of responsibilities in adult education was approved, and remains in place today. The division clearly states the powers and responsibilities of the individual ministries. In general, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport relate to the support of the supply of education, while those of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs relate to the stimulation of demand for adult education.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. The primary responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, MŠMT) within adult education are:

1. Preparation of legislation concerning adult education.
2. The creation of adult education strategies and linking initial and adult education as per the concept of LLL.
3. Definition of the system of financial support for adult education.
4. Financing research, performing studies and comparisons of adult education data at an international, national and regional level.
5. The development of programmes of adult education.
6. Supporting the supply of education that meets specific quality criteria.
7. Collecting information on the supply of adult education.
8. The system of validation of non-formal and informal learning, Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL and development of the National Register of Qualifications in line with the development of the National System of Occupations (classification).
9. Development of a system of adult education within the school system for those who want to attain a higher level of formal education.
10. Support for civic and interest-based adult education.

11. Support for educators in adult education.
12. The provision of LLL, monitoring of the qualifications and skills needed on the labour market, creation of tools for information support of lifelong guidance services.
13. Support for promotion of adult education and its tools.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí, MPSV). The primary responsibilities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs within adult education are:

1. Analysis of current and future demand for qualifications on the labour market.
2. Continuous dialogue with social partners.
3. The development and upkeep of occupation definitions (within the National System of Occupations) as a necessary condition for setting respective qualifications and validation of non-formal and informal learning.
4. Setting requirements for adult education in conjunction with the labour market to maximise the balance between supply and demand in the labour market.
5. Retraining in line with labour market requirements, including financing and education of job-seekers in order to enable them to apply themselves on the labour market.
6. Support for education for disadvantaged adults entering the labour market.
7. Support for human resources development, support for the education of employees and employers, setting up systems for the development of human resources in businesses with a particular focus on small and medium enterprises.
8. Enabling career guidance for job-seekers.

National policies are reflected in the regions in two areas:

The Ministry of Education draws up a Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic, which sets out priorities in education that are mandatory for the regions.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs manages the Directorate General of the Labour Office, which manages local offices in the regions.

Within the ESF Operational Programme for Employment (2014-2020) calls are published for the regions that support activities in the areas of employment and adult education. The calls provide a general framework in which regions can implement projects that suit their own needs.

In May 2010, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education established the National Guidance Forum as a mutual advisory body in the field of career guidance in a lifelong perspective. It unites entities providing and developing services of career guidance and counselling in the Czech Republic including institutions under state administration.

The Ministry of Culture as a central state administration body for the media, libraries and cultural and educational activities provides support for a substantial part of interest based learning.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

All ministries are responsible for vocational training in regulated professions within their sectors. They are authorizing bodies according to the Act on the Recognition of Further Education Results as well, i.e. they grant authorization to entities to organise exams and award vocational qualifications (for further details see sections 2.2.6 and 3.2.1), and they participate in preparation of qualification and assessments standards in their sectors.

Regions establish public secondary and tertiary vocational schools, therefore their role in education and training including adult education is very important.

Municipalities are entitled to establish basic (elementary) schools and local museums, galleries, libraries and cultural community centres which are traditional venues for adult education and learning and cultural activities.

Adult education is also influenced by advisory bodies of the government, especially by the Council of Economic and Social Agreement, and social partners. Individual regions set up councils for the development of human resources (with advisory function). Chambers of commerce also act as providers of vocational training at national and regional level.

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

A fundamental influence on the development of employment policy and adult education policy was the approval of the following strategic documents:

Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030 (*Strategický rámeček Česká republika 2030*)

Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030 defines long-term objectives not only in the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development, but also in governance, global development and regions and municipalities. It sets forth 97 specific goals aimed at improving people's wellbeing, while respecting the principles of sustainable development. The document will serve as an overarching framework for sectoral, regional and local strategies. The selection and adoption of specific measures will be carried out by the relevant public administration bodies and supported by the activities of non-state stakeholders. The ability to use innovative approaches, gain transversal skills and learn from experience is crucial in order to maintain respect for cultural heritage.

The measures to accomplish the objective should be aimed at developing and improving the system of initial and adult education (lifelong learning), with an emphasis on improving the core competences of learners in order to enhance their employability and success in civic life and improving motivation in adult education. The measures will be also be oriented towards a greater involvement of business entities in education and stronger cooperation between public administration, the business sphere and the non-profit sector.

Action Plan to Promote Economic Growth and Employment in the Czech Republic,
2017 update

Education including retraining is viewed as one of the key pillars of further economic growth. The Action Plan stresses the necessity to assess what changes are necessary to

make in education and labour market in order to use the full potential of digitalisation for the economy. The plan contains specific tasks for the MoEY and MoLSA in 2017 such as drafting an informative manual for the development of cooperation among employers confederations and educators, producing an analysis on the effectiveness of the current system of retraining, and the assessment of the background study for the Initiative 4.0 with the proposal of measures and a roadmap.

The National Reform Programme of the Czech Republic 2017 (*Národní program reformy České republiky 2017*)

Regarding the system of adult learning this annual key reform document stressed the importance of enhancing the quality of adult education, which will be addressed in the project KVASAR (Heightening of quality and effectiveness of the adult education system in cooperation with employers). The goal of the project will be a proposal for revision of retraining courses so they better match needs of labour market, the unemployed and learners. Retraining should be modularised to accommodate prior learning of trainees.

Industry 4.0 Government Initiative

Industry 4.0 (or the fourth industrial revolution) is the most recent trend in digitalisation and automation. Machines and technologies will take over a major part of repetitive operations which will result, inter alia, in significant shifts in the labour market. Many low-skilled jobs will disappear while, on the other hand, new jobs requiring higher-skilled labour are expected to emerge.

For the Czech Republic, as a predominantly export-oriented country with a high proportion of industry, the fourth industrial revolution represents an important challenge and opportunity from which its future competitiveness will be derived. Therefore in 2016, the Czech government approved the Industry 4.0 Initiative prepared by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. It provides key information, pinpoints possible trends and outlines proposals for measures (Mařík 2016)⁶.

A critical success factor in terms of the ability to cope with the impact on employment is primarily the quality and functioning of the education system, including lifelong learning. For the area of labour market and adult education the initiative recommends, inter alia:

- To test new instruments for active employment policy in relation to the nature of shifts in the labour market (e.g. so-called long-term retraining corresponding to the demands on technologies set by Industry 4.0),
- To commence modern training and re-training programmes fostering the development of digital literacy for the whole population, especially for persons at risk of unemployment, the unemployed and for those losing work from disappearing occupations,

⁶ <https://www.ciirc.cvut.cz/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/2016-08CzechInitiativeIndustry4-0.pdf>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

- To introduce a forecasting system for labour market development and skills needs based on quantitative and qualitative forecasting methods,
- To introduce a system for regular complex monitoring of new jobs,
- To strengthen and streamline guidance services for the suitable selection / modification of career paths and their effective linking with the forecasting system for skills needs,
- To establish a platform for linking the talent supply with demand to facilitate the creation of virtual and flexible teams working on the basis of teleworking and telecommuting,
- To encourage higher education institutions to offer a sufficient range of training courses in continuing education for all types of high-skilled occupations in the user segments of the economy affected by new trends (incl. promoting MOOC on-line courses, use of modern platforms such as educational forums, etc.);

The primary objective of the Industry 4.0 national initiative was to encourage key ministries and social partners to outline detailed action plans for their designated areas while Industry 4.0 provided a good basis for that in terms of quality and detail. In the 2016 and 2017, more specific action plans have been developed. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs prepared a document Labour 4.0 and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is working on Education 4.0. Therefore the initiative Industry 4.0 is primarily about promoting, in a responsible fashion, a change in mind-set across society.

Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020 (*Strategie vzdělávací politiky České republiky do roku 2020*)

The measures within this document follow on from the Strategy of Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic (Strategie celoživotního učení ČR) from 2007 and emphasise the importance of adult education within the framework of LLL. Priorities are also given by the ET2020 strategic document. Adult education is covered by section 3.1.6, supporting the accessibility and quality of adult education and, to this end, the following steps will be taken:

- Create the necessary conditions for the development of a diverse selection of adult education opportunities;
- Build an informed environment stimulating demand for adult education with a focus on low qualified and socially disadvantaged citizens;
- Support and develop the work of schools and libraries as centres for lifelong learning, which offer not only initial education, but also a wide range of adult education targeted at the adult population, including senior citizens, and which take part in the system of validation of non-formal and informal learning based on the National Register of Qualifications; and,
- To direct the development of the supply of adult education based on the needs of the market and enabling the National Register of Qualifications to be connected to active employment policy (for example in retraining).

Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020 (Strategie politiky zaměstnanosti do roku 2020): This strategy was adopted by the government resolution number 835 on 15

October 2014. Of particular relevance to adult learning is priority 3: Adaptation of employers, employees and job-seekers to changes and requirements of the labour market.

This priority responds to the need for better matching of supply and demand in the labour market, particularly in terms of qualifications, as well as skills and competences. It reflects the reality that initial education is not capable of responding to the dynamic development of technology and the economy, and is also not capable of preparing the workforce for their entire professional life. Greater focus is therefore placed on employment policy in the areas of predicting the development and demands of the labour market; and support for adult education.

3.2 Adult learning policy framework

3.2.1 A summary of major developments/ changes since 2010

3.2.2 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

In recent years, a focus has been placed on development of the system for validation of non-formal and informal learning based on the Act 179/2006 Sb. on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results (further the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL) and on improvement in the quality of adult education.

The Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL defines the National Register of Qualifications, and sets its content, the bodies responsible for describing and approving qualifications, the rules by which skills and competences are verified and recognized, and the ways in which it is possible to achieve a level of education. The National Register of Qualifications is a publicly available register of vocational qualifications recognised in the Czech Republic, which can be awarded through validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The purpose of the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL and the National Register of Qualifications is to enable adults to gain a qualification outside the formal school system based on recognition of their experience and education, in the form of a standardised exam taken in front of an authorised entity. Those who pass the exam get the certificate of vocational qualification. A significant proportion of the Czech workforce does not work in a field for which there is a formal qualification. These people are often experienced professionals in the field in which they work, but they do not have any formal certificate.

3.2.3 Involving employers in defining qualification needs

In order to deliver vocational qualifications relevant to labour market needs, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport cooperates with sector councils. A sector council is a representative body of employers for the given sector. There are 29 sector councils in the Czech Republic. These councils are responsible for the drafting of vocational qualifications. Qualifications created in cooperation with the sector councils subsequently become part of the National Register of Qualifications. Sector councils provide an important platform for the exchange of information and viewpoints amongst all relevant actors in the labour market. The State and stakeholders in the labour market gain detailed information and

employers have the opportunity to influence education policy and recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The aim of national policy is to cultivate adult education and create systematic tools which will increase the motivation of citizens to participate in adult education. The goal is to achieve a change in public perceptions of LLL.

The support for non-vocational areas of adult education (development of various types of basic skills, civic education) is insufficient due to a lack of interest from the state in education that does not directly increase competitiveness and employability. Learners also prefer vocational education and training and the data set out in sections 1.1 and 1.2 suggests that most of the Czech population is insufficiently motivated to take part in adult education.

It is necessary to inform citizens of the opportunities and advantages that learning brings. Many people do not understand the importance of adult education, why they should spend time and money on something with no specific use, or how education and/or learning can help them find work, improve their position in the job market or to solve social or personal problems.

The purpose of the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL and the National Register of Qualifications is to enable adults to gain a qualification outside of the school system on the basis of recognition of the results of their experience and education, in the form of a standardised exam taken in front of an authorised entity, which has been granted the right to award the given vocational qualification by the relevant ministry.

Implementation of the Act 179/2006, on the VNFIL began in 2007. The key instrument in its realisation is the National Register of Qualifications (NSK), which contains vocational qualifications recognised in the Czech Republic.

