

## **Early leaving from vocational education and training in Slovakia**

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## A. Early leaving from education and training

Europe's 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, suggested to reduce the share of early leavers to less than 10 % within its headline targets<sup>1</sup>. Slovakia is among the countries meeting this target for a long period.

Table 1. Early leavers from education and training\* in 2004-12

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU27	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.0	14.8	14.3	14.0	13.5	12.8 <sup>P</sup>
SK	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.0	4.9	4.7	5.0	5.3

Source: Eurostat; LFS [tsdsc410]; date of extraction: 01-07-2013.

Note: \* The percentage of persons aged 18 to 24 fulfilling the following two conditions: first, the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3C short; second, respondents declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey; (p) – provisional.

Being asked to set its own 2020 target<sup>2</sup> Slovakia set a target of 6 % of early school leaving that might be surprising amid the history presented in Table 1 above. Indeed, the youth education attainment level in Slovakia is very high, as visible from Table 2 below, with 2012 data being the best in the EU27.

Table 2. Young people with at least upper secondary education\* in 2004-12

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU27	77.2	77.4	77.9	78.1	78.5	78.6	79.0	79.5	80
SK	91.7	91.8	91.5	91.3	92.3	93.3	93.2	93.3	92.7

Source: Eurostat; LFS [tps00186]; date of extraction: 01-07-2013.

Note: \* The percentage of young people of the age 20-24 years having attained at least upper secondary education attainment level, i.e. with an education level ISCED 3A, 3B or 3C long minimum.

Nevertheless, both of these national indicators (early school leavers and educational attainment) are based on LFS and do not reflect appropriately extremely unfavourable data of ethnic Roma, in particular those living in “marginalised communities” of low living standard. There are no official statistical data on ethnic Roma as it is forbidden to collect the race and ethnicity data on a national basis. Hence, the LFS data on education are biased, as according to estimations only about 25 % of ethnic Roma declare themselves as belonging to the Roma nationality. This is less than the estimated share of ethnic Roma living in the marginalised communities. Therefore, it is hardly possible to get unbiased LFS data without violating the law. Similarly, other educational statistics data also refer to officially declared nationalities and not to ethnicity. Very often educational data on socially disadvantaged people are seen as referring predominantly to the ethnic Roma, as they are overrepresented in this category.

<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2010). Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Communication. COM(2010) 2020 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0682:FIN:EN:PDF>.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2011). Europe 2020 targets, [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets_en.pdf).

Thus, although very well known on a local level, this serious problem of locally low education attainment is not visible in national statistics. Data from one of rare official surveys indicate a harsh difference in the education level of ethnic Roma and non-Roma living in proximity.

**Table 3. Roma and non-Roma living in proximity aged 20 to 24 with at least upper secondary education, compared to total population in 2011**

	<b>Roma (sample)*</b>	<b>Non-Roma (sample)*</b>	<b>Total population (LFS)</b> (%)
Share of educated	20	79	93.3

Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/World Bank/European Commission Regional survey 2011 and Eurostat [tps00186]; calculated and tabled by authors.

\* Approximately 750 Roma households and 350 non-Roma households living in proximity.

The estimation of ReferNet Slovakia based on the demographic estimation of ethnic Roma population, low educational achievement data of socially disadvantaged pupils and local data on education levels of ethnic Roma indicates that Slovakia has over 10 % of young people without upper secondary education, despite meeting the LFS early school leavers benchmark. Even more, there are too many ethnic Roma without completed lower secondary education and subsequently with no access to school-based IVET offering an ISCED 3C certificate of apprenticeship.

The definition of early leaving from education and training in Slovakia is equal to the definition of Eurostat (see Table 1 above), as it was induced by the European agenda. Similarly, under the influence of Eurostat, the NEET data (population of a given age group and sex who is not employed and not involved in further education or training) were gradually incorporated into a national discourse on transition from school to work.

Traditionally, only drop-outs from schools (numbers of individuals who left school without attaining respective level of education offered by respective educational programme) were reflected. It can be simplified that “dropping out from the system” was originally not an issue compared to dropping out from school.

