

Innovation of the fields of study system

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**REGULATION/LEGISLATION** **CZECHIA**

Timeline

2020 Approved/Agreed**2021 Implementation****2022 Implementation****2023 Implementation****2024 Implementation****2025 Implementation****ID number 39060**

Background

As a result of gradual automation and digitisation of production technologies, there have recently been significant changes in the labour market in terms of requirements on graduates of upper secondary VET. The system of study fields currently covering 281 programmes, includes both new fields of study required by the labour market and retains those fields that are no longer needed by labour market.

Objectives

The goal is to create an attractive, open and permeable system of VET fields of study, developed as a result of a consensus of the relevant decision-making bodies and employers' representatives and more responsive to trends in employability of upper secondary school graduates. The aim of the system innovation is primarily to clarify, simplify and define the fields of study, that will be developed in close cooperation with employers.

It is embedded in the Strategy 2030+: Roadmap of key measures for the period 2020-23 'Innovation of the fields of study system' under the measure Modern and open VET with high added value, key action 1.1 Field revision and innovation of the system of fields of study.

The Long-term plan for education and the development of the education system of the Czech Republic 2019-23 also lists among the priority objectives of upper secondary education the innovation of the fields of study system.

Measures related to the innovation of the fields of study system will result in an amendment to the Government Regulation No 211/2010 Coll., On the system of fields of study in basic, upper secondary and tertiary professional education (by 2023).

Further changes in the fields of study system are expected by 2023.

Description

By 2023, the VET system will be structured to focus on the common professional basis within the relevant group of fields of study. This innovation will allow for a gradual choice of

career paths and will enable learners to postpone early specialisation. It will also lead to a reduction in the total number of fields of study (current number of fields is 281). The amended fields of study system will be open and offer the possibility to follow up on previous education at any time and continue to obtain a higher level of education (qualification), including the recognition of prior learning. This will increase the possibilities to adjust/modify the education path during the course study, whether in terms of the education level or field of study, and students will not be forced to start studying from the very beginning.

2020 Approved/Agreed

An important step was the amendment to Government Regulation No 211/2010 Coll., on the fields of study system for basic, upper secondary and tertiary professional education, which entered into effect on 1 September 2020. The amendment enables the development of combined study programmes (EQF 4) making it possible to obtain a vocational certificate (typical for EQF 3 pathway with high proportion of WBL) after the third year and a *Maturita* certificate after the fourth year of study. This adjustment followed the pilot testing initiated in 2012 (with about 60 upper secondary schools). There was a great deal of interest on the part of schools, but also on the part of employers. The added value is that students will not leave school without qualifications if they fail to complete the *Maturita* exam. Schools interested in offering combined study programmes can prepare their school educational programme from 2021/22.

The roadmap for the Strategy for the education policy of the Czech Republic 2030+ focusing on the overall innovation of the VET fields of study system was finalised.

2021 Implementation

The National Pedagogical Institute developed the Methodology for the work of working groups engaged in the innovation of the VET fields of study system, and discussed it with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. There were preparations to select the stakeholders and experts for five professional platforms (*technical, economic and services, sciences, artistic, healthcare and social*)/working groups and an expert team which will discuss the proposals for innovative and new fields of study. A feedback questionnaire was designed and conducted for representatives of schools and employers and for representatives of the regional authorities (school founders). The questionnaire focused on key topics from the proposed Innovation of the fields of study system:

- (a) pyramid arrangements of framework educational programmes and modernisation of their content;
- (b) flexible organisation of school educational programmes and instruction with the use of modularisation;
- (c) acquisition of professional qualifications in the course of the studies;
- (d) easier transition of graduates to the labour market, boosting the quality of practical training;
- (e) fostering career guidance.

The results of the questionnaire survey were taken into account during the process of adjusting the draft concept for the innovation of the fields of study system.

Based on the analysis of the current system of fields of study, labour market projections, monitoring of development trends as well as future skills needs and qualification requirements with regard to Industry 4.0, numbers of students, graduate unemployment rates and numbers of schools and their distribution, a new proposal of the concept for innovation of the fields of study system was prepared. This proposal is based on the principal of a common professional basis within individual study fields (the so-called core) and is aligned to the roadmap of key measures of the Strategy 2030+. The proposal was consulted and discussed with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The proposal also includes linking vocational qualifications listed in the National

register of qualifications (NSK) to the proposed innovated fields of study (the methodology for interconnecting both systems is being finalised).