The NSK distinguishes between two types of qualification:

- Comprehensive vocational qualifications (úplná profesní kvalifikace) – a holder is expected to have the ability to work in a particular occupation.
- Vocational qualifications (profesní kvalifikace) – a holder is expected to have the ability to perform particular activities or groups of activities which enhance employability in the labour market. Vocational qualifications can form part of a comprehensive vocational qualification.

The procedures for awarding vocational and comprehensive vocational qualifications are specified by law. Each vocational qualification is described by a pair of standards:

- Qualification standard (kvalifikační standard) - a description of the skills required for a specific work activity or activities in a particular occupation. These are the skills which are required for the relevant vocational qualification.
- Assessment standard (hodnoticí standard) - a list of criteria and procedures for validating the skills required in a particular occupation. It describes how to verify that the candidate possesses the skills required for the qualification.

Sector councils participate in the formulation of these standards. These councils include:

- Representatives of major employers in the sector;
- Representatives of professional organisations and guilds;
- Representatives of ministries;
- Educators; and
- Representatives of the National Institute for Education.

The standards are published at www.narodnikvalifikace.cz. Those who pass the exam get a certificate of vocational qualification.

The Adult Education Survey showed that the predominant reason for enrolling in adult education is to acquire the necessary skills for the labour market. For this reason, state policy is focused on tools and systematic approaches that are relevant to labour market demands. The aim of these systematic approaches is to stress the importance of education in relation to the involvement of individuals in the labour market and thus target the personal motivation of citizens to participate in adult education.

In order for the NSK to stay relevant, it must reflect the development of the labour market. This is done by using the National System of Occupations (NSP), which contains not only a classification and description of occupations, but also an extensive catalogue of competences (more than 20,000). Competences from this catalogue are used when vocational qualifications are created. The NSP is continuously developed and improved and is publicly available at www.nsp.cz. Potential users of the NSP are officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Labour Office, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, developers of education programmes (in initial and adult education), employers (especially those specialising in human resource development) and designers of qualifications, amongst others.

3.2.4 *Main legislative act(s) governing the provision of adult learning*

The **Education Act** effective from January 1, 2005 is already based on the concept of lifelong learning. The Act defines in a new and more accurate manner study programmes alternative to day form of study, reinforces the role of supplementary studies and introduces shortened study to acquire secondary education completed with a school-leaving examination, enables head teachers to acknowledge prior learning (including informal learning) and even to acquire a recognised level of education without prior formal school attendance.

The fundamental principle of the **Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results** from 2006 is to enable everybody to verify his or her knowledge and skills regardless of the manner in which it was obtained (For details see sections 2.2.6 and 3.2.1).

The **Higher Education Act** contains provisions on lifelong education courses and their validation (for details see section 2.2.5)

Regulations and rules related to work performance: the **Labour Code** (professional development of employees), the **Employment Act** (provisions on the development of human resources) and following regulations for carrying into effect the Acts.

The **Trade Licensing Act** specifies requirements for fulfilling professional competence to acquire particular trade licenses which include notifiable trades (vocational and professional trades) and also permitted trades where a proof of professional competence is required.

The **Act on Promoting Small and Medium-sized Enterprise** enables to provide support, among others, for education and training in upper secondary school programmes completed with an apprenticeship certificate, and to enhance professional qualifications of adults.

Latest adopted policy changes (new legislation or modifications of existing legislation) from September 2015

- A change in the financing of the National Register of Qualifications (NSK). Until the end of 2015 the NSK had been financed on a project basis but since 2016 has been financed from the state budget. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport approved the proposal to implement the act 179/2006 on the VNFIL, which requires the financing of the NSK to come from the Ministry of Education budget. This measure relates to the "Governance" priority of the European Agenda for Adult Learning 2015-2020. Continuity of financing would be expected to increase effectiveness and stability.

Major reforms between September 2013 and September 2017

- Since 2013, the National System of Occupations (NSP), the national classification of occupations, has been financed from the state budget (see section 4.0 investment in adult learning systems). This measure relates to the "Governance" priority of the European Agenda for Adult Learning 2015-2020.
- The implementation of selected retraining as a new opportunity for unemployed to choose an educational focus of retraining. According to provision §109a of the Employment Act, an applicant can arrange retraining on their own by submitting a request to the Labour Office. The applicant must choose:
 - a) The type of work they wish to retrain for, and
 - b) The institution that will perform the retraining.

The application is reviewed by an expert committee that considers whether the chosen qualification will assist the applicant on the job market and whether it is medically appropriate for the applicant. The total cost of the selected retraining must not exceed CZK 50,000 over three years (approx. €2,000). A decision to pay for training is made at the discretion of the Labour Office (it is not required to do so). The Labour Office will make the payment directly to the institution after completion of the training. The Labour Office will only pay for retraining so long as the applicant is included in job-seeker rolls. The Labour Office does not pay for any costs outside of the retraining itself.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

In 2015, 38,078 people were retrained, 8,376 fewer than in 2014; 17,641 (46.3% of the total) retrained in the selected retraining process.

This measure relates to the “supply and take up” priority of the European Agenda for Adult Learning 2015-2020. It increases the motivation of trainees to learn and their responsibility for the results of retraining.

- On the basis of the Act 435/2004 on Employment, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport accredits retraining programmes, which lead to exams as defined in the National Register of Qualifications, if the respective qualification is in the Register. The connection was made in 2009, based on the Ministry of Education Decree 176/2009 Sb, which sets out requirements for accreditation of educational programmes, organisation of education in a retraining institution and the method in which retraining is ended. According to paragraph 3 of the decree, each retraining course ends with an exam for a vocational qualification. Retraining courses are accredited so as to prepare applicants for exams and the contents must be in accord with the assessment standard of the vocational qualification.

This leads to:

- Increased quality and relevance of retraining courses (retraining courses are based on standards of vocational qualifications and are finalised with exams, so participants are awarded with a Vocational Qualification Certificate).
- Comparability of retraining on a national level (based on the demands of employers) and consistency (standardisation) of the knowledge and skills of participants/graduates (retraining courses must prepare participants for all competences given by the standard of that qualification).
- The possibility of measuring the quality and success rate of graduates from those educational institutions whose expenses related to retraining of job-seekers are reimbursed – this criterion can be taken into account when public procurement is applied.

Over the past two years this system has been put fully into practice. This measure relates to the “Quality” priority of the European Agenda for adult learning 2015-2020.

3.2.5 *Main strategy(-ies)*

Main national strategies such as Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020 and Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020 are described in detail in the section 3.1.2.

Further main strategies relevant to adult education are:

Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period of 2015-2020 (Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávání a rozvoje vzdělávací soustavy České republiky na období 2015-2020): This strategic document builds on previous documents setting out long-term aims for education and operates in accord with the Educational Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the

Year 2020 (Strategie vzdělávací politiky České republiky do roku 2020). It sets the main goals of regional education as follows:

- One of the primary goals in the area of adult education for the period will be the restructuring of the financing system and further development of the system of validation of non-formal and informal learning based on the act 179/2006 on the VNFIL and the National Register of Qualifications.
- Each person 18 years of age or older with completed lower secondary education or those undergoing retraining according to the law governing employment can make use of the system of validation of non-formal and informal learning, based on the act on the VNFIL and the National Register of Qualifications.
- The goal of the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport is to continue to develop and support this system of validation and further integrate it with other national and international qualification systems in order to increase its universal applicability;
- At the national level the issue of insufficient development of key competences of adults, their basic skills and civic education has never been systematically addressed. For this reason, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport intends to increase support to low skilled and socially disadvantaged citizens primarily to improve their situation in the labour market.

Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020

(Strategie digitální gramotnosti České republiky na období let 2015 – 2020): The Decision of the Cabinet of the Czech Republic no. 523 on the strategy for digital literacy was adopted on 1 July 2015. The primary aim is the development of digital skills amongst Czech citizens, so that they are prepared to use digital technology for their personal lifelong development, in order to improve their quality of life and social application. The goal of the resolution is the development of tools which enable workers to be prepared for employment and support for current employees who face changes due to information and communication technologies and globalisation.

Action Plan of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020

(Akční plán Strategie digitální gramotnosti ČR na období 2015 až 2020): Following the adoption of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015–2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs put together an action plan which sets out how measures proposed by the aforementioned strategy will be implemented. The Decision of the Cabinet of the Czech Republic no. 616 on this action plan was adopted on 7 July 2016.

The primary goal of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015–2020 and the Action Plan of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015–2020 is to plan and pursue measures that would improve the digital skills of Czech citizens. The measures are divided into six strategic goals: employment, competitiveness, social inclusion, support for families, public sector electronic services and support for the educational system and learning through digital technology. These measures focus on supporting transferable and non-transferable digital skills for employees and the unemployed, increasing accessibility of digital centres, improving

digital skills among the digitally excluded and digitally illiterate, and introduction of electronic services into the public sector.

The **Youth Support Strategy 2014-2020** (Koncepce podpory mládeže 2014-2020)⁷ is a strategy paper that deals with youth in general, but it also proposes support for activities that help young people to gain relevant education and increase their employability, with special attention to be given to youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The implementation of the priorities is mostly ensured by launching relevant national and regional grant schemes.

The **Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020** (Strategie sociálního začleňování 2014-2020) issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs aims in general to reduce and prevent poverty and social exclusion. Among its main priority target areas are employment and training of people at the risk of social exclusion. In general it supports guidance and motivation measures, closer cooperation of the Labour Office with local employers, programmes of work and social rehabilitation, local coordination of activities and better targeting of active labour market policies (ALMPs) etc.

The study *Iniciativa Práce 4.0 (Initiative Labour 4.0)*⁸ provides a very good insight into a very pressing theme, since the Czech Republic is among the countries which are most threatened by job loss due to automation (SPD, 2016)⁹. It stresses the importance of further increasing accuracy of projections, taking into account Czech data and context, because current estimates of possible impacts vary significantly and most of them are very general and/or speculative. These impacts and solutions must be discussed with all relevant actors, since measures could be socially sensitive. The study also questions the meaningfulness of the current form of retraining provided by public employment services, because these courses do not provide necessary practice and do not take into account the individual needs of learners. This statement is supported by findings of the EEPO Review. (EC, 2015a). Retraining courses are on average too short (1-3 months) and funding per retrainee is small (roughly € 300)¹⁰. New approaches in learning are emerging (e.g. connectivism) and adaptive education programmes based on self-learning software can be expected to be more effective.

The study also suggests developing an education fund for adult learning based on a foreign functioning transferable model with contributions from the state and employers.

⁷ MŠMT, (2014). *Koncepce podpory mládeže 2014-2020* (Youth Support Strategy 2014-2020) <http://www.msmt.cz/file/33599/>

⁸ MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2016a). *Iniciativa práce 4.0* Prepared by: Národní vzdělávací fond (The National Education Fund) http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/prace_4_0/studie_iniciativa_prace_4.0.pdf

⁹ SPD (Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic), (2016). *Sladování nabídky a poptávky na současném trhu práce* (Harmonisation of the current labour market supply and demand) https://www.socialnidialog.cz/images/stories/Dovednosti_cely_dokument.pdf

¹⁰ EC, (2015a). EEPO Review Spring 2015: Upskilling unemployed adults The organisation, profiling and targeting of training provision <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2265&furtherNews=yes>

3.2.6 *Main implementing act(s)*

The National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing for the period 2013–2017 is a strategic document under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs that is proposing steps to be taken in areas of population ageing and preparation for ageing. Apart from the issues on how to improve the image of seniors in media and how to support the development of relations between generations or reinforce the role of family in taking care for seniors, it concentrates also on the support of education for seniors. Activities focus on the development of upper secondary and postsecondary educational programmes and on the increase in participation of seniors in education. Another goal is to increase number of seniors and senior organisations in international projects within the Erasmus+ Programme.