Unfortunately, a Sectoral Information System (RIS) offering individualised data with tracking possibility has not yet been completed<sup>3</sup>. Thus, educational statistics is still offered only based on the aggregated data collected from individual schools and the LFS data on transition from education to work. There are no genuine graduate tracking data available. Almost nothing is known about VET school graduates training effectiveness, as there are no reliable data<sup>4</sup>. The unemployment data of graduates are used as a proxy<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Piloting of Sectoral Information System (Rezortný informačný systém – RIS) was officially launched in 2011; however, it is not expected to be fully functional soon. Educational statistics collected by the Institute of Information and Prognoses in Education is still based on the aggregate data from schools and not on the individualised data.

<sup>4</sup> Representatives of employers, in particular from the automotive industry, frequently speak about an extreme supply/demand mismatch indicating, with a reference to their own estimations, only 6 % of secondary VET graduates trained appropriately and ready to enter the workplace, with the rest of graduates either not skilled enough or not willing to get a job in a profession and therefore seeking a different working position.

<sup>5</sup> The registered unemployed and graduates data broken by schools and educational programmes (the newest data as of May 2013) are available at <http://www.uips.sk/regionalne-skolstvo/nezamestnanost-absolventov-strednych-skol>.

Subsequently, there are no data available on early leaving from VET. It is not possible to break down the early school leaving data presented in Table 1 into general and VET programmes related data.

Early leaving from vocational education and training in Slovakia per se seems not to be worth of specific policy due to the favourable LFS data presented in Table 1<sup>6</sup>. Instead, another two interrelated topics are seen more urgent by the national educational authorities:

- access of socially disadvantaged people to education, in particular access of people from marginalised communities (usually ethnic Roma); and
- the quality of qualification offered by the school-based IVET.

## **B. Different aspects influencing the decision to remain or discontinue VET**

### **1. Structural characteristics of the IVET system**

The Slovak education system has a very strong secondary VET component, as presented in the following table.

**Table 4. Number of ISCED 3 graduates by programme orientation in 2010/2011**

	ISCED 3 All	ISCED 3 General	ISCED 3 VET	
		3A	3A	3C
Numbers	69 780	19 219	38 542	12 019
Share (%)	100	28	55	17

*Source:* National UOE data; Data collection time IX/11.

It is school-based with practical training provided in school premises or in the workplace provided there is a contract between a school and respective businesses. There is no apprenticeship system in Slovakia. All individuals in IVET are students and no one is an employee as typical for dual systems. The development in a secondary IVET stream in numbers of students and schools broken by ownership after the 2008 reform induced by the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. is presented in Table A1 in the annex.

Any individual has an opportunity to acquire a full VET qualification within formal IVET offering a large variety of programmes. It is a part of tradition that secondary IVET was offered in many specialised programmes. According to the latest update in May 2013, the official register maintained by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education contains 1,496 programmes with relevant programme documentation approved. Some of them are unlikely to be opened and some of them are already obsolete. Only those programmes that are listed in the Decree of the Ministry of Education of the SR No. 282/2009

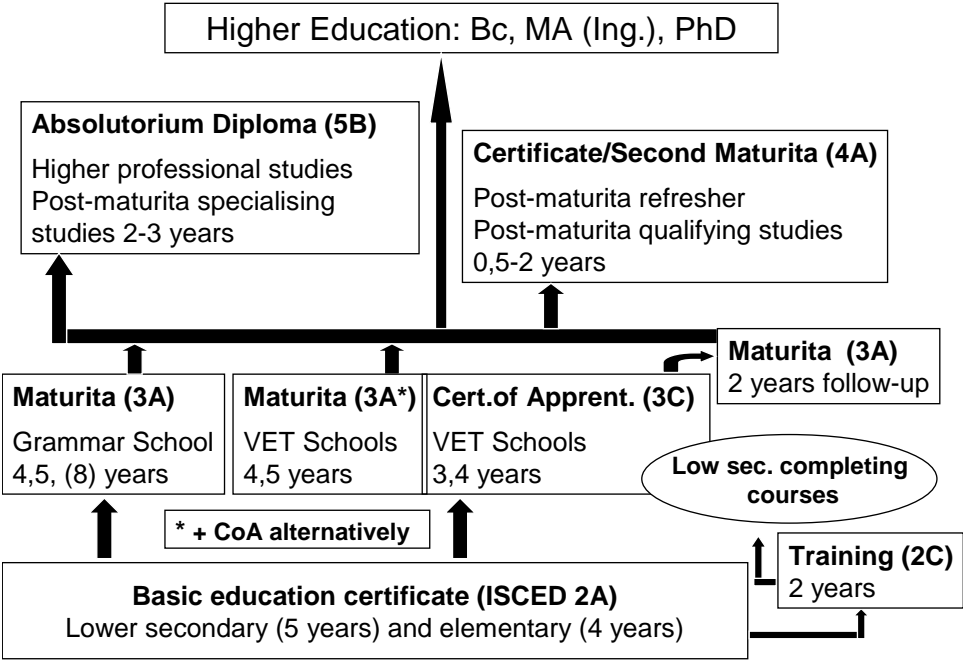
<sup>6</sup> Neither in the 2013 National Reform Programme (Ministry of Finance of the SR (2013a)), nor in the statements of important representatives of educational authorities, the need for national action was explicitly expressed. Rather, pointing to the Eurostat data and bad results of other countries compared to Slovakia, as e.g. Malta and Portugal, is stressed. Nevertheless, deterioration is expected in the future rather than further improvement, as also visible from the 2020 benchmark.

