

National recovery and resilience plan

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 SLOVAKIA

Timeline

2020 Design

2021 Approved/Agreed

2022 Implementation

2023 Implementation

2024 Implementation

2025 Implementation

ID number 39325

Background

The National recovery and resilience plan identified reforms and investments to be supported by the Recovery and resilience facility.

Objectives

The National recovery and resilience plan promotes reforms at all education levels, including VET-related objectives in the components Education for the 21st Century and Increasing the performance of Slovak higher education institutions.

Description

The National recovery and resilience plan sets out a package of reforms and public investments to be implemented by 2026. For programmes at ISCED levels 0 to 5, the component Education for the 21st Century mainly focuses on reforming the curriculum, introducing new education methodologies, and updating textbooks. The main goal of the curriculum reform is to improve learner competences needed for the 21st century (critical thinking, digital and soft skills).

The plan also prioritises teacher training on the new content and form of teaching. The main aim of the teacher training reform is to improve the skills of the pedagogical and professional staff and motivate them to participate in continuing professional development. The reform supports teachers to:

- (a) implement the curriculum reform;
- (b) increase the use of digital technologies in education;
- (c) adapt the learning process to the individual needs of each learner (especially those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds or in a multilingual environment).

Opening free access to teacher training opportunities enables teachers to achieve these goals. The reform should impact initial teacher training as well.

An additional aim of the plan is to foster the publication and distribution of teaching materials and improve school infrastructure, for instance by creating school libraries to be

used as educational centres and improving schools' digital equipment.

While the curriculum reform focuses predominantly on education programmes at ISCED levels 1 and 2, reforms addressing upper secondary education, also affect VET schools.

The curriculum reform has a projected budget of approximately EUR 100 million. Of this EUR 42 million is allocated to the creation and implementation of a new curriculum (including the development of digital support tools), EUR 44.5 million for systemic procurement of textbooks and EUR 13.5 million to expand electronic testing and implementing an online *maturita* school-leaving examination. A budget of approximately EUR 50 million is earmarked for teacher training. Investment in the digitisation of schools is planned at approximately EUR 187 million, while EUR 123 million will be allocated to school infrastructure-, including EUR 15 million for the renewal of school libraries to function as education centres.

In higher education, 'Increasing the performance of Slovak higher education institutions' component of the National recovery and resilience plan brings important systemic changes with a potential impact on tertiary VET. The plan introduces financial stimuli to increase the number and enrich the variety of professionally oriented bachelor degree programmes and short-cycle tertiary programmes. Developing new or modernising existing practical training premises for professional bachelor's programmes is explicitly indicated among investment priorities.

2020 Design

The preparation of the National recovery and resilience plan started in summer 2020.

2021 Approved/Agreed

In March 2021, the National recovery and resilience plan (RRP) was submitted for public consultation. On 28 April 2021, it was adopted by the government, on 21 June 2021 it was endorsed by the European Commission, and on 13 July 2021 adopted by the EU economic and finance ministers. With 43% of the total financing for RRP supporting climate objectives and 21% supporting a digital transition, it exceeds the required minimum allocations set by the EU regulation. Nevertheless, the RRP pays only a little attention to VET. VET schools will benefit from the related investments in digital equipment and renewing facilities. The most important change is abolishing a 'dead-end-stream' of initial VET. It is related to redesigning ISCED 253 programmes, as these programmes did not allow to progress to higher levels of formal education. The most important measure is the retraining of 172 800 seniors and disadvantaged working age adults in digital skills, following a pilot project. The introduction of individual learning accounts under discussion was not included in the RRP. However, it was incorporated in the Lifelong learning and counselling strategy for 2021-30, approved by the government on 24 November 2021.