In 2016, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs completed the **Analysis of Supply and Demand on the Labour Market** (*Analýza nabídky a poptávky na trhu práce*), which explored the balance between supply and demand in the labour market and suggested measures to reduce this imbalance. The analysis also contains proposed measures concerning career guidance, retraining, predictions, and cooperation on the labour market.

Action Plan Labour 4.0, prepared by the MoLSA in cooperation with stakeholders, elaborates further the Industry 4.0 and Labour 4.0 initiatives and sets out measures, inter alia, for the development of knowledge and skills to be in demand by the labour market as expected in near future. One specific goal out of a total of four is dedicated to the support of adult education and learning and contains concrete measures, such as the support of new forms of education and learning and individualisation, promotion of new learning opportunities, interconnection with career guidance, elimination of barriers etc. If all measures are implemented, improvements could be made in several problematic areas, including increasing the attractiveness of education programmes for adults and the permeability between initial and adult education. Also, a better match between supply and demand of skills on the labour market could be achieved.

The Action Plan Labour 4.0 and the Action plan of the Strategy of digital literacy of the Czech Republic for the years of 2015-2020 are complementary to each other.

The *Youth Guarantee Programme (Program Záruky pro mládež)* follows the European initiative: Youth Guarantee. The main implementer of the programme is the Labour Office. The aim is to create a wide offer for various groups of young people according to their individual needs and possibilities. The programme proposes 23 suggestions/initiatives, which are mostly incorporated into the ongoing programmes and projects. They include e.g. improving the system of career guidance, strengthening the role of IVET schools in providing also CVET (including courses leading to recognized certificates) with the aim of increasing the possibilities to engage NEETs back in education, increasing the capacities of Labour Office information and guidance centres, a further development of the integrated information system (www.infoabsolvent.cz) providing a wide scope of information and tools supporting career and education choices, research and monitoring activities about the underlying factors of youth unemployment, a further support of the development of key competences and a better linking of the vocational training to the competences defined by the National Registry of Qualifications (NSK) to increase the future employability of

young people, education projects realized by the Further Education Fund and the projects of Labour Office regional units.

The programme is implemented over the whole territory of the Czech Republic, in the NUTS 2 Northwest (Severozápad) region, the measures of the programme are also financed from the EU YEI fund (Youth Employment Initiative) as this region was the only one in the Czech Republic meeting the entry requirement of the initiative on unemployment of young people up to age 25 higher than 25% (in 2012). The Czech Republic has taken the opportunity from the proposal of the ESF regulation and has voluntarily committed itself to extend the target group to young people under the age of 30.

3.3 National quantitative policy targets

No quantitative policy targets in the National Reform Programmes as influenced by the EU Strategy 2020 were set for Adult Learning. The shown targets refer to education and to the employment, since Adult Learning is viewed as a main means of improving employability in the Czech Republic. The Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020 sets a target of 15% of adults participating in learning (in line with ET 2020).

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
to increase the employment rate of the population aged 20-64 years to 75%	2010	70.4% (2010)	77.0% (3Q 2016)	Target reached
to increase the employment rate of women (20-64 years) to 65%	2010	60.9% (2010)	68.7% (3Q 2016)	Target reached
to increase the employment rate of older people (55-64 years) to 55%	2010	46.5% (2010)	59.0% (3Q 2016)	Target reached
to reduce unemployment among young people (15-24 years) by one third compared to 2010;	2010	18.3% (2010)	11.4% (3Q 2016)	Target reached
to reduce unemployment among the lowskilled (ISCED 0-2) by a quarter compared to 2010	2010	25% (2010)	20.3% (3Q 2016)	Target not reached yet
public expenditure on science, research, development and innovation in the Czech Republic at 1% of GDP	2010	0.62% (2010)	0.93% (2015)	Target not reached yet (The target of the Europe 2020 Strategy is 3% of GDP)
32% of persons aged 30-34 years with tertiary education.	2010	20.4% (2010)	31.9% (2016, provisional)	Target almost reached
15% of adults participating in learning.	2014	9.6% (2014)	8.8% (2016)	Target not reached

No further data could be found to fill the table above. The national strategies and implementing acts related to AL or LLL usually do not contain target figures.

3.4 Quality assurance

The quality assurance in the institutions providing adult education depend on the type of individual educational institution. They can be grouped into three types:

1. Adult education programmes provided by basic (combined primary and lower secondary) schools (základní školy), upper secondary schools (střední školy), tertiary professional schools (vyšší odborné školy); elementary art schools (základní umělecké školy), language schools authorised to organise state language examinations and institutions for the further education of pedagogical staff.

The body responsible for the evaluation of basic schools, upper secondary schools, tertiary professional schools, art schools and language schools authorised to organise state language examinations is the Czech School Inspectorate (Česká školní inspekce, ČŠI). Evaluation procedures, such as inspection reports, inspection records, thematic reports etc. are the same as in the case of initial education.

The quality assurance of institutions for the further education of pedagogical staff (continuing professional development of teachers), which is stipulated by the Act on Pedagogical Staff, is carried out by the National Institute of Further Education (Národní institut pro další vzdělávání, NIDV) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

2. Adult education programmes provided by higher education institutions.

Quality assurance of higher education institutions (vysoké školy) complies with the Higher Education Act, which determines both internal and external evaluation and also the obligation to prepare annual reports on activities, annual reports on management, and requires a strategic plan every five years. In 2016, an amendment to the Higher Education Act with new rules of accreditation including the establishment of an independent National Accreditation Bureau and a new system of evaluation of quality of higher education institutions entered into force.

No specific information was found on quality assurance of lifelong education courses in HEIs.

3. Adult education programmes provided by different types of commercial institutions, various professional associations, non-profit associations and other private subjects.

Evaluation of adult education programmes/courses provided by private subjects, commercial institutions, various professional associations, non-profit associations and other private organisations is not formally controlled or centrally monitored.

When a provider wants to provide courses leading to awarding vocational qualifications as defined in the National Register of Vocational Qualifications (NSK) he must be registered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and is subject to quality assurance procedures as described in the Act 179/2006 on VNFIL6), the

respective approved procedures and a rulebook on implementing the NSK (Metodika naplňování Národní soustavy kvalifikací) (NÚV, 2015)¹¹. For more details see paragraph Evaluation of the VNFIL system below and the section 3.2.1.

Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic

Once every four to five years, the Ministry of Education draws up Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic, which is approved by the Government. Subsequently the regional authorities also draw up long-term plans for education and the development of the education system in their respective regions. This plan includes the adult education sector. Evaluation of the education system at regional level is carried out by regional authorities in a report on the state and development of the education system in their respective regions once every four years.

Evaluation of the VNFIL system

The VNFIL system is continuously evaluated. Evaluations and feedback from users were used to inform drafting of changes in the legislation. For quality assurance purposes the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL was updated in 2012 and another amendment is under way.

Each vocational qualification must be updated at least every four years. Register of Vocational Qualifications updates are based on feedback from authorised entities.

Evaluation of the Action Plan for Employment

The Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs continuously evaluates the labour market situation. Despite favourable developments in recent years, the Czech labour market still suffers from an imbalance between supply and demand. The analysis resulting from this evaluation proposes the following measures:

- Increase the motivation of individuals to enter employment.
- Motivate employers to employ disadvantaged groups.
- Intensify the activity of the Labour Office.
- Increase qualifications matching on the labour market.

The next action plan for employment will build upon the results of this analysis.

3.5 Future policy developments

- A legislative change to the Act 179/2006 on the VNFIL has been in the process of being prepared since 2014. The following changes are proposed:
 - To implement the master of craft qualification.

¹¹ NÚV (National Institute for Education) (2015). Metodika naplňování Národní soustavy kvalifikací (Guidelines for the development of the National Register of Qualifications) http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/NSK/metodika/Metodika_NSK_III.pdf NÚV

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

- To legislate the body responsible for the development of the National Register of Qualifications.
 - To remove technical legislative inadequacies and correct the act based on the experience of its implementation.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports, is preparing an amendment to the act 435/2004 on Employment with the goal of updating the conditions of accreditation, along with introducing the possibility to revoke accreditation. The revocation of accreditation would prevent the educational institution from applying for that accreditation in the following three years.
- To support the implementation and sustainable development of the system for validation of non-formal and informal learning based on the National Register of Qualifications, and strengthen the integration and permeability between initial and adult education, the possibility to, through the system of validation of learning, earn a comprehensive vocational qualification and pass the Final Exam (to earn the Apprenticeship Certificate) or the Maturita Exam without the necessity to study within the formal initial education. (Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020, Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020).
- To support and, based on systematic measures, improve quality of supply of adult education, as well as increasing the quality of the system of the VNFIL based on the National Register of Qualifications (Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020, Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020).
- One of the instruments of quality is a system rating the quality of educational institutions. The project KONCEPT (Koncepce dalšího vzdělávání) produced a proposal to form a chamber of adult education and to rate the quality of educational institutions, which would be self-financing. It is intended that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports would take the role of guarantor of the system, and would set the criteria for quality.
- To support and develop the work of schools as centres of lifelong learning, which provide not only initial education for students, but also various kinds of adult education (interest-based, civic, retraining, other professional) and validation of prior learning (by the act 179/2006 Sb.) for all adults. (Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020, Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020).
- Better functioning of upper secondary schools as centres of LLL will be brought about by the ESF project Strategic Management and Planning in Schools and Regions (SRP), because of its focus on supporting the development of head teachers and their leadership and on the improvement of teachers' competences and teaching. A system of intensive support for schools will be created and piloted in cooperation with local education stakeholders. The project is implemented by the National Institute for Further Education (Národní institut pro další vzdělávání, NIDV), which is an agency under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, within the EU Operational Programme Research, Development and Education.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

- To create the fundamentals for development in the area of civic skills and support activities leading to active citizenship, an increase in active involvement in public life, extending knowledge of citizens' rights and duties and the ability to critically consider information received and possible alternative solutions¹².
- To develop further the Central Database of Competences (Centrální database kompetencí, CDK). CDK forms a common base for the National Register of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications. The CDK is a shared, hierarchically structured and sorted database, which currently contains approx. 18,000 skills (competences). The CDK is divided into soft skills, general skills, and professional skills and knowledge. The CDK is the basis for validating and certifying skills and is one of the common priorities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for the synergy between the National Register of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications.
- To support the systematic development of education in digital skills. In 2015 the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020 (Strategie digitální gramotnosti ČR na období 2015-2020) was adopted. The Strategy sets out the environment and concrete steps to support the development of digital skills. Furthermore, in 2016, the government approved the Action Plan of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020 (Akční plán Strategie digitální gramotnosti ČR na období 2015-2020), which specifies the steps necessary to accomplish the goal¹³.
- To set up a system for predicting the needs of the labour market (specialising in the prediction of qualifications demanded) on a national and regional level. The goals, given the current availability of solutions to this issue (using primarily the results of the projects on Prediction of Qualification Demand, PŘEKVAP and KOMPAS) are to:
 - Set up a system of gaining all relevant data necessary for creating qualified analyses of the job market, monitoring the qualification needs of the job market and anticipation of future trends on the job market on both a national and a regional level.
 - Expand the predictions to take into account the issues of individual target groups on the job market (disadvantaged persons, the probability of unemployment, etc.) and to capture the predicted development of the job market.
 - Map trends on the labour market, in terms of qualifications and skills, and also in terms of predicting the length of unemployment of job seekers, as well as new requirements connected with the fourth Industrial Revolution.
 - Ensure the effective functioning of employment services both in terms of securing quality workers and offering individualised services to clients, especially those at a disadvantage on the job market. (Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020).
- To support systematic measures to increase the quality of retraining. The goal is not only adjustment of the system of accreditation of retraining courses, which

¹² Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020, Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020

¹³ Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020 Action Plan of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020

should lead to an increase in supply-side quality, but also setting up measures and system checks for the implementation of retraining courses¹⁴.