Coll. on Secondary Schools can be offered. According to this decree, there were in total 454 programmes approved for opening, of which 435 regular VET programmes, 16 regular programmes at conservatories and 3 general education programmes. Furthermore, 55 new VET programmes and 5 new programmes at conservatories were approved for testing in respective schools for the 2012/2013 school year. In reality, a different number of programmes is delivered influenced by the interest of students and labour market needs. According to the statistical data as of 15 September 2012, there were in total 506 programmes offered in VET schools and conservatories in the 2012/2013 school year, including those tested and also programmes to be closed after graduation of students who are still in education.

There is no substantial problem with the provision of IVET as schools are very flexible in meeting training preferences<sup>7</sup> of young people (and/or their parents) due to a huge surplus of places available in secondary VET schools resulting from a harsh decrease in population. Being financed on a per capita principle schools fight hard to attract students as well as to prevent them from dropping out.

A simplified chart presenting a VET system in Slovakia is offered below.

Figure 1. Education system in Slovakia (Arts and Special Schools not included)



The compulsory education lasts for 10 years (typically 9 years of “basic education” + 1 year at secondary school). This regulation is considered an important instrument to prevent from

<sup>7</sup> That are however often disregarding labour market needs.

early school leaving as it reduces a risk of entering the labour market after completion of ISCED 2 “basic education”. Another measure to reduce early school leaving relates to the amendment of the Education Act by Act No. 324/2012 Coll., changing the position of ISCED 2C programmes with specially adjusted curricula designed for drop-outs from basic schools. ISCED 2C programmes were originally offered to low achievers and 2-year training was completed by a low level qualification. This programme has been recognised by law as the “lower secondary vocational education level” however not valued on the labour market. A surplus of unemployed ISCED 3C graduates made ISCED 2C graduates not competitive. Since 2013 secondary VET schools can deliver to ISCED 2C learners courses for completing “basic education”, opening them the door to more competitive ISCED 3C or even ISCED 3A programmes. Originally till 31 December 2012, these courses were only offered by basic schools.

This measure also reduced a risk of dead ends in IVET provision as secondary VET schools are financially stimulated to retain students in schools and offer them a longer programme rather than to let them leave the school with an ISCED 2C education level only. When dropping out from any programme offered by a secondary VET school, three years after leaving school, but upon an official announcement on interruption, an individual can return to school and continue the full-time formal education. Furthermore, he/she can decide for part-time study. Costs of part-time study do not create a barrier in contrast to the time necessary to spend in school classrooms/workshops. Originally, a measure allowing for completing a programme based on subsequent individual subjects completion was abolished by amendment of law, as this opportunity was misused by schools earning from fees without assuring the quality of graduates.

Older learners are in a more difficult position as there is no fully functional system of validation of non-formal and informal learning. Although the Act on LLL No. 568/2009 Coll. has opened the door to obtaining partial VET qualifications a necessary precondition – creation of the National Qualifications System, is still pending<sup>8</sup>.