2022 Implementation

As part of the National recovery and resilience plan (RRP), the component 'Accessibility, development and quality of inclusive education' includes Investment 1, 'Removing barriers in school buildings at all levels of the education system'. On 24 August 2022 the education ministry launched the call 'Removing barriers in buildings/removing architectural barriers in larger secondary schools'. Schools with a minimum of 275 students as of 15 September 2021 are eligible to apply. The education ministry has identified a list of 375 secondary grammar and VET schools, each eligible for the maximum funding amount of EUR 130 000. The total indicative budget for this call is EUR 32 607 212. The period for eligible expenses ends on 30 June 2025, by which time the architectural barriers in buildings must be removed.

In connection with the RRP, under the component 'Education for the 21st Century', Reform 2 'Preparation and development of teachers for new content and form of teaching (change in initial teacher training and strengthening of professional development of teachers)', schools could apply from 19 December 2022 until 20

January 2023 for funding for teacher retraining of at least 20 hours and up to 24 hours focusing on three areas:

- (a) revision of school curriculum to support the creation of its own innovative school educational programme (school curriculum);
- (b) inclusive education to prepare educators how to adapt their teaching to meet the individual needs of students with special educational needs;
- (c) the development of digital skills focusing on improving the quality of work in the digital environment, including cyber security and cyberbullying prevention

In June 2022, Slovakia received the RRP first payment for the implementation of 14 milestones (of which three related to higher education) in the amount of EUR 398.7 million after the deduction of the respective part of pre-financing that Slovakia received in 2021 in a total amount of EUR 822.7 million.

2023 Implementation

In March 2023, Slovakia received the RRP second payment of EUR 708.8 million after the deduction of the respective part of pre-financing for fulfilling 14 milestones and two targets among which debarrierisation of school buildings, simplified recognition procedure of regulated professions, improving digital skills of seniors. In September 2023, Slovakia submitted an application to the European Commission for the third payment, based on fulfilling of 27 milestones and two targets (out of which seven related to education, however without a direct impact on VET. In December 2023, Slovakia received the third payment of EUR 662.36 million after the deduction of the respective part of pre-financing.

On 26 April 2023, the government approved an amendment to the RRP by adding a new REPowerEU chapter. It contains a reform aligned with Goal 13 of the Agenda 2030 supported by an envisaged investment of EUR 14.74 million in improving conditions for the development of green skills.

2024 Implementation

In October 2024, the European Commission approved the fulfilment of all milestones for the fourth payment of EUR 799 million after the deduction of the respective part of pre-financing. Among the three education-related milestones, two are directly relevant for secondary VET. One is a legislative amendment addressing the prevention of early school leaving and transforming ISCED 253 programmes, which were previously considered a dead-end path. The second is legislative changes in continuing professional development of pedagogical and professional staff translated into practice, including the creation of competence portfolios as a crucial instrument for assessment of individual development and progress. Long-awaited training of staff funded by RRP aimed at equipping educators with '21st-century skills' started in autumn 2024. This training focuses on enabling staff to exploit newly delivered digital equipment and content in particular.

As part of the revised RRP, the national 2023-26 project REPowerEU - Development of green skills is being implemented by the State Institute of Vocational Education. The project consists of three parts: adaptation of existing VET programmes in secondary VET schools, developing new programmes of continuing professional development for pedagogical staff, and creating modular continuing VET programmes for adults, all focusing on green skills.

In December 2024, Slovakia requested the fifth payment for implementing the measures resulting from the recovery plan, amounting to almost EUR 598 million. Three milestones concern the area of education

- (a) Adoption of legislative changes that will introduce the definition of segregation into law and the creation of methodological materials for the implementation of desegregation;
- (b) Percentage of trained teachers (55%), in particular in preparation for the new curriculum, inclusive education and digital skills;

(c) Performance contracts signed with public universities; At least two calls for proposals to support the strategic development of universities concluded.

2025 Implementation

In July, Slovakia received the fifth payment after the payment cut not related to educational milestones. Together, Slovakia managed to draw almost EUR 4 000 million of the total allocation of EUR 6 400 million.