- The implementation of modularisation of retraining. Retraining is primarily given in accordance with the National Register of Qualifications so that the educational programmes end with an exam of vocational qualification according to the act 179/2006 Sb on the VNFIL. Thus, the National Register of Qualifications is a factor in the quality of accreditation on exit, which is given by the qualification standard for education and the assessment standard for the final examination in front of an authorised examiner. The modularisation of retraining would allow for an education tailored to the client, based on the demands of the job market.
- A change in the Employment Act is being prepared that would make it possible to undergo an exam of vocational qualification according to the National Register of Qualifications without the necessity of a previous education in a course as well as the option not to give accreditation to educational institutions that have had their accreditation rescinded¹⁵.
- The Information System for Accreditation (Informační systém pro akreditace) should serve as a tool to streamline the accreditation process, by creating a uniform and integrated system for processing applications, evaluation by members of accreditation committees, uniform standards and templates to carry out the agenda, verification of information from base registers and to publicise accreditations awarded.
- To introduce and legislatively anchor a system of master of crafts exams. An important conceptual change in the system of adult education is the introduction of master of craft exams. The main reason for their introduction is to open the way to achieve the highest level of “craft mastery” and to ensure the capability to transfer knowledge and skills to the next generation, primarily through vocational training in schools, companies, or in apprenticeships and licenced trades. A master of craft exam is a combination of theoretical and practical tests composed of three parts:
 1. The creation of a masterwork in the field (planning and construction).
 2. Managing a complex order within the field (planning, budgeting, ensuring inputs, assigning work, quality control).
 3. Running a licensed trade or small business (accounting, taxes, financial responsibility, interacting with the civil service, preparing a balance sheet etc.

Each exam should have a representative of the appropriate guild present. The legislative platform for the master of craft exam is the act 179/2006 Sb on the VNIFIL. Introducing the master craft exam permits graduates of three and four year programmes of vocational education to gain a higher level of qualification (EQF level 5). The exam should also improve the prestige and attractiveness of vocational education and offer students in vocational education programmes a new perspective on adult education and better employment. (Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020, Long-

¹⁴ Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020, Measures to Resolve the Adverse Situation on the Labour Market

¹⁵ Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020, Measures to Resolve the Adverse Situation on the Labour Market

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020).

4.0 INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS

The source of most investments in adult education has been the European Social Fund (ESF). The ESF has financed, for example, the development of the National Register of Qualifications, the support of schools as centres for LLL and prediction of demand for skills and qualifications. The ESF has also financed the implementation of educational activities, such as education within the Action Plan for Employment (Akční plán zaměstnanosti), development of internships, and support for education amongst the socio-economically disadvantaged. Investments in adult education are primarily those in support of education that increases competitiveness in the Czech Republic, such as vocational education.

ESF funding in previous programming periods was spent in support of the development of the adult education system, as well as direct investments in adult education such as retraining and workplace learning. Other forms of adult education (civic education, basic skills, digital skills, etc.) did not receive significant financial support, although the Action Plan of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the period 2015-2020 (Akční plán Strategie digitální gramotnosti ČR na období 2015-2020) and its associated projects will provide systematic financial support for the development of digital skills.

ESF funding of basic skills including digital skills is possible within the currently implemented Operational Program Employment. (For more details see section 4.3.1)

Given that most adult education is unregulated and subject to the influences of supply and demand, the government prioritises specific areas, such as digital skills and Industry, as well as target groups, such as workers at risk of losing their jobs or women on maternity leave. The State does not provide widespread support for adult education through vouchers or other means.

4.1 Total investment in adult learning and change over time

4.2 Public national investment

Table 4.1 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

No data is available to fill the table above.

4.2.1 *Tax incentives*

In the Czech Republic, tax incentives are the main tool supporting the demand for adult education. They are primarily applied in two areas: recognition and validation of learning outcomes and adult education for employers.

The taxpayer may deduct from the tax base of the relevant tax period fees of up to CZK 10,000 (EUR 370) for examinations which validate results of continuing education under the Act on VNFIL. Disabled taxpayers may deduct up to CZK 13,000 (EUR 480) over the course of a tax period and severely disabled taxpayers up to CZK 15,000 (EUR 550).

Employers can deduct costs associated with adult education from the tax base as stipulated by the Act 586/1992 on Income Taxes.

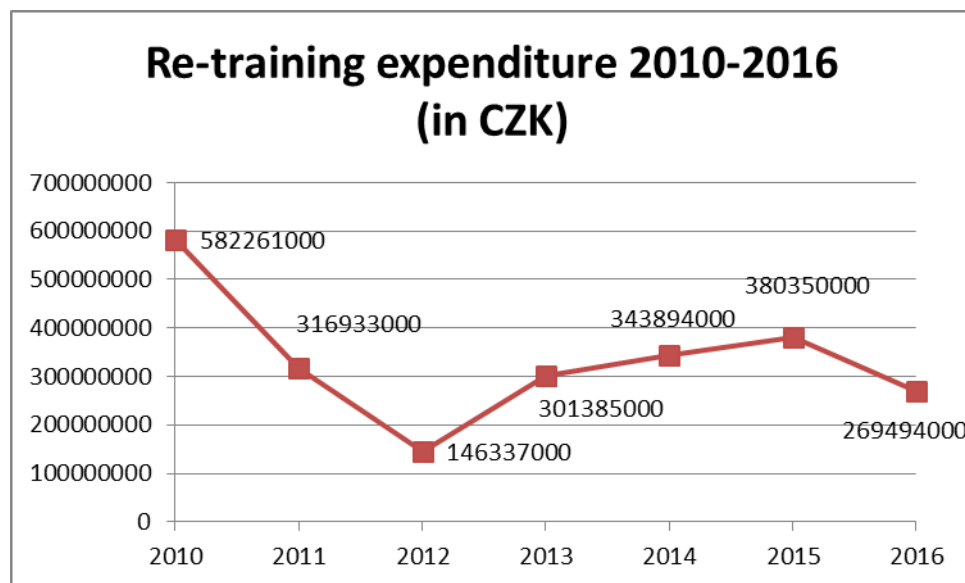
4.2.2 *Active Employment Policy*

Retraining of the unemployed is organised and financed by the Labour Offices and focuses on training in skills which are demanded by the labour market, i.e. retraining courses are practically oriented and lead trainees to perform specific jobs. Most common were courses on improving computer skills, courses in welding and courses leading to driving licences. Courses most commonly selected by the unemployed were courses to obtain driving licences followed by welding licences and courses on body care.

As the diagram below shows, there was a significant drop in expenditure on retraining between 2010 and 2012. This was caused by a reduction in the budget for the programme on Active Employment Policy as well as by the change in the Act on Public Procurement, which changed the rules for public procurement. The budget was lowered from 582 261 000 CZK (21 mil EUR) to 146 377 000 CZK (5.5 mil EUR) in 2010. Since then a steady increase can be observed, in 2015, 380 350 000 CZK (14 mil. EUR) was spent on retraining, which is 3.9 % of all Labour Office costs in Active Employment Policy programmes. In 2015, 38,078 people retrained, 8,376 fewer than in 2014. Of those who retrained, 17,641 went through selected retraining.

In the 2016 the figure dropped to CZK 269,494,000. No information was found to explain this decrease, but it could be caused by the delay in implementation of ESF projects and interventions.

Figure 4.1: Budget of Active Employment Policy goes mainly to providing funding for retraining of the unemployed



Source: Data in figure adapted from https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/trh_prace.

4.2.3 *Financing of systemic tools and the environment of adult learning, including the dialogue with employers*

The National System of Occupations has been financed by the state budget since 2013. Previously it had been financed on a project basis. The classification of occupations (the development of the online platform NSP - National System of Occupations) is currently financed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs according to instruction number 5/2014 of the Deputy Minister for Employment, which also states that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the manager of the National System of Occupations, and that the Fund for Further Education (which is organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) is its administrator.

The National System of Occupations is financed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with a yearly budget of EUR 0.4 million. This is spent on IT, upkeep of the NSP and the creation and revision of 300 entries a year.

The National Register of Qualifications and the National System of Occupations, together with the system for validation of non-formal and informal learning, has been developed with support from ESF funding in the 2007-2013 programming period. Currently, the further development of these tools is financed by national sources, mainly the state budget. In the case of the National Register of Qualifications the state contributes 1.3 mil. EUR per year and employers provide 0.5 mil. EUR. Given that it is only two years of implementation, it would currently be premature to evaluate this practice.

4.3 EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF)

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

Unlike between 2007 and 2014, when two operational programmes were active, there is currently only the Operational Programme Employment (OPE) (Operační program Zaměstnanost, OPZ) under the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs that supports Adult Learning. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports also uses funds from the OPE. The main goal of the Programme is to support employment, including equal opportunities for men and women, employer and employee adaptability, adult education, social inclusion, modernisation of public services, and social innovation in employment and social integration.

The total budget for the OPE is EUR 2,598,410,025. The theme Sustainable and Quality Employment is supported from ESF and YEI by EUR 1,308.832.482 and EUR 27,199,968 respectively (approx. 62% of EU funding)¹⁶.

Adult Learning (adult education) is mainly supported within the priority axis 1 (Promoting employment and workforce adaptability) of the OPE, namely within its three investment priorities: The investment priority 1.1 (Access to employment for job-seekers and inactive people, including the long-term unemployed and people far from jobs, also through local employment initiatives and support for labour mobility) with the specific objectives 1.1.1 (Increase employment of supported persons, particularly older, low-qualified and disadvantaged) and 1.1.2 (Increase employment of supported young persons by the Youth Guarantee Programme), the investment priority 1.3 (Adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change) with specific objectives 1.3.1 (Increase the professional level of knowledge, skills and competencies of workers and compliance of qualification level of the workforce with the labour market's requirements) and 1.3.2 (Increase adaptability of older workers) and the investment priority 1.4 (Modernising labour market institutions), with specific objectives 1.4.1 (Increasing capacity, complexity and service quality of employment public institutions) and 1.4.2 (Increasing quality of adult education).

The expected EU investments (ESF and EYI) for Adult Learning and/or closely related activities can be deducted from the list of calls for the Operational Programme Employment (OPZ)¹⁷.

The calls that are relevant to or support AL, are following:

- Active Employment Policy I (APE) (CZK 4,000m, EUR 148m)
- Instruments of APE II (CZK 7,034m, EUR 260.5m)
- Support of Youth employment in Northwest region (CZK 640m, EUR 24m)
- Youth Guarantee (CZK 1,000m, EUR 37m)

¹⁶ <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/programmes/2014CZ05M9OP001>

¹⁷ [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/getmedia/afcc0c7a-8847-435f-87a9-7b76faf8cd9f/Harmonogram-vyzev-OPZ-\(verze-k-25-8-2017\).xlsx](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/getmedia/afcc0c7a-8847-435f-87a9-7b76faf8cd9f/Harmonogram-vyzev-OPZ-(verze-k-25-8-2017).xlsx)

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

- Support of long time unemployed (CZK 1,600m, EUR 59m)
- Development of continuing vocational education and training (CZK 1,980m, EUR 73m)
- Continuing vocational education of employees in companies (CZK 3,500m, EUR 129m)
- Education of employees from disadvantaged groups (CZK 50m, EUR 1.85m)
- Support of target groups' employment (CZK 297m, EUR 11m)
- Initiative to support youth employment in Northwest region (CZK 160m, EUR 5.9m)
- Higher employability of target groups (CZK 880m, EUR 32.5m)
- Continuing education of employees in companies (CZK 2,000m, EUR 74m)
- Support of employees in risk of losing jobs (CZK 250m, EUR 9.2m)
- Education – a collaborative path for development (CZK 560.5m, EUR 20.7m)
- Support of target groups' employment (CZK 300m, EUR 11m)
- Education of employees (CZK 50m, EUR 1.85m)

Please note that not all the above listed calls are intended for adult education exclusively and that some other call not listed here support adult education as well.