A trial and error strategy in decisions on a field of study should be prevented by a system of counselling (teachers functioning as educational counsellors in basic schools) and career guidance counsellors in Centres of Educational and Psychological Counselling and Prevention. In practice, conscious risk taking can be attributed to low achievers in academic subjects applying for general education in grammar schools or ISCED 3A programmes in VET schools calculating with a surplus of free places available in ISCED 3A programmes. Furthermore, they rely on softening of requirements of schools on graduates’ performance. Indeed, softening of requirements resulted from a fiscal pressure on these schools to secure the budgets.

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<sup>8</sup> See more in part 2.1.



There are no official national data on mobility between programmes although it is not rare that students move from a more demanding ISCED 3A programme, e.g. technical VET, to another ISCED 3A programme with an “easier” way to obtain a desired “maturita” school leaving certificate. This kind of fluctuation remains however hidden within aggregate data collection. A specific regional picture is offered in Box 1 below.

**Box 1 - Žilina region data on leaving schools and mobility between programmes**

This ad hoc survey offers a partial insight in dynamics within programme attendance in one of eight regions in Slovakia. Data collected from 67 VET schools (50 public, 5 private and 12 church affiliated) announce a number of students who decided to leave the programme before its completion in the 2011/2012 school year. These data are not based on individualised statistics, but on aggregated data and therefore tracking is not possible. These individuals may or may not return back to the same programme or the same school later. The experience of regional authorities indicates that many of them do and only a smaller part does not and becomes early school leavers.

**Table 5. Students not having completed a VET programme in the Žilina region in the 2011/2012 school year**

Programmes	All students*	Out	Share (%)
ISCED 3A	25 958**	431	1.7
ISCED 3C	3 887	253	6.5
ISCED 2C	285	20	7.0
All VET	30 130	704	2.3

Source: Regional educational authority of Žilina region.

\* Without students of part-time studies and post-maturita programmes.

\*\* Out of which 1,464 students of ISCED 3A follow-up studies (intended for ISCED 3C graduates).

The data above seem to indicate a lower interest in completion of programmes of “lower” category. That seems to be underlined by no student out from grammar schools and confirmed by the mobility data presented in the following table indicating a higher inflow into grammar schools than into IVET. However, all numbers are comparably small.

**Table 6. Mobility between general education and VET in the Žilina region in 2011/2012**

Type of programme change		Number
From grammar school to VET school		40
From VET school to grammar school		110
of which	from ISCED 3A VET to grammar school	79
	from ISCED 3C to grammar school	31

Source: Regional educational authority of the Žilina region.

A weak point of the school-based VET system is a harsh discrepancy between graduates supply and labour market needs translating into very high unemployment of young people. It is partly a result of an insufficient quality of graduates and partly due to a mismatch between learning and employment preferences of the population and skills/qualification needs of the national economy. Increasing dissatisfaction of employers with both quality of graduates and supply/demand mismatch resulted in the decision of the Ministry of Education to regulate entering into ISCED 3A studies<sup>9</sup> and to support work-based learning within IVET; inter alia by exploring the opportunities to introduce genuine apprenticeship as an alternative to the currently pure school-based IVET.

Although there is no apprenticeship in Slovakia, schools cooperate with businesses in order to offer at least part of practical training directly in the workplace. Respective contracts between schools and companies are based on a win-win strategy and individual efforts of regional stakeholders. There is however insufficient systemic support for this kind of cooperation as costs of practical training in the workplace are not considered as tax deductible for the partner company and the contribution from the state budget to work-based learning would be at the detriment of the budget of the partner school. Thus, schools are not interested in announcing the number of learners offered work-based learning to national authorities. Official data fluctuate about 5 % of VET school students annually<sup>10</sup>.

## **2. Labour market and social policy issues**

### **2.1 Labour market**

A precise number of occupations requiring completion of a specific VET programme will be available after completion of the National System of Occupations, within which occupation and qualification requirements are described according to the national classification KZAM corresponding to ISCO-08. There are 369 occupations out of total 1,800 already included in the register, with 1,400 occupations to be completed at the end of the ESF project in September 2015. Following the tradition of the education system and the strong IVET system looking for employment without at least the ISCED 3C level of education is a rare case.

There are however no exact data available about requirements on completion of specific VET programmes as a precondition for getting a job. There is no obligation to register new vacancies in labour offices and therefore there is no exhaustive national statistics about the structure of job creation broken by education/qualification level. In 2012, 5,493 free working positions were announced, out of which 86.1 % requiring at least ISCED 3C or a higher level of education.

