

National implementation plan: Slovakia

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 SLOVAKIA

Timeline

2022 Design 2023 Implementation 2024 Implementation

ID number 44321

Background

According to the Council Recommendation of 24 November 2020 on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, Member States were expected to submit a National implementation plan (NIP) within 18 months of the adoption of the Recommendation. The education ministry submitted the NIP to the European Commission on 31 May 2022.

Objectives

In response to the 2020 Council Recommendation on VET and the Osnabrück Declaration on VET, the education ministry prepared a comprehensive National implementation plan (NIP), which sets out the following eight objectives to address European priorities and achieve national targets:

- (a) excellent, inclusive and accessible VET for all;
- (b) high employment rate of graduates;
- (c) sustainable and competitive fields of study/qualifications in IVET and CVET relevant to labour market needs based on digital and green transition;
- (d) validation and recognition of prior learning;
- (e) increase in adult participation in lifelong learning
- (f) reduction in early school leaving rates through second chance education;
- (g) increase in WBL across all qualifications;
- (h) quality assurance in IVET and CVET.

Description

Eight priority areas were identified in relation to the achievement of the objectives, five of which explicitly target VET, two target lifelong learning in parallel with VET ((f) and (h)) and one targets interlinking general education and VET (e):

- (a) centres of excellence in VET;
- (b) in-company training centres;
- (c) higher VET transformation;
- (d) quality assurance in IVET and CVET;
- (e) prevention of early school leaving;

- (f) basic skills;
- (g) individual learning accounts;
- (h) a new system of lifelong learning introduced by the law on lifelong learning.

All these priority areas are addressed in the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30, adopted by the government on 24 November 2021; all but one (b) are also addressed in the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24, approved by the government on 20 April 2022, containing timelines, responsible actors and expected costs jointly financed by the State and the EU.

2022 Design

Explicit measures are set in the NIP for priority areas (a) to (e). Activities related to the other three priority areas have not yet been specified, but many relevant changes are expected from the adoption of a new act on lifelong learning and the first-ever act on adult education that were submitted for internal discussion within the education ministry and its subsidiaries.

Further progress depends on implementation and funding from ESIF. Two national projects, Centres of excellence and Quality, covering priority areas (a) and (d) respectively, are in draft form and are under internal discussion within the State Institute of Vocational Education which is expected to run both projects.

2023 Implementation

The collapse of the government in October 2022 resulting in the appointment of the interim technocratic government, ruling until new parliamentary elections, has not created favourable conditions for implementing the NIP. This period can be seen as focusing on preparing alternatives in implementing policies and drafting VET- and LLL-related projects envisaged by the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30. A new Government manifesto approved by the parliament on 21 November 2023 finally created the basis for stable policy planning. The first projects to be funded by Programme Slovakia 2021-27 were agreed by the end of the year. These include:

- (a) Centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs), run by the State Institute of Vocational Education;
- (b) Introducing quality management in VET and adult education, also run by the State Institute of Vocational Education.

In addition, two projects indirectly linked to the NIP were agreed, run by the Sector Councils Alliance (SCA):

- (a) Development of professional capacities of social partners;
- (b) Sector Councils Alliance - forecasting of labour market trends and needs.

Both projects are aimed at capacity building of the SCA that is newly empowered by the Act on adult education (292/2024) amending also the Act on VET (61/2015) to affect VET and LLL policies.

2024 Implementation

A revised version of the NIP, updated to align with the NIP guidelines, was resubmitted to the European Commission on 16 March 2024. It contains eight measures equivalent to the 2022 NIP but elaborated in more detail and titled more precisely. The 2024 NIP interlinks the political priorities of the new government and expert proposals outlined in the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30. It aligns these priorities with the objectives and funding from the meanwhile approved Programme Slovakia 2021-27, which specifies key investment priorities.

The measures of the 2024 NIP are formulated as follows:

- (a) Centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs);

- (b) Supra-company training centres;
- (c) Post-secondary VET transformation - the creation of higher industrial schools;
- (d) Quality assurance in IVET and CVET;
- (e) Prevention of early school leaving (early leaving from education and training);
- (f) Basic skills;
- (g) Individual learning accounts;
- (h) New system of lifelong learning introduced by the new law on lifelong learning.

In addition to two NIP-relevant national projects (large systemic projects funded by EU sources via Programme Slovakia 2021-27) that started in 2023 - namely, the Centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs) with a budget of EUR 15.6 million and Introducing quality management in VET and adult education, with a budget of EUR 6.96 million, funding from Programme Slovakia 2021-27 for other NIP-related activities has also been agreed.

Two national projects funded by Programme Slovakia 2021-27 started in 2024 implementing NIP measures (e) and (g).

- (a) Developing and verifying an early warning system for learners at risk of early school leaving, along with targeted support for learners in the counselling and prevention system, run by the Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology with a budget of about EUR 7.67 million;
- (b) System of individual learning accounts - part I: an electronic platform for individual learning accounts (EPIVU platform), run by the education ministry, with a budget of EUR 2.3 million.