The sixth payment in the amount of EUR 977 million, containing the fulfilment of 31 milestones and goals, is under assessment by the European Commission. One RepowerEU-linked milestone relates to VET. Innovated secondary programmes in support of green transition were created, and are already piloted within the national 2023-26 project REPowerEU - Development of green skills.

A dispute of experts concerns the milestone bound to the seventh payment. It is related to lower secondary vocational education programmes, the so-called F-type programmes at ISCED 253 level. They have been reshaped, as, for example, three mechanical engineering programmes merged into one at the request of employers, and all were changed in terms of content. The setting of the ceiling for enrolment of new learners is, as requested by the RRP, prescribed by the education ministry decree based on specific criteria. Thus, the requirements of the milestone have been undoubtedly met. Nevertheless, some experts, economic analysts predominantly, criticise these programmes as too expensive, and at the same time, having a low share of employed graduates. They suggest abolishing them and insist on the provision of a substantially cheaper one-year general education programme aimed at completion of lower secondary general education.

Programmes are expensive due to a higher share of practical training and work with learners who are, as a rule, dropouts from general education and live in a socially disadvantaged environment. Graduates of these programmes (in particular those who do not make use of the newly created option to continue in training to receive a certificate of apprenticeship), therefore, really feature low officially registered employment. This could be changed by making use of the idea of a 'stackable' pathway to qualifications within lifelong learning, starting with these and any other small/partial qualifications.

Bodies responsible

- Government Office of the Slovak Republic

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
Learners with disabilities
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)
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
School leaders

Thematic categories

Modernising VET infrastructure

Improving digital infrastructure of VET provision

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Developing and updating learning resources and materials

Acquiring key competences

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[National recovery and resilience plan of the Slovak Republic \(in Slovak\)](#)

[Proposal for a Council implementing decision on the approval of the assessment of the National recovery and resilience plan of the Slovak Republic](#)

[The National recovery and resilience plan of the Slovak Republic summary of reforms and investments](#)

[National recovery and resilience plan of the Slovak Republic web portal](#)

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

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

[Call of the education ministry aimed at removing barriers in larger secondary schools](#)

[Information of the education ministry on application for funding of retraining of teachers](#)

[National digital skills strategy of the Slovak Republic and the action plan for the years 2023-2026](#)

[National recovery and resilience plan REPowerEU chapter \(in Slovak\)](#)

[Summary of reforms, investments and milestones to be achieved for nine RRP instalments](#)

Related policy developments

2025 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

2025 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:

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 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

2025 Implementation**Amendments to the Education Act (245/2008)**

In January 2021, the education ministry submitted to public discussion an extensive amendment of the Education act (245/2008), which provoked a heated debate with more than 1 000 comments, of which more than 680 were fundamental.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2020 Completed

Modern and successful Slovakia: national integrated reform plan

The finance ministry was responsible for preparing the National integrated reform plan (NIRP).

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

A continuing professional development model for pedagogical and professional staff

A new act was adopted on pedagogical staff and professional staff (138/2019) in 2019 complemented by two decrees (361/2019 on education for professional development and 1/2020 on qualification requirements). The act cancelled:

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Implementation

Digital transformation strategy

In the short term, three priority areas have been identified by the strategy, forming a basis for the 2019-22 action plan:

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Supporting teachers in their work with disadvantaged learners

For a long time ESF projects have been crucial in promoting teachers' in-service training regarding assisting disadvantaged learners, including Roma. In 2017, the implementation of the ESF 'Open school for all' project gave a new impulse to this effort.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Environmental education

Since October 2017, the Green education fund (GEF), managed by the Slovak Environment Agency and financed from the State budget and private companies, has been active in supporting environmental education. EUR 155 000 were earmarked for 28 NGO-projects at national (11) and regional (17) level.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Actions preventing intolerance

In 2016/17, in response to signs of increasing intolerance in the European Union, secondary education national curricula were supplemented by a document for teachers and counselling staff on how to prevent racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and extremism.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). National recovery and resilience plan: Slovakia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/39325>