No data were found on a breakdown of target groups, nevertheless each Investment Priority of the OPE has a set of indicators including number of participants from target groups.

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

Adult Education was mainly supported in the period 2007-13 by two Operational Programmes: Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness (OP EC) (Operační program Vzdělávání pro konkurenceschopnost, OP VK) and the Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment (OP HRE) (Operační program Lidské zdroje a zaměstnanost, OP LZZ).

The total financial allocation for the OP HRE was EUR 2,226 million (EU EUR 1,892 million), while the OP EC received EUR 1,955 million (EU EUR 1,661 million).

The total number of participants reached 10 million (the population of the Czech Republic is 10.5 million)¹⁸. Of these 23% were employed, 71% were inactive, 57% with low level of education, 27% young people and 8% minorities. High share of low skilled participants (ISCED 1 and 2) correlates with the focus of the Czech OPs on the policy field Enhancing Human Capital and its focus on pupils. The ESF contributed significantly to educational and training reforms. From 2007 till 2014 educational attainment strongly increased. The amount of training ending in graduation far exceeded the targets.

ESF interventions are predominantly seen as positive and beneficial. For example, in the Pilot counterfactual impact evaluation of OP HRE, it is stated that support provided by OP

¹⁸ One person could participate more than once, so the term participant may include double counting of individuals.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

HRE has had a positive impact on creating and maintaining jobs (EC, 2016). In particular, the propensity score matching method showed the impact of approximately 21,000 maintained/created jobs in 1,447 supported enterprises in comparison with matched unsupported firms (Ireas Centrum, 2013). As regards the socio-economic impact, 56,000 jobs were created during this programming period within the theme Access to Employment, of which 44% were created for women. Additionally 4,500 jobs for disadvantaged groups were created within the theme Social Inclusion. About 2 million participants graduated. Overall, the ESF funding was used to widen the scope of the measures. Another important aspect was reaching target groups that are normally not targeted by national activities, such as the development of human resources in research and development.

Also, the Czech government and the relevant ministries were dealing with number of problems, which were identified by the Supreme Audit Office in its reports. Among them were shortcomings in legislation; in the control system; in the assessment and selection of projects for financing, including badly designed assessment and selection criteria; shortcomings in contracts and decisions on the provision of subsidies; financial shortcomings etc. The Supreme Audit Office in its inspection report (NKÚ, 2016) recommends to reconsider the amount of financial means dedicated to advertisement and media campaigns targeted at the wide public, because of its short lived effect. Also, the inspection report recommends to inform public about the level of funding of successfully implemented projects and how to apply for funding, which would increase the transparency of help from EU funds (EC, 2016).

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING POLICY

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.¹⁹

5.1 Develop learners' interest in learning

Since the entry of the Czech Republic into the EU in 2004, the adult education landscape has been granted increasing financial support. It became a policy priority and received more financial support from the state budget.

Much of the support for adult education comes from the ESF, which provides the opportunity to create a systematic framework for adult learning.

Participation in adult education has doubled since the accession of the Czech Republic into the EU, but it is not growing rapidly at present. Currently, there does not appear to be a changing tendency to focus on and support adult education. In many ways the current support is of a declaratory character and is not connected to the allocation of financial resources which would lead to the actual development of adult education and learning.

The primary motivation of Czech citizens to take part in adult education is to keep or gain employment.

Given that most adult education is unregulated and subject to the influences of supply and demand, the government prioritises specific areas, such as digital skills and Industry, as well as target groups, such as workers at risk of losing their jobs or women on maternity leave. The State does not provide widespread support for adult education through vouchers or other means.

There has been an attempt to apply tax breaks for adult education to employees and the self-employed. Currently these tax breaks apply only to employers with the exception of costs for examination for vocational qualifications as defined in the National Register of Qualifications (NSK). State budget goals currently prevent widening of tax breaks.

Tools such as the National Register of Qualifications and the National System of Occupations are being implemented, but are not widely recognised by the majority of citizens. For this reason, in the coming years it will be necessary to ensure adequate promotion so that all citizens have the opportunity to benefit from these tools. The initial implementation phase has provided valuable lessons for their improvement. Within VNFIL, employers formulate competences for performance of occupations.

¹⁹ Key success factors, indicating the strength of evidence (available in all EU 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" by EC (2015): <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/final-report-20150817-en.pdf>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Selected retraining was introduced, which enables unemployed to select their course. This could be a good sign of a much needed shift from a passive approach consisting of just offers of retraining and vocational education to a more active approach which is based on interests, strengths and experience of learners.

The awareness of benefits of learning is mostly raised through ESF projects. The guidance system for learners about learning options is also done through ESF projects. The coordination of various projects and its outputs had been limited in previous programming periods.

To develop interest of adults in learning is a very important task, since 58% of adults in the Czech Republic are not participating in adult learning and do not want to participate (EU average 46%). Their most common explanation is that they do not need it (46%) and they do not have time (22%).

According to an analysis carried out within the project KOOPERACE, the main reason why low skilled persons are not willing to participate in adult learning is the stress it creates, since their education experience is often associated with failure (FDV, 2015a). Therefore this barrier should be addressed in policies and gradually eliminated.

An example of a project being currently implemented by the Fund for Further Education aimed at raising interest in learning is the project Místa zblízka. It is a social innovation project, which seeks the formation of self-sufficient, sustainable and learning locations. During the project, people learn how to use the internal resources and potential of the place where they live and work. The project is implemented in four selected locations in the Czech Republic (Aš, Sokolov, Louny and Podbořany areas) with high unemployment. Courses, workshops, participatory and facilitation meetings, guided walks and meetings with experts, etc. are held for local interested people. The target groups are active locals (employers and employees, public administration - management of municipalities, educational and counselling institutions, employees of NGOs and social enterprises as well as job seekers, socially excluded persons or persons at risk of social exclusion

The Project JobHub will create an information system to support career guidance and career counsellors. It will contain and connect diagnostic and guidance tools, various sources of labour market information and feature a shared online platform for career counsellors.

What is not clear is how to ensure availability and accessibility of career guidance to vulnerable groups on the labour market who need it the most.

Another example is the project Education through practice (Vzdělávání praxí), running from 2016 till 2019, aimed at providing interested individuals from eligible target groups (job seekers registered at the Labour Office, parents on parental leave, those over 50, or persons with low qualification) with an opportunity to undergo an internship in a company. The Fund for Further Education (an agency managed by the MoLSA) mediates the internships by pairing the right intern with the right company and provides related guidance to both the parties. The internships last from 1 to 6 months. The project follows on from a similar project "Internships in companies" that was realized in previous years.

5.2 Increase employers' investment in learning

Employers directly participate in building the National System of Occupations and the National Register of Qualifications. The relevant ministries cooperate with employer representatives through sector councils. The network of 19 sector councils is maintained by the Chamber of Commerce and the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic.

Employers participate in the ESF projects. In the current programming period employers can apply for support through the POVEZ II project (Support for vocational education of employees II). Employers can receive up to 85% of costs of education and can get a refund of employees' remuneration while they are in training.

5.3 Improve equity of access for all

There exists a system to recognise prior informal and non-formal learning. For details see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.4.

The Labour Offices ensure that guidance is available for disadvantaged and difficult-to-engage groups, but low motivation of difficult-to-engage persons is still viewed as a main obstacle in reaching them out and involve them in learning. There is no specific policy measure that would deal with it. Persons who are unemployed, at risk of losing job, inactive, disadvantaged and under-represented can participate in many ESF funded projects under the current programming period. Nevertheless, the sustainability of these programmes and projects is limited and it is not clear whether and how these groups will be supported beyond 2020.

Although some data and studies suggest that improvement of basic skills, including ICT skills, is one of the most effective ways to increase the chance of getting a job, the majority of projects and programmes focus on specific vocational skills only. Example of currently implemented project by the Fund for Further Education aiming at improving equity of access for all provides the PROKOP project (Improving competences to increase employability). The project engages participants from target groups, especially long-term unemployed and inactive in training in financial literacy, civic and soft skills. A team of external trainers and counsellors was built to provide the activities in individual regions. The emphasis is put on the quality of training, targeted approach and complexity of supporting activities, especially high interactivity, engaging trainees in active participation, practical training of model situations, etc.

The Youth Employment Promotion Initiative for the NUTS 2 Northwest Region (Iniciativa na podporu zaměstnanosti mládeže pro region NUTS 2 Severozápad) is implemented in the Ústecký and Karlovarský Regions by public employment services. The main goal of this initiative is to ensure that young people aged 15-29 gain the necessary work experience and then a stable job. This is to be achieved by training, by returning applicants or interested persons to education and, with a previous language training, by a possible participation in a foreign (German) labour market.

This Initiative includes two innovative measures – Internships Abroad and Return to Education.

Within the Internships Abroad activity (Stáže do zahraničí), the participants can travel abroad to work there to gain experience and increase their skills. The Labour Office will pay for their accommodation, meals and travel expenses. The participants go through an intensive language course (aimed specifically at German language as the region borders with Germany).

The aim of the Return to Education activity (Návrat do vzdělávání) is to motivate participants without education to return to school through both individual and group counselling. Within this activity, the Labour Office closely cooperates with suitable schools focused mainly on practical training. Return to Education provides motivation activities, diagnostics of professional orientation and study skills, preparation for admission to education with the help of an educational counsellor, and accompanying measures (reimbursement of travel costs, accommodation, meals, medical examinations, school aids).

Another example of a pilot project focusing on outreach of difficult to engage groups via quality career guidance is the international project GOAL (Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners) funded by the EU Erasmus+ Programme. The project is implemented in six countries, the Czech partner is the National Institute for Education (an institution under the purview of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports). It aims to improve existing models of guidance and orientation for adults in order that these services can specifically reach low skilled adults, long-term unemployed, inactive, early school leavers without completed upper secondary education and socially disadvantaged adults.

The project also has two other specific objectives: first - to identify critical factors and criteria of success as a base for evidence-informed policy development in the area of implementation of centres for guidance and orientation with opportunities for validation of prior learning in Europe and the second - to develop a structural support base amongst decision makers and relevant stakeholders for scaling up the model of educational guidance and orientation in all partner countries. GOAL serves as a pilot project in the Czech Republic – the programme developers are de facto starting from scratch. At present, there is not sufficient support for the inactive target group in the Czech Republic: services related to career guidance are not widespread and the general public is usually not aware of them (ReferNet, 2017).

5.4 Deliver learning that is relevant

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs implemented the Prediction of Qualification Demand project (PŘEKVAP) (2015) in order to create a comprehensive system to predict national demand for qualifications. Expansion of outputs of this project and further development of skill forecasting continues in the currently implemented ESF project KOMPAS (Labour Market Predictions) by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The project goal is to develop (by 2020) a sustainable and reliable system for labour market monitoring and forecasting that would connect national and regional levels. The system

will collect and process available statistical data as well as qualitative information on the regional and national developments, important changes and technology trends. The outcomes of the system are expected to inform education providers (IVET as well as CVET), the public employment service (responsible for retraining), regional authorities (responsible for IVET), employers, and central bodies (Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education) via a comprehensive website.

Project Learning and Skills for the Labour Market II VDTP II (Vzdělávání a dovednosti pro trh práce II) deals with the mismatch between skills supply and demand on the labour market. The goal is to provide job seekers with a relevant learning of skills important for employment of self-employment including communication skills, skill needed for finding a jobs etc. Long-time unemployed are provided with individual support and assistance. Retraining courses will be selected and offered as to fulfil skill gaps and shortages on the market. The preferred supported groups are hearing impaired persons, low-qualified and socially excluded people, although any client of the public employment services (unemployed) can apply.