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<sup>9</sup> Amendment of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. introduced average marks with 1-excellent and 5-fail at a five-point scale as a requirement for entering grammar schools (2.0 or better) and ISCED 3A programmes at SOŠ (2.75 or better). See also Vantuch, J. (2013).

<sup>10</sup> It was 3.8 % in 2012 and 5.75 % in 2010, according to the Report on education in Slovakia prepared in 2013 by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and submitted to the parliament (Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu (2013).

There were 2,631 positions (47.9 %) requiring ISCED 3C level of education with a certificate of apprenticeship and 740 positions (13.5%) requiring at least the ISCED 2 level of education. Marginal 0.4 % represented work not requiring education. The most known online job portal Profesia.sk indicated only 1,643 jobs with ISCED 2 level of education as a minimum requirement (3 %) out of all 50,109 jobs offered in the first half of 2013<sup>11</sup>. Even less favourable data for low skilled are indicated by the vacancy statistics of another strong online portal<sup>12</sup>.

Young unskilled workers have better chances to find jobs in the service sector (e.g. supermarket staff) and/or abroad, in particular in short-term seasonal works.

Labour market rights of young people are equal regardless the level of completion of VET. Skilled workers and unskilled workers are equal in labour market rights with the exception of positions in public and civil service where employees are categorised according to law and remunerated depending on their working tasks difficulty and demandness. In the private sector, formal qualifications are less important compared to real performance. Nevertheless, low qualified and non-qualified people are squeezed out from working places by better qualified people due to a current high unemployment, in particular in regions with long-term low job creation.

There are no partial qualifications recognised due to the pending elaboration of the National Qualifications System. Two ESF funded projects, "Creation of the National Qualifications System" carried out by the State Institute of Vocational Education and in particular "Continuing education and guidance for adults as an instrument for increasing their employability" carried out by the National Lifelong Learning Institute, are expected to create a basis, i.e. qualification and assessment standards for recognition of partial qualifications. National Lifelong Learning Institute is obliged to create qualification standards broken into relevant partial qualifications for 40 qualifications most demanded in the national economy. Currently, there are 8 certified institutions (7 VET schools and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry) entitled to recognise qualifications for the purpose of starting business according to the Trade Licensing Act No. 455/1991 Coll. (§ 22(1)e). This procedure is based on a register of qualifications containing qualification and assessment standards maintained by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport<sup>13</sup>. The aforementioned Trade Licensing Act also lists precisely the trades that require specific qualification:

- 34 crafts (Annex 1 of the Act) requiring acquiring qualification based on completion of an ISCED 3C programme at SOŠ. This qualification can be substituted by a mix of other

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<sup>11</sup> Ad hoc information offered by the Profesia company.

<sup>12</sup> There were only 14 blue-collar positions without VET qualification out of 20,217 vacancies offered according to [www.careerjet.sk](http://www.careerjet.sk) as of 8 July 2013.

<sup>13</sup> A list of "LLL qualifications" is available at [www.isdv.fri.uniza.sk/Qualifications.aspx](http://www.isdv.fri.uniza.sk/Qualifications.aspx).

education and years of practice, or at least 10 years of recent practice, or by validation of knowledge and skills by a certified institution according to the Act on LLL;

- 89 regulated trades (Annex 2 of the Act) requiring specific sectoral certification.

In case of some of crafts and regulated trades listed in Annex 4 substitution of education or examination according to the Act on LLL by a long period of practice is explicitly declared as not possible (together 8 categories of activities).

## **2.2 Policies impact on VET**

There are no detailed studies on the influence of future wage expectations on education strategies of young people (and/or their parents). A decline of interest in ISCED 3C studies is attributed to the shock from the volatility of blue-collar labour market severely damaging the blue-collar status in the 1990s rather than to better remuneration prospects elsewhere.

Table A2 in the annex suggests that a higher level of education pays, as e.g. the average gross wage of ISCED 3C educated with a certificate of apprenticeship is 19.7 % higher compared to the ISCED 2 level and the average gross wage of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle higher education educated is 62.7 % higher compared to the ISCED 3A VET educated.

Table A3 in the annex however clarifies that a status of employment (business/non-business sphere) matters more than the education/qualification level.

