



Sector Councils

SektorovÃ© rady



Czech Republic

1 DESCRIPTION

Timespan Continuously ongoing since 2010.

Stage FULLY OPERATIONAL

Focus area



MATCHING SKILLS FOR TODAY'S JOB MARKET



MATCHING SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

2 FOUNDATIONS

Policy Area



ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

Focused on understanding the skill shortages signalled by the labour market, coordinated by nationwide employers associations.

Policy Goal

Public policy makers as well as social partners (associations of private employers) in the Czech Republic have been facing the problem of skill mismatch between the supply of skills of graduates from formal education and the demand for new/specialised skills continually generated in the labour market. It was decided to set up a platform for systematic cooperation between the two sides. Sector Councils are employer-led and publicly partly co-funded, and supervise expert groups, whose task is to monitor skill shortages and consult corresponding policy measures (Vocational Qualifications, National System of Professions etc). The activities of Sector Councils help to narrow the gap between requirements of employers (in terms of qualifications and competencies of employees) and the supply of workforce (both current and future), through identification of future needs and recommendations for improvement.

Mismatch

EXPLICITLY DESIGNED TO ADDRESS SKILL MISMATCH

Aim of policy instrument



ADDRESS SKILL SHORTAGES



UPSKILL EMPLOYED ADULTS



MATCH SKILLS OF YOUNG GRADUATES



BROADLY ADDRESS SKILL MISMATCH

Legal basis

OTHER

Independent associations of employers with a focus on human resources.

Administrative level

NATIONAL

Main responsible body

Svaz průmyslu a dopravy (Confederation of Industry)

Stakeholders



CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



EMPLOYER FEDERATIONS

Svaz průmyslu a dopravy (Confederation of Industry) - leading partner, responsible for selected sector councils
Hospodářská komora (Chamber of Commerce) - responsible for selected sector councils
Agrární komora (Agrarian Chamber) - responsible for selected sector councils
Svaz podnikatelů ve stavebnictví (Association of Building Entrepreneurs) - responsible for selected sector councils
Trexima s.r.o. - coordinator
Large numbers of bodies (employers or association of employers, ministries) representing in total 29 sector boards.

Funding

Most of Sector Councils' operations so far have been in design and amendments of vocational qualification standards (National Register of Qualifications - NSK) and National System of Professions (NSP). There is a funding allocated from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports budget for running the NSK. However, this is dedicated to the executive body responsible for NSK (Národní ústav pro vzdělávání - National Institute for Education), and some resources are partly channelled to Sector Councils. There is an initiative of the Confederation of Industry (leading partner of the Sector Councils network) that is proposing to include Sector Councils into creation of 2 new subsystems: Skills 4.0 (Dovednosti 4.0) and Competence pyramids (Kompetenční pyramidy). The Skills 4.0 subsystem would be a process where employers (represented by Sector Councils) together with academics, science and R&D representative, define future skills, incorporate them into the Central Database of Competences and assign them to (often new) professions and qualifications. The Competence pyramids subsystem would be a tool/mechanism for influencing the educational system and curricula to ensure graduates have new skills, often multisectoral and transferable. There is a need to identify new funding for these activities.

Intended beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of activities and outputs generated by Sector Councils are employers through continuously improved accessibility of skilled workforce, which is a domain of the Councils' operations.

3 PROCESSES

Use of labour market intelligence



ENABLE STRATEGIC BUSINESS DECISIONS



DESIGN STANDARDS AND ACCREDITATION

Sector Councils exploit discussions on regular basis among their members to identify current skills gaps and mismatches, as well as to identify future skills needs. They also use statistics (vacant jobs by professions) to formulate current needs and trends. Experts nominated to Sector Councils monitor the labour market and identify developments, trends and changes in skill demand; exchange information on sectoral needs in workforce development; support further training and up-skilling of workers; analyse skill needs in particular sectors and propose the structure of new qualifications; and define Assessment Standards of new qualifications. In the medium-term, each Sector Council develops a Sector Agreement (strategic document that summarises the current situation of the sector in terms of skill needs, and proposes solutions including specific measures and the timeline for their realisation).

Financial schemes

Mixed financing of: subsidies based on calls for particular time limited projects; specific budget allocated for running of the National Register of Qualifications; and private financing. Sector councils are not legal entities and therefore are not eligible for incentives directly, only through other bodies.

Frequency of updates

Sector Councils are operational on an regular basis. The frequency of meetings varies, depending on particular Council attitudes and need. Some of them hold meetings quarterly, some once a year.

Development

The first Sector Council was set up in 2005 (Forestry), as a first initiative to address qualification needs for this particular sector. However, at that time, sector councils were rather informal initiatives inspired by foreign practices. This changed after the National Register of Qualifications (NSK) and National System of Professions (NSP) project were launched. These two programmes brought a new impulse and help to formalize the structure and responsibilities of sector councils.

Barriers

Except for the difficult financing schemes (dependent on calls for subsidies channelled through key members), no major obstacles are identified. Sector Councils are recognised bodies within the established system for identification of skills mismatch and programmes/projects addressing identified needs.

Success factors

A key factor is a close and focused cooperation of bodies and people involved: 250 people from various companies, associations and institutions are members of 29 Sector Councils, and an additional 1,500 experts are invited to tackle specific tasks.

Innovativeness**VERY INNOVATIVE**

The approach made Sector Councils clearly and directly responsible for defining the vocational qualification standards from the employers' point of view, thus reflecting practical needs. In this way, Sector Councils can influence the training programmes and curricula for specific qualifications and professions, and channel it to responsible institutions (e.g. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Labour Offices etc).

4 SUSTAINABILITY

Evidence of effectiveness

The instrument was developed and exists as intended. 29 Sector Councils were established in total and 7 Sector Agreements signed. Sector Councils identify the problem in skills and qualifications, provide evidence and propose solutions to overcome barriers. The Sector Agreements define ways and approaches to solve the problem in specific qualification needs. Key success factor so far is establishing vocational qualification scheme.

Engagement of stakeholders

There is a body called Conference of Sector Councils Chairmen (Stáilá; konference pá™ edsedá- sektorov½ch rad), which meets annually to coordinate activities and outputs of Sector Councils. The role of Sector Councils in the system of vocational qualification is set by the law (Act 179/2006). Its regulation (regulation of the Ministry of Education, No. 208/2007) defines the responsibilities of Sector Councils, as well as the cooperation with other bodies within the vocational qualification system.

Transferability**NOT EASILY TRANSFERABLE**

The concept of Sector Councils was based on the successful programme of Sector Skills Councils using their best practises.

Sustainability

The structure and activities of the Sector Councils will continue over the next period. The reasons for this are a) the Sector Councils' long history and its representativeness in the vocational qualification and National System of Profession b) the legislation act No. 179/2006, setting the position of Sector Councils within the system of vocational qualification c) the backing of Sector Councils by key employer associations (Confederation of Industry, Chamber of Commerce etc).
