

# Learning Slovakia strategy paper

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT****STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN** SLOVAKIA

## Timeline

2016 **Design** 2017 **Approved/Agreed** 2018 **Completed****ID number 28565**

## Background

In 2016, the education ministry initiated the development of a new reform paper. A group of experts was created and asked to present a vision of a future education system, including VET, to complement an earlier 2013 analytical paper describing the status quo prepared by the education ministry staff. A final report was preceded by two phases of consultation processes: the first with professionals based on publishing the initial theses, the second with the general public after presenting a draft report.

## Objectives

To describe measures addressing identified weaknesses or suggested improvements.

## Description

In September 2017, the education ministry published the Learning Slovakia strategy paper, following a public discussion on a draft version from March 2017. The VET-related chapter of this strategy paper for the first time in the official documents clearly defines and distinguishes between the diverse forms of work-based learning: dual VET, as set in the 2015 Act on VET; work-based learning within VET school-enterprise agreements but without individual learning contracts; short-term internships; other short-term placements in companies; and company schools. The paper advocates supporting all forms of work-based learning through fiscal incentives. It proposes to include some form of work-based learning in all types of programme, as well as in general education. Analysing the pros and cons of Slovakia's dual VET concept, the strategy paper makes proposals to improve it and make it more flexible:

- (a) financial support for schools to cover costs for adjusting curricula and teaching methods to dual VET and partner company needs;
- (b) attractive financial incentives for companies engaging in dual VET (itemised tax deductions);
- (c) simplifying engagement in dual VET for micro companies (with up to 10 employees);
- (d) a new three-and-a-half-year ISCED 353 programme (not offering access to higher education) where the school-based theoretical part will be completed after three years, while practice will continue for an additional half-year in a workplace;
- (e) legislative backing for creating ISCED 353 graduate career paths (EQF 4 and EQF 6);

(f) a legal framework for establishing company schools providing both theory and practice and relating fiscal stimuli.

Learning Slovakia stresses the need to develop quality assured procedures and assessment manuals to complement the existing qualification standards. The education ministry reaffirms the country's commitment to progress in implementing a validation system as indicated in the National programme for the development of education (NPDE). Reflecting the intentions of the Government's manifesto, the 2017 Learning Slovakia also suggests to:

- (a) review initial and continuing training and update pedagogy related professional standards for those teaching VET practice;
- (b) adjust learning outcomes of pre-service bachelor studies and pedagogical studies for practitioners from business and industry, better suited to VET's specificities to make the access to teaching/training professions easier.

#### **2016 Design**

#### **2017 Approved/Agreed**

#### **2018 Completed**

Learning Slovakia strategy paper contributed to the development of the 2018 National programme for the development of education that is subject to gradual implementation.

Some of the Learning Slovakia proposals were also taken into consideration during the preparation of the 2018 amendment to the Act on VET.

## **Bodies responsible**

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

## **Target group**

### **Learners**

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers  
Learners with disabilities  
Adult learners  
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  
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)

# **Thematic categories**

## **Governance of VET and lifelong learning**

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET  
Further developing national quality assurance systems  
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

## **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Expanding VET programmes to EQF levels 5-8  
Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation  
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

## **Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications**

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks  
Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full  
Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

## **Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences**

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

## **Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation**

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

# **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

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[Cedefop ReferNet Slovakia \(2016\). First year of dual VET - is the glass half empty or half full?](#)

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[Learning Slovakia strategy paper \(in Slovak\)](#)

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[Cedefop ReferNet Slovakia \(2018\). Learning Slovakia: an education reform proposal](#)

## **Related policy developments**

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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.

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**2024 Implementation****Slovak national qualifications framework**

The development of the SKKR has been a lengthy process. It progressed in parallel to the wider reform of VET and involved various stakeholders.

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2024 Implementation****Flexible routes to labour market relevant qualifications**

The so-called 'shortened studies' (ISCED 353) were put in place in 2015/16 in line with the Act on VET (61/2015). They target young people and adults who want to broaden or deepen their qualification or acquire another one to improve their employability.

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2024 Implementation****National programme for the development of education**

On 27 June 2018, the government approved the National programme for the development of education (NPDE). The NPDE was adopted, with 106 measures to be fulfilled until 2027. Some measures related to regional schooling and higher education are relevant also to VET.

**Type of development**

Strategy/Action  
plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2024 Implementation**

**Introducing dual VET**

The Act on VET was amended in March 2015 (61/2015). Its main objectives were to introduce a dual VET scheme and tax incentives for enterprises to provide training. The reform entered into force in September 2015 and made available upper secondary VET delivery in three forms:



**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**“ ... ” Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28565>