In October, a call titled Development of basic skills of adults - the path towards inclusion and employability, with a total allocation of EUR 6 million funded by Programme Slovakia 2021-27, was launched. It invites submitting projects aimed at developing the basic skills of 16 to 65-year-olds with skill deficits hampering their employability. The focus is on developing basic skills, such as reading, math and digital skills. Additional skills, e.g. financial, media and health literacy, green skills, and communication skills, can also be developed, but only as part of the development of the aforementioned skills. This call contributes to implementing NIP measure (f).

The 2024-29 project Improving quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) towards labour market needs, run by the State Institute of Vocational Education and supported by the Swiss-Slovak Cooperation Programme up to CHF 5.75 million, was launched in September 2024. The project will address the following NIP-relevant activities:

- (a) Supporting the transformation of post-secondary VET by establishing higher industrial schools selected from a shortlist of secondary VET schools (NIP measure (c)). The project will explore the possibility of recognising learning outcomes from the currently offered ISCED 554 programmes (currently offered by secondary VET schools) through credits relevant to bachelor studies in higher education, with a special focus on the IT sector.
- (b) Supporting the creation of supra-company training centres (NIP measure (b)). Two interrelated financial schemes funded by Programme Slovakia 2021-27 are being prepared, one focusing on support for building and expanding the capacities of trainers, instructors and necessary administrative staff assisting small and medium-sized entrepreneurs and small traders to recruit future workers and experts in the field, and the other one focusing on investment in the state-of-the-art equipment for these centres.

Thus, seven out of the eight aforementioned NIP measures are linked to funding vehicles that will either pave the way for direct implementation or create conditions for implementation.

The eighth NIP measure proposed legislative backing for a lifelong learning system through a new act on lifelong learning. In contrast to this proposal, on 30 October 2024, the parliament approved the Act on adult education (292/2024), which, while not providing full coverage for lifelong learning, addresses several important topics within

the framework.

Furthermore, a 2024-29 project titled Support for the development of evidence-based policies, which is indirectly linked to the NIP, was launched with a budget of EUR 2.39 million. It is aimed at strengthening both ex-ante and ex-post analyses and monitoring at all education levels including VET. The project run by the education ministry is funded by Programme Slovakia 2021-27.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth
- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (until 2024)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
Adult learners
Unemployed and jobseekers
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment
Low-skilled/qualified persons
Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
School leaders
Adult educators
Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)
National, regional and local authorities

Other

State School
Inspectorate

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies
Optimising VET funding
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

VET promoting equality of opportunities

VET underpinned by a culture of quality assurance

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 \(in Slovak\)](#)

[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 \(in English\)](#)

[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24 \(in Slovak\)](#)

[Lifelong learning and counselling strategy action plan 2022-24 \(in English\)](#)

[2022 National Implementation Plan](#)

[2024 National Implementation Plan](#)

[Programme Slovakia 2021-27](#)

[Act No 292/2024 on adult education](#)

Related policy developments

2024 **Approved/Agreed**

Individual learning accounts

Reflecting the LLCS 2030 recommendations the State Institute of Vocational Education prepared a comparative study focusing on new European policies, ILAs and microcredentials.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2024 **Approved/Agreed**

Act on adult education (292/2024)

The education ministry initiated new legislation instead of the originally proposed law on lifelong learning, which was previously recommended by the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 and approved by the government.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

CVET

2024 **Implementation**

Sector Councils Alliance

The amendment to the Act on employment services established the Sector Councils Alliance (SCA) as the interest association of legal entities.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 **Implementation**

Swiss project in support of VET

The main activities of the project comply with the three aforementioned objectives and six measures.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30

LLCS 2030 focuses on four thematic areas: the qualification system; basic skills and civic education; lifelong learning, counselling, and motivation of citizens for lifelong learning; and building a system of skills management and identification of lifelong learning needs.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Creation of centres of excellence in VET

The creation of CoVEs is determined by the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30 adopted by the government on 24 November 2021.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Preventing and reducing early leaving from education and training

The Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30, approved by the government on 24 November 2021, addresses early school leaving in the section 'Second chance education and F-type programmes'. It suggests four measures aimed at:

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Type of development

Practical

measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

National basic skills improvement initiative

The following five measures are set by the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30:

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation

National EQAVET implementation plan

The national EQAVET implementation report (2016-20), containing measures to strengthen quality assurance in IVET, has been prepared. At the end of 2016, ŠIOV, the quality assurance national reference point (QANRP), joined a European project aiming to introduce peer review in the country.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

VET graduate tracking

The Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (public employment service) coordinates the national project Prognosis of labour market development, which is carried out under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

“ … ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). National implementation plan: Slovakia: Slovakia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/44321>