An alternative picture offered by the job portal Profesia.sk and its division platy.sk collecting data via an online questionnaire is presented in Table A 4 in the annex. Although an increase between respective categories is also visible, the only remarkable increase in wages is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of higher education compared to ISCED 3A (39.3 %). A more detailed analysis however indicates that the level of education matters more in some economy sectors than in others, as presented in Table A5 in the annex. In the category of skilled technicians the ISCED 3C educated earned substantially more than the ISCED 2 level educated (37.4 % increase compared to 6 % in case of all people).

The differences between the wages in respective levels do not rise dramatically, with the exception of the increase of wages of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle higher education educated. Data on wages seem to support a criticism of current bachelor studies as not sufficiently valued by the labour market. Nevertheless, there are many examples of professionals with ISCED 3C education paid better than higher education graduates (in particular in humanities and social science) aired in public. Although there is no confirmation from research, a popularity of ISCED 3A studies and subsequently higher education studies in humanities and social science seems not to be a result of low attractiveness of VET but rather a fear from early specialisations. Broader qualifications and/or less time consuming programmes seem to be preferred over narrow qualifications and/or more demanding studies. Furthermore, there is a surplus of places at secondary schools and higher education institutions caused by a

population decline and a rich supply of secondary education, and subsequently of higher education offered for free complemented by private higher education studies for reasonable fees and also by part-time studies for small fees by public higher education institution. Thus opportunity costs and return of investment consideration are seen less relevant in decisions on education of people in Slovakia compared to countries with high fees for study.

Slovakia is placed among some Nordic and Central European countries with the lowest income inequality, according to the Gini index. Table A6 in the annex presenting median wages of respective age cohorts broken by education and age groups offers a more detailed picture of income prospects with an increasing age and level of education. When looking at median wages of young people, a difference between ISCED 2 and ISCED 3C seems not to be important at least from short-term prospects. The 20-24 aged ISCED 2 educated earned EUR 501.17 and the ISCED 3C educated earned EUR 558.05.

A risk of poverty trap is very high for young NEETs, in particular from the marginalised communities with a low level of qualification, as additional costs resulting from travelling from segregated settlements to the workplace might make social benefits more attractive than employment and/or further education.

**Table 7. Comparison of income of a family composed of 2 adults and three children with not working parents and one working parent for a minimum wage<sup>14</sup>**

		(EUR)	
	<b>Family composed of 2 adults and three children</b>	<b>MAX**</b>	<b>MIN***</b>
A	Nobody employed; receiving social benefits	503.84	236.90
B	One parent employed; income monthly for first 6 months*	643.63	491.52
C	One parent employed; income monthly after 6 months	580.56	428.45
D	Difference (A-B) – Short-term income increase*	139.79	254.62
E	Difference (A-C) – Long-term income increase	76.72	191.55

Source: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, ad hoc data.

\* Temporarily remaining in a social net and benefitting for 6 months from social support in addition to the wage;

\*\* MAX – qualified for all possible benefits; \*\*\* MIN – obligatory benefits.

To make employment more attractive is a permanent is a permanent challenge for politicians of all political wings<sup>15</sup>. Families below the subsistence minimum according to the Act No. 601/2003 Coll. on subsistence minimum can get benefit in material need (conditions are defined in the Act No. 599/2003 Coll. on aid in material need)<sup>16</sup> and can also apply for additional benefits besides regular child/family benefits<sup>17</sup>. These families can apply for benefits related to compulsory education of their children (see Table 8 below):

<sup>14</sup> A minimum wage of EUR 337.70 (EUR 292.48 net) has been set since 2013.

<sup>15</sup> In 2013 new legislation was set to stimulate people in material need to work. See also part C.2 concerning the so-called activation allowance.

<sup>16</sup> See more in English at <http://mic.iom.sk/en/social-issues/social-security/68-zivotne-minimum-slovensko.html>.

<sup>17</sup> See more on social benefits in English at [http://www.upsvar.sk/socialne-veci-a-rodina-2/prispevky.html?page\\_id=308593](http://www.upsvar.sk/socialne-veci-a-rodina-2/prispevky.html?page_id=308593).

- subsidies for meals (maximum EUR 1 for lunch and EUR 0.35 for another meal and EUR 1 maximum per day and child in total<sup>18</sup>, and subsidies for school stationary and learning aids (maximum EUR 33.20 per child per school year<sup>19</sup>);
- school attendance contribution applied since 1 September 2009, currently EUR 17.20 per child and conditioned by proper school attendance.