5.5 Deliver learning that is of high quality

The Czech Republic lacks a system to verify the success of adult education.

Quality is only monitored in cases where public funding is provided. In the case of retraining courses, it is necessary to gain Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport accreditation for the programme. The requirement to pass a standardised test according to the National Register of Qualifications at the end of retraining was codified.

Education that is not financed through state or ESF funds is not monitored for quality, and is left to market principles. The introduction of a system to judge the quality of educational institutions is being considered, but state intervention could prove to be unnecessary regulation.

A proposal for rating of organisations providing adult education was developed in the National Institute for Education but it was not implemented yet.

The vocational qualification “Adult educator” was created, which ensures the quality of educators.

For more details on quality assurance in adult education see section 3.4.

5.6 Ensure coherent policy

There is communication between the ministries involved in adult learning. Both ministries (the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) cooperate on the implementation of projects within the Operational Programme Employment, in the development of the system of adult education and the improvement of its quality. Coordination takes place because of the work of the National Council for Qualifications, where relevant ministries, educators and social partners are represented.

There are inspiring overarching strategies and background reports, e.g. The Czech Republic 2030 or Industry 4.0, which stress the importance of adult learning in the Czech Republic. These strategies are usually well argued and most of them have their content elaborated in action plans. The problematic step is setting relevant qualitative and quantitative indicators and other policy measures. Actual implementation is then influenced by an ever-changing political situation²⁰.

Adult learning is not a priority in the current policy framework. The need for a comprehensive adult learning strategy that would take into account learning needs for 21st century is obvious. There are suitable sources, i.e. existing strategies in other areas, that already support steering adult education and learning toward development of general basic and transferable skills (literacy, numeracy, ICT skills, foreign languages, critical thinking, decision making, responsibility, communication skills, team work, learning skills, etc.).

This could be the first important step to elaborate coherent and effective adult learning policy and implement relevant adult policy reforms. Among long standing problems that still need attention are low participation in learning, particularly that of low skilled adults, equitable access to education and training, improvements in adults' basic skills, a mismatch between skills supply and demand, an under-developed system of career guidance for all and medium and long term skills forecasting.

There are improvements in the coordination of policy actions at the national and sub-national level, but the whole picture that should constitute the "building blocks" for successful adult learning policies is still patchy and incomplete.

²⁰ For example, in last 25 years the average tenure of a Czech minister of education has been about one year (14 months).

6.0 STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADULT EDUCATION SYSTEM

6.1 Strengths

The existence of a system for validation of prior learning based on standardised exams, as given by the act 179/2006 Sb. On the VNFIL. The system is still not widely used, but around 150,000 vocational qualification holders represents a good result and shows that there is a demand for vocational qualifications. The system of validation is also connected to the system of initial education. When a person wishes to pass a Final Exam (to be awarded with the Apprenticeship Certificate) or Maturita Exam (Leaving Certificate required for enrolment in higher education), head teachers of upper secondary vocational schools are obligated to recognise Vocational Qualification Certificate(s) and allow them to take the above mentioned exams. Retraining programmes must be accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and accreditation is granted only if a programme leads to a vocational qualification as defined in the National Register of Qualifications. This practice was implemented in 2009.

The existence of the National System of Occupations which is linked to the National Register of Qualifications through the Central Database of Competences (Centrální databáze kompetencí). The Central Database of Competences is a unique system which not only connects both systems but is also the common and respected tool for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs) are strategic partnerships involving employers, regional development agencies, Regional Authorities etc. By the end of 2016, they were set up in each of the regions (14) of the Czech Republic. Their main goal is strategic coordination and support of regional labour markets and employment, including providing services that complement the public employment services. In recent years, Czech Republic has increasingly faced lack of qualified workforce. Although unemployment rate is currently very low (2.9 % in July 2017, source: Czech Statistical Office, www.czso.cz), there still persists structural unemployment. Qualifications of job seekers do not match qualifications required by employers, especially of fresh graduates. Many TEPs are carrying out ESF funded projects within the OPE (Operational Programme Employment) with the aim to support target groups (young people, seniors, handicapped etc.) in terms of developing motivation, guidance, trainings, internships and job offers.

6.2 Weaknesses

- Insufficient support for the development of adult education by the state, which leads to insufficient promotion of adult education opportunities. Despite the development of systematic tools supporting adult education, most people are still unaware of the possibilities they have to get vocational qualification. This weakness is being addressed only partly, but not to a sufficient extent. The underdeveloped system of adult and continuing education and low participation of universities within this system pose a substantial risk that the system of training, continuing education and re-training might not be able to implement the changes required by Industry

4.0 and consequently the structural mismatch between the existing and the newly required skills and knowledge of workers could only deepen (Mařík, 2016).

- An under-developed system of career guidance from a LLL perspective. Career guidance is well developed in the Labour Offices (most of the target group are unemployed), where the counsellors are supervised and receive ongoing training. Career guidance for employed people, who are not customers of the Labour Offices is less well developed, there is no coordinated approach to systematic development of the skills of career counsellors or evaluation of the quality of their counselling. This weakness is being addressed only partly.
- A lack of individually tailored retraining (modularisation, exam-only). Retraining courses are offered as part of a complex educational programme. Regardless of the knowledge the participants have, everybody undergoes the whole educational programme without any assessment of existing competences. The prior assessment of skills together with the modularisation of retraining programmes would be more effective. This weakness is being targeted and some steps have been taken in order to make progress in this area (e.g. in the proposal of the project KVASAR)

7.0 FURTHER POLICY REFORMS AND ORIENTATIONS NEEDED

The supply of education courses for adults from private for profit organisations is sufficient. Providers react flexibly to meet the demand. In order to increase the participation of adults in education it is necessary to look for other means and opportunities.

Experts from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIDV) and the beneficiaries of the project Koncept agree that tax incentives (in the form of deduction of education expenses from the tax base) would help to increase participation in adult education. Although this proposal was included in the Strategy for Lifelong Learning (2007-2014), this measure never materialised.

A greater demand for adult education could be stimulated by informing the public of the importance of adult education and of the opportunity to obtain a Vocational Qualification Certificate. The promotion of adult education and the NSK is ongoing, but is not nationwide. A campaign which would cover various media is not planned.

An important step will be to continue the work started under the Prediction of Qualification Demand (PŘEKVAP) project and ensure the collection of good quality data from employers regarding skills and qualification predictions. Collection of data must take place in every region. With these data, more effective retraining (selection of qualifications and skills to meet demand) and initial upper secondary vocational education will be possible. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently implementing the project KOMPAS, which will deal with the above mentioned themes (for more information see section 5.4).

Further needed and/or planned policy reforms are described in section 3.5.

8.0 SUMMARY

In the past 10 years, the system of adult education in the Czech Republic has changed significantly. In 2007, the act 179/2007 on the VNFIL entered into force. By 2016, the National Register of Qualifications contained 839 vocational qualifications and 146,000 people had passed the test and hold the certificate of vocational qualification. Some of learners have passed comprehensive vocational qualifications equivalent to the final exam (Apprenticeship Certificate) or the Maturita exam (the vocational part). In 2009 the system of accreditation of retraining courses was linked to the National Register of Qualifications, which is viewed as an important aspect of quality in the field of retraining. Another positive step was the implementation of retraining courses chosen by trainees (see sections 3.2.2 and 5.4).

It could be concluded that the system is being built reasonably effectively. Nonetheless, it is complicated for the layperson, and it is difficult to navigate. Thus it is vital for the Czech Republic to build a framework for adult education with focus on career guidance in a LLL perspective. The currently insufficient support is reflected in the negative attitudes that Czech citizens have towards adult education, which results in a lower motivation to participate in adult education than in other EU countries.

In terms of the country's statistical performance, the Czech Republic met the Europe 2020 employment target in 2016, as 75% of 20-64 year olds were employed. Since 2011, the level of employment has been growing and this positive trend is due to both improving economic conditions and measures taken under the Active Employment Policy. In July 2017 the unemployment rate was 2.9%.

On the other hand, the Czech Republic does not succeed in meeting the Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) benchmark on participation in AL (at least 15% of adults should participate in learning). Since 2011, the participation in AL of the Czech population has been falling. It can be expected that the participation rate will raise again due to the implementation of projects and interventions supported by the ESF. Whether the growth will sustain after the termination of the current programming period (after 2020) remains unclear.

In terms of the summary of policy reforms in CSR/NRP, neither the Czech National Reform Programme nor the Country Specific Recommendations focus primarily on the adult learning (education) sector. They stress the development of competitiveness and employability on a rather general level without any specific recommendations and objectives. Therefore, no specific measures were undertaken based on these documents in the adult education sector.

In the last decade a lot of energy has been dedicated to supporting the adult education on a system and legislative level. This effort has resulted in the establishment of flexible conditions for attaining education in adulthood. Nevertheless, it could be stated that the general public is not sufficiently informed of all opportunities that exist and are offered to them. Only policymakers, experts in the adult education sector and in public employment services and some employers are sufficiently informed.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Another priority is the development and improvement of system tools and implementation processes. These tools (the register of qualifications NSK and the classification of occupations NSP) have been implemented in the last ten years. The experience gained so far allows for the assessment of pros and cons and for finding solutions for better effectiveness and quality.

While legislative support for the connection of initial and adult education exists, its implementation is ineffective and limited. One of the contributing factors is insufficient career guidance, and the lack of an integrated career guidance system, which would help to enable a fluid transition from initial education to adult education.

It is important to improve cooperation between MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) and MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), possibly including redistribution of their current responsibilities.

To summarise in terms of future policy reforms, one of the key areas in need of further development is data collection on the state of the labour market in the regions. It is particularly important to determine which jobs will be in demand in the future. The effectiveness of retraining can thus be improved. Also, the supply and relevance of initial vocational education and training can be adjusted accordingly in advance. Both the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are ready to cooperate in this task. Among important task for future policies and policy reforms is to monitor and reflect trends, such as the improvement of digital skills among the workforce, and to implement other measures in relation to Industry 4.0.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

COV (Centre for Civic Education), (2013) Občanské vzdělávání (Civic education) http://www.obcanskevzdelavani.cz/uploads/9bb2e62e7ec0473414f0da87b4fe9aac1d5a8719_uploaded_cov2013-kas-obcanske_vzdelavani_v_cr.pdf

ČSÚ (Czech Statistical Office), (2010). Další odborné vzdělávání zaměstnaných osob (Further vocational education of employed) <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/dalsi-odborne-vzdelavani-zamestnanych-osob-dov-2010-f6lqqfmyxn>

EC, (2015). An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe (Prepared by ICF Consulting Services Limited) http://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/all_in-depth_analysis_of_adult_learning_policies_and_their_effectiveness_in_europe_12.11.2015_pdf.pdf

EC, (2015a). EEPO Review Spring 2015: Upskilling unemployed adults The organisation, profiling and targeting of training provision <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2265&furtherNews=yes>

EC, (2016). ESF Ex-post Evaluation Synthesis 2007-2013 Country Report – Czech Republic <http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?advSearchKey=ESFex-post2007-2013&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en&policyArea=&type=0&country=0&year=0>

EC, (2016a). Education and Training Monitor 2016 Czech Republic http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor_en

FDV (Fund for Further Education), (2015). Předvídání kvalifikačních potřeb: koncept – metody – data. Část 3. Čtvrtá průmyslová revoluce a zaměstnanost. Výstup projektu Předvídání kvalifikačních potřeb (PŘEKVAP). (Forecasting of skills needs: Concept-methodology-data. Part 3. Fourth Industrial Revolution. Output of the project PŘEKVAP) <https://koopolis.cz/sekce/knihovna/407-prekvap-predvidani-vyvoje-trhu-prace-a-zkvalitnovanivystupu-tohoto-predvidani>