2022 Implementation

In Q1 2022, a draft concept for the innovation of the fields of study system and the subsequent revision of the upper secondary VET framework educational programmes was developed. The innovation of the fields of study system should ensure its updating, improve its vertical and horizontal permeability and enhance the link between initial and continuing VET. The draft concept was the subject of wider discussions and negotiations with the external experts from the expert group and with the representatives of regional authorities from the departments of education.

Alongside with the draft concept, the evaluation of a questionnaire survey prepared for the representatives of schools, employers and representatives of school founders was also discussed. In Q2 2022, internal discussions were held within the NPI ČR and at the MŠMT. Finally, in Q4 2022, the concept and the results of the questionnaire survey were discussed at the meeting of the heads of the expert platforms. The expert platforms initiated their activities in autumn 2022 and they became an important forum for discussing the proposed updated system of fields of study and the subsequent revision of VET framework educational programmes.

In early 2022, the Methodology for the working groups involved in the activities of expert platforms (i.e., the working groups will be part of the platforms) was finalised and submitted to the MŠMT. The methodology is part of a package of conceptual and methodological materials that was handed over to the heads and vice-heads of each platform.

In parallel, the first drafts of the annotations for the newly proposed fields were prepared. Working drafts are ready for further adjustments based on possible modifications to the structure of the system of fields and discussions within the expert platforms. Draft graduate profiles have also been prepared for about half of the newly proposed fields of study.

2023 Implementation

The senior experts of the NPI ČR drafted a proposal for innovating the fields of study system by the end of April 2023. This included analytical and conceptual studies for various sectors and topics (such as the transition of secondary school graduates to tertiary education, attractiveness of VET, utilising flexible hours in the school curriculum) and proposals for innovating the sectoral system, including qualification profiles.

The working draft was continuously discussed internally and revised by the methodological team. After May 2023, following a change in the leadership at the Ministry of Education and due to shifts in vision, the draft was reopened, revised and discussed with the Ministry of Education at the end of June. The new priorities of the education ministry included a significant reduction in the number of fields of education in the system, aiming to postpone specialisation after the age of 15, when the first career choice is currently made.

In October 2022 and April 2023, the draft concept for the innovation of the fields of study system and the revisions of the framework curricula had already been discussed with the chairs/vice-chairs of the professional platforms. In October 2023, 5 expert platforms were launched as consultative and advisory groups for the innovation of the education sector system and other related activities.

Thus, during the second half of 2023, negotiations on the new composition of education fields in secondary schools were underway, emphasising the MŠMT's focus on strengthening general education fields and their component within the curriculum. Surveys conducted by NPI among schools indicated that approximately 85% of students in VET fields who completed the Maturita exam apply for tertiary education. Therefore, schools are encouraged to utilise available lessons for general subjects.

The proposal for the innovation of study fields was subsequently discussed in the working groups set up until January 24. The conclusions from the expert platforms were evaluated by the NPI experts and the methodological team. Documentation including a proposal for the innovation of the system of study fields was prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Education in February 2024.

2024 Implementation

Development of a framework curriculum for the new General Lyceum study field was underway. The Ministry of Education Youth and Sports announced its pilot validation for the 2025/26 school year, with schools beginning to apply for the validation.

Sectoral and conceptual roundtables (November onwards) have gathered stakeholder feedback on the draft versions of the innovation of study fields following public presentation of each sector. Based on the conclusions and decisions of the Ministry of Education, a draft government regulation on the system of study fields will be prepared. The finalisation of the draft of the updated system is expected in January 2025.

After the discussion of the draft innovation of the system of study fields and the subsequent consensus and decision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports it is possible to start the development of framework educational programmes for secondary vocational schools in accordance with the principles of the 'competence pyramid'. In the course of 2024, qualification profiles for the fields of education in the innovated system were developed, and the vocational component of the framework curricula is under development for several fields, modelling the competence concept. For this component, the main current source is the National Qualifications Framework and the corresponding professional and full professional qualifications. This linkage is necessary in terms of transforming professional competences into qualification profiles and aligning initial and further education outcomes.