Table 8. Average annual numbers of beneficiaries\* in 2008-2012

Type of benefit	Average annual numbers of beneficiaries				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Subsidies for meals	64 322	56 948	65 257	74 343	72 845
Subsidies for textbooks, school stationary and learning aids	70 914	71 146	82 222	84 080	82 631
School attendance contribution	-	49 068	62 393	63 247	63 006

Source: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

\* Families receiving benefits in material need or families with the average net income up to subsistence minimum during last 6 months.

There are no specific social policies implemented to reduce dropping out from VET per se. The implemented policies are aimed at fulfilling the compulsory education already mentioned in Table 8 above and at retaining in education in secondary school until successful completion of the programme. In the first case families in material need are given the aforementioned contribution of EUR 17.20 monthly per child for attendance of the first class in a VET programme, provided it is the 10<sup>th</sup> year of compulsory education of this child.

In the second case, scholarships have been provided since 1 June 2004 to students to motivate them for better performance and completion of secondary education, often a VET programme. Scholarships were intended to cover at least part of costs for education (e.g. travel costs, food, accommodation, learning aids, etc.). New terms for awarding scholarships are in place since 1 September 2008 according to § 149 of the Education Act No. 245/2008 Coll. (see Box 2). Furthermore, an activation contribution of EUR 63.07 monthly can be offered to adults in material need returning to school or entering the labour market training organised by labour offices within active labour market policies.

**Box 2 - Scholarships for socially disadvantaged students of secondary schools, vocational schools and practical schools**

For the 2012/2013 school year the scholarship monthly amounts were set as follows:

- Students with average mark up to 2.0 received 50 % of subsistence minimum, i.e. EUR 44.41;

<sup>18</sup> Meals are for free since 2011, cofinancing by families in amount of at least EUR 0.03 was required before 2011.

<sup>19</sup> No cofinancing by families is required. In case at least 50 % of pupils at basic school are from families in material need all children in basic school are also served for free and benefit from this.

- Students with average mark over 2.0 up to 2.5 received 35 % of subsistence minimum, i.e. EUR 31.09;
- Students with average mark over 2.5 up to 3.5 received 25 % of subsistence minimum, i.e. EUR 22.21.

The scholarship cannot be awarded to a student with the average mark over 3.5 in the previous school year (of 5-mark scale with 1 the best and 5 the worse), and the scholarship amount is set by a certain percentage of subsistence minimum of a dependent child.

In the 2011/2012 school year, the average monthly number of students receiving scholarships was 11,048 (the number varies monthly based on fulfilment of requirements entitling for scholarships). The average monthly amount of scholarship was EUR 33.01. For more details see the 2009/10-2011/12 data in Table B1 in the annex.

As already indicated, there are no specific policies aimed at reducing dropping out from VET as there are no reasons seen for a targeted national action. Nevertheless, risks of school leaving before its completion is monitored<sup>20</sup> by educational authorities, and schools are also obliged to take a preventive action whenever they observe deterioration of performance or unauthorised absence. In the country, the number of hours of unauthorised absence per student of VET school has been gradually increasing from 7.17 hours in 2009 to 8.4 in 2012 per school year. A strong deterioration trend in five regions is visible from the Table A7 in the annex.

It must be noted that the indicator in that table does not show the average number of hours per absentee as there are no individualised data available. Nevertheless, the indicator is interesting for comparisons, inter alia, it indicates an extremely bad situation in the Košice region. Furthermore, it signalled the discrepancy between VET schools and grammar schools (about 8 times more hours of unauthorised absence in VET; e.g. 8.21 hours per student in VET schools compared to 0.89 in grammar schools in 2011). Thus, preventive actions in VET schools are encouraged by regional authorities, as visible from a good practice example (see Box 3) discussed and offered for dissemination in the Žilina region.