FDV (Fund for Further Education), (2015a). Osoby s nízkou kvalifikací a další profesní vzdělávání: postoje, zkušenosti, bariéry. (Low Qualified Persons and Continuing Professional Education: Attitudes, Experience and Barriers). <https://koopolis.cz/sekce/knihovna/456-vystup-projektu-kooperace-osoby-s-nizkou-kvalifikaci-a-dalsi-profesni-vzdelavani>

Ireas Centrum, (2013). Pilot counterfactual impact evaluation of the Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment <http://www.ireas.cz/en/focus/35-regional-development/projects/86-cie>

Mařík, V. et al., (2016). Národní Iniciativa Průmysl 4.0 (National Initiative Industry 4.0) <http://kzps.cz/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/kzps-cr.pdf>.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2013). Národní akční plán podporující pozitivní stárnutí pro období let 2013 až 2017 (The National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing for the period 2013–2017) <https://www.mpsv.cz/cs/21725> (updated version from 2014)

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2014). Strategie politiky zaměstnanosti do roku 2020 (SPZ), (Strategy of employment policy until 2020) https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/strateg_zam_2020/strategiepz2020.pdf

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2014a). Strategie sociálního začleňování 2014 – 2020 (Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020) <https://www.mpsv.cz/cs/17081>

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2014b). Realizační plán programu Záruky pro mládež České republiky (Implementing plan for the Youth Guarantee Programme) <https://www.mpsv.cz/cs/16867> (updated version from April 2014)

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2015). Strategie digitální gramotnosti České republiky yobdobí let 2015 – 2020, (Strategy of digital literacy of the Czech Republic for the years of 2015-2020) <http://www.mpsv.cz/cs/21498>

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2016). Akční plán Strategie digitální gramotnosti České republiky na období let 2015 – 2020 (Action plan of the Strategy of digital literacy of the Czech Republic for the years of 2015-2020)

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2016a). Iniciativa práce 4.0 Prepared by: Národní vzdělávací fond (The National Education Fund) http://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/prace_4_0/studie_iniciativa_prace_4.0.pdf

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2014c). Aktivizační opatření k řešení nepříznivé situace na trhu práce (Measures to solve unfavourable situation on the labour market); available at: <http://databaze-strategie.cz/cz/mpsv/strategie/aktivizacni-opatreni-k-reseni-nepriznive-situace-na-trhu-prace>

MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2016b). Analýza nabídky a poptávky na trhu práce. (Analysis of the labour market supply and demand) (Document approved by the Czech Cabinet)

MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) and MPSV (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), (2009). Vymezení kompetencí mezi MŠMT a MPSV (Setting out competences between MoEYS and MoLSA). Working Document of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (not published)

MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), (2014). Strategie vzdělávací politiky České republiky do roku 2020 (Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020), : http://www.vzdelavani2020.cz/images_obsah/dokumenty/strategy_web_en.pdf

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), (2014a). Koncepce podpory mládeže 2014-2020 (Youth Support Strategy 2014-2020) <http://www.msmt.cz/file/33599/>

MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), (2015). Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávání a rozvoje vzdělávací soustavy České republiky na období 2015-2020, (Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020) <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/skolstvi-v-cr/dlouhodoby-zamer-vzdelavani-a-rozvoje-vzdelavaci-soustavy-3>

MŠMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), (2007). Strategie celoživotního učení v České republice (The strategy of lifelong learning in the Czech Republic). http://www.msmt.cz/uploads/Zalezitosti_EU/strategie_2007_EN_web_jednostrany.pdf

Naviga 4, (2016). Závěrečná zpráva Evaluace IPN (Final Report Evaluation of Individual National Projects)

NKÚ (Národní kontrolní úřad, Supreme Audit Office), (2016). Kontrolní závěr z kontrolní akce 15/26 (Inspection report 15/26 of the Supreme Audit Office on promotion and publicity spending in operational programmes supported by the ESF and the state budget in 2007-2013) <https://www.nku.cz/assets/kon-zavery/k15026.pdf>

NÚOV (National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education), (2011). National referencing report of the Czech Republic http://www.nuov.cz/uploads/ECVET_a_EQF_4_6/National_Referencing_Report_Czech_Republic_en_fin_1.pdf (The National Referencing Report was revised in 2015 https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-eqf/files/national_referencing_report_czech_republic_2015_eng.pdf)

NÚV (National Institute for Education), (2015). Metodika naplňování Národní soustavy kvalifikací (Guidelines for the development of the National Register of Qualifications) http://www.nuv.cz/uploads/NSK/metodika/Metodika_NSK_III.pdf

ReferNet, (2017) Outreach and Guidance in Upskilling Policies in the Czech Republic, RefeNet Article

SPD (Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic), (2016). Sladování nabídky a poptávky na současném trhu práce (Harmonisation of the current labour market supply and demand) https://www.socialnidialog.cz/images/stories/Dovednosti_cely_dokument.pdf

Úřad Vlády ČR (Office of the Czech Government), (2011). Investing into European Competitiveness: Contribution of the Czech Republic to Europe 2020 Strategy, National Reform Programme of the Czech Republic 2011 <https://www.vlada.cz/en/evropske-zalezitosti/dokumenty/national-reform-programme-of-the-czech-republic-2011-85806/>

Úřad Vlády ČR (Office of the Czech Government), (2017). Strategický rámec Česká Republika 2030 (Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030) <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/udrzitelny-rozvoj/cr-2030/uvodni-stranka-144714/>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Úřad vlády ČR (Office of the Czech Government), (2017a). Akční plán na podporu hospodářského růstu a zaměstnanosti – Aktualizace pro rok 2017 (Action Plan to Promote Economic Growth and Employment in the Czech Republic, 2017 update) https://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/dulezite-dokumenty/akcni-plan-na-podporu-hospodarskeho-rustu-a-zamestnanosti-_aktualizace-pro-rok-2017-152586/

Úřad vlády ČR (Office of the Czech Government), (2017b). Národní program reforem České republiky 2017 (National Reform Programme of the Czech Republic 2017) <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/evropske-zalezitosti/aktualne/vlada-schvalila-narodni-program-reforem-cr--na-zaklade-ktereho-nam-evropska-komise-navrhne-nova-doporuceni-155605/>

Acts

The Education Act. Zákon č. 561/2004 Sb. o předškolním, základním, středním, vyšším odborném a jiném vzdělávání (školský zákon) v aktualizovaném znění (The Act 561/2006 Sb., on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education, as amended) <http://www.msmt.cz/dokumenty-3/skolsky-zakon-ve-zneni-ucinnem-od-1-1-2017-do-31-8-2017>)

(Education Act in English version from 2008) https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http://www.msmt.cz/uploads/VKav_200/Act_561_2011/edu_act_2011.doc)

The VNFIL Act. Zákon č. 179/2006 Sb., o ověřování výsledků dalšího vzdělávání ve znění pozdějších předpisů (The Act 179/2006 Sb., on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results as amended. <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/dalsi-vzdelavani/zakon-c-179-2006-sb>)

Higher Education Act. Zákon č. 111/1998 Sb., o vysokých školách (The Act 111/1998 Sb. on Higher Education Institutions, as amended <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/1998-111>)

On-line data sources:

Information platform on adult education in the Czech Republic (DV monitor): http://www.dvmonitor.cz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=161&Itemid=387

Eurostat: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/statistics-illustrated>

Eurostat (Labour force survey), (2015) : <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-labour-force-survey>

Czech Statistical Office: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/1-vzdelavani>

Comprehensive database of Czech strategies: <https://www.databaze-strategie.cz/cz/CR>

Financing Adult Learning: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/FinancingAdultLearning/>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Integrated portal of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs- employment policy and situation at the labour market: https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/trh_prace

Information portal ISA+ for young people to help them to choose the most suitable carrier, study programme and school: <http://www.infoabsolvent.cz/>

Information portal on vocational qualifications awarded in the system of VNFIL (in en): <https://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/>

Information portal on the new standardised Maturita exam: <http://www.novamaturita.cz/index.php>

Information portal on occupations, professional competences and jobs (in cs only): <http://www.nsp.cz/>

Information portal on jobs and learning opportunities: www.vzdelavaniaprace.cz

Information portal on adult education for policy makers and experts in AL (in Czech only): <https://koopolis.cz/rozcestnik/>

National Institute for Education: www.nuv.cz

Portal on learning opportunities for adults (mostly for profit): <http://www.skoleni-kurzy-educity.cz/firmy/verejne-kurzy>

Fund for Further Education: www.fdv.cz

Sector Councils: www.sektorove-rady.cz

ANNEXES

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

Name	Date of adoption	Short description of content
Education Act (the act 561/2004 Sb. On Preschool, Elementary, Secondary and Tertiary Professional and other education, as amended)	24/09/2004, (last amendment 08/03/2017)	The Education Act governs all education in all schools and education institutions except HEIs and end education of students in state care. The act formulates the foundations and goals of education and introduces concept of national core and school curricula, defines study programmes alternative to day forms of study, reinforces the role of supplementary studies and introduces shortened study to acquire secondary education completed with school-leaving examinations and enables to acknowledge prior learning.
Act on the VNVIL (the act 179/2006 Sb. on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results, as amended)	30/03/2006 (last amendment 25/04/2012)	The act specifies the method of assessing vocational competences, the rules governing the authorisation of certification bodies and the responsibilities of agencies involved. It established a National Register of Qualifications (NSK) containing vocational and comprehensive vocational qualifications.
Higher Education Act (the Act 111/1998 Sb. on Higher Education Institutions, as amended)	22/4/1998 (last amendment 02/03/2016)	The act describes the goals and functions of non-vocational tertiary institutions, the role of the state and the institutions, specifies the types of institutions, their financing, the courses of study, the rights and responsibilities of students, the status of academic staff and contains provisions on lifelong education courses and their validation
Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030	19/04/2017	Strategic Framework 2030 defines long-term objectives in the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development, in governance, in regions and in municipalities. It sets forth 97 specific goals aimed at improving people’s wellbeing, while respecting the principles of sustainable development. In initial and continuing education (lifelong learning) the emphasis is on improving key competencies of learners in order to enhance their employability and on improving motivation for adult education.
Industry 4.0 Government Initiative	24/08/2016	The primary objective of the Industry 4.0 Government initiative is to provide a good basis for key ministries and social partners for further detailed

