

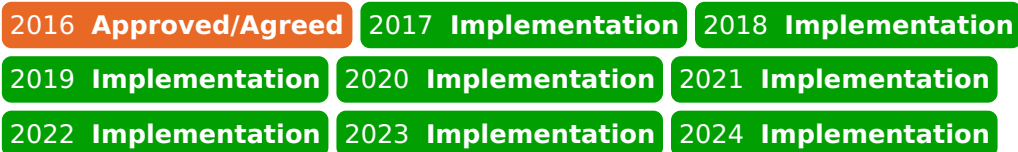
Strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 SLOVAKIA

Timeline



ID number 28573

Background

In PISA 2015, learners in Slovakia achieved 453 points in reading literacy, which was significantly below the OECD average and the performance in PISA 2009 (477 points). This poor performance resulted in a vivid public debate and calls for intervention.

Objectives

The strategy was created as a response to unfavourable PISA results. 21 specific goals were identified. The medium-term aim was to reach the average level of the OECD countries in PISA 2018 reading literacy.

Description

In 2016, the education ministry submitted to the government a Strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy. The 2016/17 school year was declared 'year of reading literacy', accompanied by diverse activities, including competitions. The State School Inspectorate published a report on monitoring reading literacy in basic and secondary schools. A survey on a sample of 3 863 secondary learners was conducted in February 2017. Grammar school learners achieved significantly better results than VET school learners; girls in VET schools performed significantly better than boys. A significant difference in performance was also found between learners from large and small schools due to the better infrastructure that large schools have. A new in-service teacher training programme, Motivating students' reading comprehension, was accredited by the education ministry and entered into force on 27 June 2017.

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

The Strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy set the target for the country to reach at least the OECD countries' average. This target was not met, despite several activities initiated by the strategy, such as setting individual school plans to improve reading literacy or retraining of teachers, and relevant ESF projects. It was, however, unrealistic to expect a significant improvement in such a short time.

In 2019, the ESF projects in support of the better performance of general education students in PISA domains including reading literacy were in progress. In August 2019, a similar call to address VET students was launched.

2020 Implementation

Within the call for ESF projects, Linking secondary education and practice, launched in August 2019, 83 projects with a total allocation of EUR 18 127 750.82 had been selected for funding by 31 December 2020.

2021 Implementation

81 projects approved within the call for ESF projects, Linking secondary education and practice, are being implemented.

2022 Implementation

At the end of 2022, 81 projects were still in progress within the call Linking secondary education and practice.

2023 Implementation

Under the influence of the National strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy, 'coordinators for the development of reading literacy' and plans to support the development of reading literacy have been introduced in schools. This position is now legally established under legislation (138/2029), allowing the school director to appoint a suitable staff member for additional duties. This person is responsible for supporting colleagues in integrating relevant activities into their subjects, ensuring coordination, and organising in-service training if needed. With the conclusion of the 'year of reading literacy' in the 2016/17 school year, activities specifically focused on the development of reading literacy are diminishing. However, projects related to the development of reading literacy continue to be implemented under financial schemes with a broader scope (e.g., key competences, basic skills, innovativeness). In-service training of teachers to support the improvement of reading literacy is also offered by the National Institute of Education and Youth (NIVAM). Nevertheless, discussions about new strategies were revived by low results in reading literacy according to the PISA 2022 results. In PISA 2022, the average score of learners in Slovakia in reading literacy was 447 points, significantly below the OECD average of 476 points and a drop of 11 points compared to PISA 2018. Moreover, 35.4% of Slovak pupils were classified as being in the risk group, a significant increase compared to 31.4% in 2018.

2024 Implementation

The shockingly low PISA results in 2022, described as a 'national tragedy' by the education minister, revived discussions about the potential role of a strong national coordinating body to support the national strategy for developing reading literacy, which has not yet been created. There are also concerns about the lack of sufficiently deep support for research on reading literacy, which negatively affects the production of materials that could help improve teaching practices in schools. Some progress is visible in the exploitation of digital content and IT, in relation to improving digital literacy. In eight schools an AI co-pilot is being piloted to study its potential for

explicitly improving reading literacy.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth
- State School Inspectorate
- National Institute of Education and Youth (NIVAM)
- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (until 2024)
- National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (until 2022)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Education professionals

Teachers
School leaders

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

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

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[National strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy \(in Slovak\)](#)

[Report of the State School Inspectorate on reading literacy \(in Slovak\)](#)

[The call Linking secondary education and practice \[Prepojenie stredoškolského vzdelávania s praxou\]](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Projects promoting key competences in IVET

In 2019, ESF-funded projects were launched aiming to improve learners' literacy, mathematics and science competences. They were also carried out in VET schools.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2020 Completed

National skills strategy

The education ministry has started an international project (with a budget of EUR 350 000) aimed at elaborating a National skills strategy for the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the OECD.

 SLOVAKIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Strategy for enhancing the level and continuous development of reading literacy: 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/28573>