

The SYPO project - System for the support of professional development of teachers and directors

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 CZECHIA

Timeline



ID number 28106

Background

The 2015 Amendment to the Pedagogical Staff Act addressed continuing professional development (CPD) issues and a new career scheme. The proposed scheme, developed in cooperation between the education ministry and the National Institute for Further Education, complemented the existing opportunities with a new path helping staff acquire the relevant skills for specific positions: participative leadership skills; needs-based and individualised teaching and formative assessment to develop young people's potential; and fostering key competence development. The proposal, however, was not approved by the Parliament but further developed by the SYPO project.

Objectives

The project responds to the current situation, which lacks a comprehensive system of professional support for teachers and directors.

Description

The SYPO project (System for the support of professional development of teachers and directors) was launched in January 2018 and is carried out in cooperation with a range of stakeholders, including representatives of the Czech School Inspectorate, the National Institute for Education, higher education institutions, the Association of School Directors, and representatives of regions. Further education of these two target groups is, to some extent, unsystematic, lacking conceptual support for different phases of the career path. Therefore, the SYPO project prepares a new concept to support systematically and comprehensively professional growth with emphasis on quality, using methodological cabinets at national and regional level and the Permanent Conference of Directors.

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

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Methodological cabinets are platforms where teachers can exchange schooling experience. A total of 12 methodological cabinets are planned to be set up in the areas corresponding to the education framework programmes. In 2019, three methodological cabinets were piloted (Czech language and literature, mathematics and its applications, informatics and ICT). Within the methodological cabinets, a network of regional ICT methodologists was created, whose task is to support school ICT coordinators, school leaders and teachers in introducing digital technologies into teaching and school management in accordance with the Digital education strategy until 2020. The first round of training (such as media training) and workshops (such as bench learning, individual and group consultations with mentors, using cloud technologies in effective leadership) for school management was prepared by the SYPO project in 2019; such events are planned to continue in 2020. Roundtables and conferences (Novice teacher II) were organised in 2019 (including the Teacher's professional portfolio). Courses for novice teachers, supporting teachers and the management of schools were designed in 2019 and should start within 2020.

The Permanent Conference of Directors was established in February 2019. This is a committee, divided at the national level into sections by type of school: kindergartens, basic schools, secondary schools and basic art schools. Its members are school directors, deputy directors and representatives of the Ministry of Education, higher education institutions and universities, school founders and professional associations. The role of the Conference is to participate in the creation of a comprehensive model for the professional development of school management; set priorities for the professional development of school management; and identify appropriate forms of support by priority.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the expert panels of the project continued (Teacher's portfolio, personal journey of professions, portfolio as a continuous personal tool for the professional growth of a teacher). The expert panel organised in May focused on remote learning..

In 2020, three new methodological cabinets were launched: the first stage of basic schools, pre-school education and the cabinet of sciences.

In October 2020, training courses intended for schools with new/starting teachers were launched. Three different types of courses have been developed: for the starting teachers, for induction/guiding teachers, and for the school management. The courses provide inspiration for setting up the adaptation process at school and developing an adaptation plan, as well as the possibility to consult with an experienced instructor and to share experiences. They are offered to schools free of charge as an integral part of the project.

2021 Implementation

Methodological cabinets provided online and in-person tutoring to students who were adversely affected by the outage of in-person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic; over 100 members of the Methodological cabinets' network from across the country signed up to help. In 2021, almost 500 teachers were involved in the regional Methodological cabinets. More than 1 800 other teachers were involved at the district/local level network.

A competence model for school headmasters was finalised in line with the Strategy 2030+, which presents a headmaster as a pedagogical leader. The international conference, Professional development of school leadership in the light of experience, was the first step towards piloting the proposed model of the system of support for professional development of school leadership, which the project is developing based on Czech and international experience. The model should become a self-reflection tool for headmasters on their work.