The innovation of the study fields system was presented by the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education at a conference in early October 2024. In accordance with the principles of the concept, the number of study fields will be reduced from the current 281 to 120-150 depending on the selected option promoted. The aim is to create broader professional basis/foundations, that support diverse specialisations/qualifications. This approach aims to eliminate narrower fields, postponing early specialisation decisions. Related fields of education can thus be built on a common professional basis ('merging into larger units'). A reassessment of the qualification level of the fields in relation to the EQF is also being considered.

The proposal for the innovation of the system of fields of study in secondary VET was discussed with vocational education stakeholders at the end of 2024 through a series of round tables, following the October Conference on Vocational Education. The conference provided a platform for communication and further deliberation on the innovation of the field system in secondary vocational education. Round tables were organised for individual areas within the 5 existing professional platforms. Feedback was also collected through a questionnaire made available to the professional public.

2025 Implementation

Based on the evaluation of the feedback collected during the series of round tables and the questionnaire following the October 2024 Conference on Vocational Education, the proposal was revised and submitted to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on 28 February 2025.

Subsequently, the proposal—serving as the basis for a draft Government Decree on the system of study fields—was discussed at the education ministry in May 2025 with additional stakeholders, and again in June within further round tables held under the professional platforms. Following the assessment of the feedback, additional modifications were incorporated.

The proposal for innovating study fields in VET was presented to the management of

the education ministry on 2 September 2025, where it was acknowledged and taken into consideration. The proposal was also presented to the Council for Vocational Education in September 2025.

The number of fields of education was reduced by approximately one third to 185 – 190 from the current 281. The background document for the Government Decree has been restructured to provide a clearer organisation by groups of educational fields. The Innovation of study fields in VET proposal constitutes a key reference framework for the subsequent development and revision of the Framework Educational Programmes for Secondary Vocational Education which will build upon the updated system of VET study fields.

The framework educational programmes will be developed or revised according to the newly proposed and approved structure of VET study fields, with updated content reflecting, in particular, current labour market demands (new technologies, materials, etc.) and social changes that bring new competence requirements.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
- National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Entities providing VET

Companies
VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Website of the Ministry of Education - a link to the Strategy 2030+ roadmaps](#)

[Government Regulation No 211/2010 Coll., on the system of fields of study in basic, upper](#)

Related policy developments

2023 Completed

Long-term plan for education and the development of the education system of the Czech Republic (2019-23)

The Long-term plan for education and the development of the education system of the Czech Republic (the Long-term plan) covers the entire system of regional education (pre-school, basic, secondary, tertiary professional education).



Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2022 Completed

Mapping future competences as part of systemic measures for defining labour market requirements - Competences 4.0 project

In the framework of the Competence 4.0 project (2019-22; Operational programme Employment, Ministry of Industry and Social Affairs), the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, Czech Chamber of Commerce and the consultancy company TREXIMA jointly participate in mapping new future compete



Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Strategy for education policy of the Czech Republic until 2030+ (Strategy 2030+)

The preparation of the Strategy 2030+ built on maximum transparency and openness. It comprised a series of expert and public consultations and roundtables on the visions and objectives of education policy and its implementation.



Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Approved/Agreed

Revision of the national curriculum for upper secondary education

In 2017, the Ministry of Education approved a proposal for revising the national curriculum for upper secondary education (RVP) and the educational programmes of individual schools (SVP). The revision of curriculum documents is among the national priorities until 2020.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Approved/Agreed

Reinforcing cooperation between schools and employers

The Amendment to the School Act, which came into force in September 2017, obliges schools to develop, with regard to the field of study, efforts to support cooperation with employers towards joint fulfilment of the objectives of secondary education.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Completed

Adjusting curricula to labour market needs

Proposals for legislative and institutional changes aiming to improve the transition from school to labour market by extending the duration of in-company training; in EQF 4 programmes, workplace internship usually takes two weeks only, hence the proposal for extension to eight weeks.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Practical

Subsystem

IVET CVET



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