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

		<p>action plans for their designated areas. A critical success factor in terms of the ability to cope with the impact on employment is primarily quality and functioning of the education system, including lifelong learning. For the area of the labour market and adult education the initiative recommends e.g. fostering the development of digital literacy for the whole population, especially for persons at risk of unemployment, the unemployed and for those being released from disappearing occupations, to introduce a forecasting system for labour market development and skills needs, to strengthen and streamline guidance services, etc.</p>
<p>Strategy of Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic 2007-2015</p>	11/07/2007	<p>The goal of the LLL Strategy and its Implementation plans was to create a system framework for learning that would connect initial, tertiary and continuing (adult) education. Public administration, municipalities and other stakeholders ought to cooperate on the development of the system framework.</p>
<p>Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020</p>	09/07/2014	<p>The Strategy sets out three priorities – to lower inequalities in education, to support quality of teaching and support teachers as its key element and to manage education system effectively and responsibly. The Strategy in line with the ET2020 Strategy sets out the target for participation of adults in education to 15%.</p>
<p>Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020</p>	15/10/14	<p>Of particular relevance to adult learning is priority 3: Adaptation of employers, employees and job-seekers to changes and requirements of the labour market.</p> <p>This priority responds to the need for better matching of supply and demand in the labour market, particularly in terms of qualifications, as well as skills and competences.</p>
<p>Long-term Aims of Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic for the Period 2015-2020</p>	15/04/2015	<p>This strategic document builds on previous documents setting out long-term aims for education and operates in accord with the Educational Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic up to the Year 2020. Among its goals is to further develop and support the system for validation, so every adult can make use of it and to increase support to low skilled and socially disadvantaged in developing their key competences with basic and civic skills.</p>
	01/07/2015	<p>The primary goal of the Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015–2020 and its action plan is to plan and pursue measures that</p>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Strategy for Digital Literacy in the Czech Republic for the Period 2015 – 2020		would improve the digital skills of Czech citizens. The measures are divided into six strategic goals: employment, competitiveness, social inclusion, support for families, public sector electronic services and support for the education system and learning through digital technology.
The Youth Support Strategy 2014-2020	12/05/2014	The Youth Support Strategy is a strategy paper that deals with youth in general, but it also proposes support for activities that help young people to gain relevant education and increase their employability, with special attention to be given to youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The implementation of the priorities is mostly ensured by launching relevant national and regional grant schemes.
The Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020	08/01/2014	The Social Inclusion Strategy aims in general to reduce and prevent poverty and social exclusion. Among its main priority target areas are employment and training of people at the risk of social exclusion. It supports guidance and motivation measures, closer cooperation of the Labour Office with local employers, programmes of work and social rehabilitation, local coordination of activities and better targeting of active labour market policies (ALMPs) etc.
The National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing for the period 2013–2017	13/02/2013	This strategic document proposes steps to be taken in areas of population ageing and preparation for ageing. It concentrates also on the support of education for seniors, on the development of upper secondary and postsecondary educational programmes and on higher participation of seniors in education. Another goal is to increase the number of seniors and senior organisations in international projects within the Erasmus+ programme.
Action Plan Labour 4.0	n/a	Action Plan Labour 4.0 elaborates further the Industry 4.0 initiative and sets out measures, inter alia, for the development of knowledge and skills that are to be in demand by the labour market in the near future. Measures require raising awareness of adult education, promoting adult learning including e-learning and MOOCs among employers and the public, to prepare for changes with digitisation and to provide informational support on learning opportunities through career guidance.
The Youth Guarantee Programme	April 2014	The aim of the programme is to offer education and training for young people according to their individual needs and possibilities. The programme proposes

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
 Full country report – Czech Republic

		<p>initiatives, which include e.g. improving the system of career guidance, strengthening the role of IVET schools in providing CVET with the aim to increase the possibilities to engage NEETs back to education, increasing the capacities of Labour Office, and further development of the integrated information system on learning opportunities (www.infoabsolvent.cz)</p>
<p>Employment Policy Strategy up to the Year 2020</p>	<p>15/10/2014</p>	<p>The priority of the Employment Policy Strategy relevant for Adult Learning is priority No. 3, which responds to the need for better matching of supply and demand in the labour market, particularly in terms of qualifications, as well as skills and competences. It reflects the reality that initial education is not capable of responding to the dynamic development of technology and the economy, and is also not capable of preparing the workforce for their entire professional life. Greater focus is therefore placed on employment policy in the areas of predicting the development and demands of the labour market; and support for adult education.</p>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

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.)
				Fosters learners' interest in	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	
Project POVEZ II (Support for vocational education of	https://esf2014.esfcr.cz/dap/LW/Views/Core/Detail?action=get&id=FAE15CE6-2EFA-4ECD-B9D2-E19BC804F15B&idForm=73796f02-af07-40b9-b717-9fc2a7764287&idbo=b4293004-1ec0-467c-ac50-7c241c3f373d	CZK 3,499,850,000	2015-2020		x		x			<p>The project POVEZ II deals with the issue of better adaptability and flexibility of work force on the ever-changing labour market. The project intends to solve the mismatch between the skills supply and demand.</p> <p>Employers, self-employed and non-governmental non-profit organisations can apply for contributions for education or</p>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

employees II) (ESF)									retraining of employees, while their remuneration costs are also covered when employees are in training. The project is implemented by the Labour Office within the Operational Programme Employment.
Project VDTP II (Learning and Skills for the Labour Market II) (ESF)	https://esf2014.esfcr.cz/dap/LW/Views/Core/Detail?action=get&id=8A411584-6A78-4A1C-B99F-39E2CF1E7D41&idForm=73796f02-af07-40b9-b717-9fc2a7764287&idbo=b4293004-1ec0-467c-ac50-7c241c3f373d	CZK 1,050,000,000	2016-2020			x	x		This intervention deals with the mismatch between skills supply and demand on the labour market. The goal is to provide job seekers with relevant skills important for employment or self-employment including communication skills, skills needed for finding a jobs etc. The long-term unemployed are provided with individual support and assistance. Retraining courses will be selected and offered to fulfil skill gaps and shortages on the market. The preferred supported groups are hearing impaired persons, low-qualified and socially excluded people, although any client of the public employment services (unemployed) can apply.
Project KVASAR (planned) (ESF)	n/a	n/a	n/a	x			x	x	The outcome of the project KVASAR (Heightening of quality and effectiveness of the adult education system in cooperation with employers) will be a proposal for revision of retraining courses so they better match needs of labour market and unemployed and learners. Retraining should be modularised to accommodate prior learning of trainees.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Project Místa zblízka (ESF)	http://www.fdv.cz/mista-zblizka	CZK 26,295,733	2017- 2020	x		x				It is a social innovation project, which seeks for a change leading to the formation of self-sufficient, sustainable and learning locations. During the project, people learn how to use the internal resources and potential of the place where they live and work. The project is implemented in four selected locations with high unemployment. Courses, workshops, participatory and facilitation meetings, guided walks and meetings with experts, etc. are held for local interested people.
Project JobHub (ESF)	http://www.fdv.cz/jobhub	CZK 39,753,164	2016- 2019	x						The Project JobHub will create an information system to support career guidance and career counsellors. It will contain and connect diagnostic and guidance tools, various sources of labour market information and feature a shared online platform for career counsellors.
Project Education through practice (Vzdělávání praxí) (ESF)	http://www.vzdelavanipraxi.cz	CZK 155,306,353	2016 - 2019					x		This intervention is aimed at providing interested individuals from eligible target groups (job seekers registered at the Labour Office, parents on parental leave, persons over 50 or persons with a low level of qualification) with an opportunity to undergo an internship in a company. The Fund for Further Education (an agency managed by the MoLSA) mediates the internships by pairing the right intern with the right company and provides related guidance to both parties. The

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

										internships last from 1 to 6 months. The project follows on from a similar project "Internships in companies" that was realized in previous years.
Project PROKOP-central (Improving competences to increase employability)	http://www.fdv.cz/prokop-central	CZK 101,151,345	2017-2020	x		x	x			The project engages participants from target groups, especially long-term unemployed and inactive in training in financial literacy, civic and soft skills. A team of external trainers and counsellors was built to provide activities in individual regions. Emphasis is put on the quality of training, a targeted approach and complexity of supporting activities, especially high interactivity, engaging trainees in active participation, practical training of model situations, etc.
Project PROKOP-východ (Improving competences to increase employability) (ESF)	http://www.fdv.cz/prokop-vychod	CZK 93,540,504	2016-2019	x		x	x			The project engages participants from target groups in three Moravian regions, especially long-term unemployed and inactive in training in financial literacy, civic and soft skills. A team of external trainers and counsellors was built to provide activities in individual regions. Emphasis is put on the quality of training, a targeted approach and complexity of supporting activities, especially high interactivity, engaging trainees in active participation, practical training of model situations, etc.

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

Project DIGI Strategie 2020 (ESF)	http://www.fdv.cz/digistrategie2020	CZK 53,740,050	2016-2019	x			x			The project DIGI Strategie implements goals as set in the Strategy of digital literacy of the Czech Republic for the years of 2015-2020 and its action plan. The main goal to improve digital skills of Czech population. All information and learning tools will be available at a portal, which will help people to learn about new technologies and how to use them. Workshops and roadshows will be organised in all regions.
Youth Guarantee Programme (ESF)	Implemented by PES in 11 regions of the Czech Republic	CZK 1,000,000,000	2016-2019	x			x			The Youth Guarantee Programme follows the European initiative Youth Guarantee. The main implementer of the programme is the Labour Office. The aim is to create a wide education offer for various groups of young people according to their individual needs and possibilities. The programme proposes include improving the system of career guidance, strengthening the role of IVET schools in providing also CVET with the aim to increase the possibilities to engage NEETs back to education.
The Youth Employment Promotion Initiative for the	https://portal.mpsv.cz/upcr/kp/ulk/projekty_esf/projekty_v_realizaci/regionalni_projekty/initiativa_podpory_zamestnanosti_mladeze_pro_region_nuts	n/a n/a	2015-2018				x	x		The initiative is implemented in the Ústecký and Karlovarský Regions by public employment services. The main goal of this initiative is to ensure that young people aged 15-29 gain the necessary work experience and then a stable job. This is to be achieved by training, by returning applicants or interested persons to education and by

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

<p>NUTS 2 Northwest Region (YEI fund)</p>	<p>https://portal.mpsv.cz/upcr/kp/kvk/projekty_esf/v_realizaci/rp/iniciativa_podpory_zamestnanosti_mladeze_pro_region_nuts</p>	<p>(2 calls for together CZK 800,000,000)</p>								<p>possible participation in a foreign labour market with language training.</p> <p>This Initiative also includes two innovative measures – Internships Abroad and Return to Education.</p> <p>Through the Internships Abroad activity (Stáže do zahraničí) the participants can travel abroad to work there, to gain experience and increase their skills. The Labour Office will pay for their accommodation, meals and travel expenses. The participants go through an intensive language course (aimed specifically at German language as the region borders with Germany).</p> <p>The aim of the Return to Education activity (Návrat do vzdělávání) is to motivate participants without education to return to school though both individual and group counselling. Within this activity, the Labour Office closely cooperates with suitable schools focused mainly on practical training. Return to Education provides motivation activities, diagnostics of professional orientation and study skills, preparation for admission to education – assistance of professional worker, ‘tasting’, admission to education with the help</p>
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
Full country report – Czech Republic

										of an educational counsellor, and accompanying measures (reimbursement of travel costs, accommodation, meals, medical examinations, school aids).
International project GOAL (Erasmus+)	http://www.projectgoal.eu/index.php	n/a	2015-2018	x		x				<p>GOAL (Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners) is funded by the EU Program Erasmus+. The project is implemented in six countries, the Czech partner is the National Institute for Education (an institution under the purview of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports). It aims to improve existing models of guidance and orientation for adults in order that these services specifically reach low skilled adults, the long-term unemployed, inactive, early school leavers without completed upper secondary education and socially disadvantaged adults.</p> <p>The project also has two other specific objectives: first - to identify critical factors and criteria of success as a base for evidence-informed policy development in the area of implementation of centres for guidance and orientation with opportunities for validation of prior learning in Europe. Second - to develop a structural support base amongst decision makers and relevant stakeholders for scaling up the model of educational guidance and orientation in all partner countries.</p>

Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills
 Full country report – Czech Republic

										GOAL serves as a pilot project in the Czech Republic – the programme developers are de facto starting from scratch. At present, there is not sufficient support for the inactive target group in the Czech Republic: services related to career guidance are not widespread and the general public is usually not aware of them
Project KOMPAS (Labour Market Predictions) (ESF)	Not available (September 2017)	n/a	2017-2020				x			The project goal is to develop (by 2020) a sustainable and reliable system for labour market monitoring and forecasting that would connect national and regional levels. The system will collect and process available statistical data as well as qualitative information on the regional and national developments, important changes and technology trends. The outcomes of the system are expected to inform education providers (IVET as well as CVET), the public employment service (responsible for retraining), regional authorities (responsible for IVET), employers, and central bodies (Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education) via a comprehensive website.

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries
(http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service
(http://europa.eu/eurodirect/index_en.htm) or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11
(freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union
(http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).



■ Publications Office
of the European Union