The expert panel organised in January 2021 dealt with pedagogical practice not only in times of remote learning; and in February 2021, it was entitled Further education of pedagogical staff as an inspiring challenge for school administration

In autumn of 2021, the first two meetings were held with 30 school leaders who showed interest in the so-called extended support. Extended support offers activities such as development portfolio and inspirational examples when working with pedagogical staff and/or students, discussions with a consultant with practical experience, self-development and self-reflection from a different perspective, several online and in-person meetings. In addition to the work on the support system model for school leadership, the piloting of school management individual support continued smoothly, particularly in the form of group and individual consultations.

A blog posting teacher contributions and experiences was created. In the form of motivational podcasts, articles and webinars, schools' headmasters engaged in the Permanent Conference of Directors shared their personal practical experience from their professional life (what inspires them, what they are dealing with, what motivates them, what they would advise to future headmasters, or what they enjoy about their role) with colleagues from other schools.

In 2021, a two-year pilot of the support model for novice teachers entering teaching practice was finalised; and the preparation began for compiling all pilot results into the Comprehensive support system for novice teachers. In the second year, the pilot focused on the teacher portfolio as an important self-reflection tool and on their professional development plans. In the schools, functional mini-teams, the so-called triads consisting of an induction teacher, a novice (beginning) teacher and a representative of the school leadership, were created; thanks to them, each novice teacher gets an induction teacher as a mentor. The concept of the triad is a cooperation scheme implemented in schools with the aim to make the novice teacher transition to teaching practice as smooth as possible, to encourage their professional development and support them according to their individual needs. All participants of the triads were offered education through e-learning courses and workshops, which were prepared within the project.

In 2021, the project supported almost 200 schools with novice teachers, and that allowed for the implementation of the support system to begin. The support system offers each school the possibility to use (free of charge) the methodological manual, Model of support for novice (beginner) teachers, with examples of inspiring practice and ideas, training or consultations with an expert. In 2021, online consultations were launched to support novice teachers, and webinars for induction teachers were held, focusing on the insights and experiences of induction teachers and school leadership.

In 2021, an expert panel Quality of continuing professional development of teachers and its self-evaluation in education institutions took place. In individual cabinets, methodological manuals, focusing on aspects such as formative assessment in basic and upper secondary schools, were being developed.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, two national Methodological cabinets were established - one for foreign languages and the other for social sciences. That brought the number of national methodological cabinets to seven of the planned twelve. As part of their activities, the cabinets organised colloquia, provided methodological support to schools and ensured the production of methodological manuals. In 2022, 370 colloquia were held at national, regional and district levels. By the end of 2022, they have become a well-operating venue of collegial support involving 3,731 teachers, including volunteer collaborators.

In the second half of 2022, the system for evaluating qualification and specialisation studies was developed and piloted, and works were ongoing on a system for prioritising continuing professional development (CPD) for teaching staff and on analysing its funding. Three training programmes related to the evaluation system for qualification and specialisation studies were developed and piloted. Seventeen educational institutions of different types that offer this kind of programmes were invited to pilot the system in practice. As soon as the evaluation of the pilot is available, the system of studies' evaluation will be adapted and prepared to be used by educational institutions providing qualification and specialisation studies, as well as by

the members of the Accreditation Commission and other employees of the MŠMT.

The implementation phase of the support system for novice teachers combined the work with the 'Model of support for novice teachers' and the relevant training courses 'Novice teachers in the adaptation period', 'Introducing teachers and their role in the adaptation period', and the 'School leadership and their role in the adaptation period'.

The courses were followed by specialised workshops designed to support novice teachers. There are also useful practice-oriented guides available on the project website for the triad of actors, i.e. for the novice teachers upon the entry into the teaching jobs, for the induction teachers (experienced teacher/mentor) to whom they provide recommendations and good practice examples and finally for the school leadership to whom they offer a wide range of basic principles and recommended actions.

Within this part of the project, 392 schools were supported. Based on the experience from the implemented activities, the model of support system for novice teachers was revised. In 2022, the piloting of the 'Model of the system of support for professional development of school leadership' and the implementation phase of the Permanent Conference of Headmasters continued. The international conference entitled "Support to Leadership in Education as a Way to School Improvement" was held in September 2022 to support this target group. In addition, there were also district conferences, group and individual consultations, online support events and bench-learnings organised.

A total of 91 webinars in the field of subject didactics were organised, with corresponding methodological cabinets that were set up, and with a total of 8,604 participants. The webinars are available in three versions: live on-line webinars, recorded webinars which are part of the on-line school (e-learning) and finally publicly available webinars posted on the YouTube channel. Another form of support represented regional workshops - in 2022, there were 285 of them with a total of 5,415 participants.

2023 Completed

In 2023, the implementation of the methodological cabinets was completed (they ran from June 2022 to June 2023). Methodological cabinets are platforms where teachers can exchange educational experiences and best practices, aimed at enhancing teaching quality and supporting professional development. As part of the implementation, all 7 methodological cabinets were established and changes based on lessons learned from the piloting phase were integrated. In 2023, 85 regional workshops, 97 partner collaborations - involving observations, 187 group interviews, 6 regional workshops, 19 interviews, 9 colloquiums of national methodological cabinets and 94 colloquiums of regional methodological cabinets were held. Additionally, 8 methodological manuals, 6 models of professional support system for methodological cabinets, and 53 webinars focused on sectoral didactics were carried out. 7 936 participants were trained. Methodological cabinets serve as functional units providing collegial support.

The implementation phase of the support system for beginning teachers was completed in 2023. The revision of the Model of the Novice Teacher Support System was finalised. A total of 1 051 novice teachers were supported through this project, alongside 2 596 participants in the adaptation process, including novice teachers, induction teachers, and members of the school management, all of whom received online support.

In 2023, the piloting of the Professional Development Support System Model for School Leadership was completed, and the revision of the Professional Development Support Model for School Leadership was finalised. The piloting of the school leadership was also completed. A total of 72 workshops, 14 bench-learning sessions, 15 regional conferences, 149 individual consultations, and 127 group consultations were conducted.

A system of support for beginning teachers was piloted, involving training events for

novice teachers, induction teachers, and school principals overseeing teachers in the adaptation period. These training sessions focused primarily on practical aspects of the adaptation process while also addressing strategies to minimise early departures of novice teachers. Handbooks and e-learning resources were developed.

The e-learning materials developed in the SYPO project were revised by the project content team, and a Module Programme for Induction Teachers, including a concept for follow-up meetings (scheduled five times a year), was prepared for launch in various regions. Information on the implementation of the course was distributed to schools and regional NPI CR offices.

The project was completed at the end of June 2023.

Bodies responsible

- National Institute for Further Education (until 2019)
- Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
- Association of School Directors
- National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers
School leaders

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

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

Attractiveness of the teaching and training profession/career

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[The SYPO project \(in Czech\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 **Implementation**

Teacher training reform to improve competences

During the period 2022-24, the reform focuses on the following areas and activities:

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Supporting school digitisation through the Recovery and resilience plan

The financial support provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT) will, at the same time, contribute to the transformation of educational content. Schools will build their own supply of mobile digital technologies and will be able to lend them.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

National Coalition for Digital Skills and Jobs (DigiKoalice)

In October 2016, the National Coalition for Digital Skills and Jobs (DigiKoalice) was established by the Ministries of Education, Labour and Social Affairs, Industry and Trade, the Office of the Government, and the Czech ICT Alliance, as part of the digital education strategy.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Projects promoting professional development of pedagogical staff

In December 2016, the education ministry announced calls for ESF jointly funded project proposals.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2023 Completed

New approach to teacher remuneration

A change in the regional education funding system was approved by the Parliament in 2017 and planned to come into force in January 2020. The per capita funding in use, built on regional and national budgets, does not take into account seniority or expertise.

 CZECHIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). The SYPO project - System for the support of professional development of teachers and directors: Czechia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

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