### **Box 3 - Good practice example of ESL preventive activity at the school level**

Schools are required to take a preventive action in case of monitored absenteeism and deterioration of performance of students according to § 6 of the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 282/2009 Coll. on secondary schools and subsequent Methodological regulation No. 21/2011 on assessment and grading of secondary school students. This can

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Slovíková, M. et al. (2011).

be translated into practice in various ways. The Žilina region educational authority promotes a good practice example from the VET school in Čadca. This school elaborated a precise procedure to operationalise the aforementioned regulations to prevent ESL and low performance of students. A failure to stick to the procedure below by the pedagogical staff is considered a violation of their working duties.

1. Risky behaviours (absenteeism in class/workshop lesson or decrease in performance) must be announced to the class teacher and reported by him/her to the office of the director by a standardised report card;
2. Meeting of teachers with parents is subsequently organised and its results recorded in the official class documentation and announced to the school management;
3. In case of no improvement, the second report card is sent to the director to initiate a meeting of director (and relevant teachers) with parents;
4. A meeting of director with parents is organised and its results recorded in the official class documentation.

In the 2011/2012 school year 189 invitations were sent to parents, with 95 % effect – meetings held. No failing students (with the lowest mark - 5) were recorded compared to 51 students in a preceding school year. Only 5 students out of 624 left the school before completion of the programme. All of them were not early school leavers, as all five left the ISCED 3A follow-up programme offered to ISCED 3C graduates.

Sustainability of remarkable improvements reported might be questioned as the impact of novelty might have substantially contributed to the improvement. Nevertheless, this example corresponds with generally shared opinions that two reasons are dominant with regard to discontinuing VET on the students' side and one is dominant on the school's side

- low performance (often due to the lack of interest);
- low support from family;
- lacking cooperation of school and family.

The school from Box 3 recognised for its results has managed to address them all.

### **3. Individual reasons to discontinue VET**

There are no surveys known analysing the reasons to discontinue secondary VET. As already discussed in Chapter 2 schools indicate low performance, often caused by low quality results of education in basic schools, as a major reason of dropping out from secondary education. In VET it often coincides with a lacking motivation of students. A novelty not reported earlier is discontinuing education due to the mobility abroad. Although there is anecdotal evidence about instability due to economic reasons among the majority,



traditional concerns relate to disproportionately high early school leaving of Roma, in particular those leaving in the marginalised communities of low living standard. One of the rare studies analysing reasons of ethnic Roma to discontinue education was conducted by UNDP supported by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Here are the findings indicating extremely low educational attainment and a high share of early school leaving: Nearly 19 % of Roma ended their education without completing ISCED 2 basic school, nearly 60 % completed standard basic school and only 17 % continued successfully their study at secondary school. Only 2 % completed ISCED 3A education and only 0.3 % higher education. 5 % attended some type of special school<sup>21</sup>. The following table offers an analysis of reasons of the same sample of ethnic Roma broken by type of settlement (living in segregated settlements, separated settlements, and living diffused within the majority population).

**Table 9. Structure of the Roma population with ISCED 2 by type of settlement and reasons for not continuing studies at secondary school**

	(%)			
<b>Reasons for not continuing studies</b>	<b>Segregated</b>	<b>Separated</b>	<b>Diffused</b>	<b>Total</b>
No interest in school or learning	33.6	22.7	30.9	29.0
Lack of money for fees, clothing, shoes	18.1	24.1	29.2	24.0
Help at home, work	14.3	14.3	13.4	14.0
Bad marks and results	12.1	16.1	13.1	13.8
Wedding	13.2	15.4	3.7	10.6
Birth of a child	2.3	1.7	4.0	2.7
Illness, health disability	1.1	1.7	3.0	2.0
Parents didn't allow me	3.4	1.0	1.3	1.9
Geographically inaccessible schools	1.5	2.8	0.7	1.6
Other	0.4	-	0.7	0.4
<b>Individuals total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Filadelfiová, J., Gerbery, D., Vittek, J., Škobla, D. (2012).

Note: Only for respondents who declared a finished ISCED 2 education and didn't try any form of secondary school education (n=849). Respondents who did not answer the question were not included in the calculations (8 % of the relevant subset).

The UNDP sample data and other surveys confirm a lower level of education of ethnic Roma woman compared to men as a consequence of giving birth at very young age.

**Table 10. Women who gave birth to a child before the age of 19**

	(%)				
	<b>Roma women living in</b>				<b>Non-Roma women living in vicinity</b>
	<b>segregated settlements</b>	<b>separated settlements</b>	<b>diffused within majority</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Share (%)</b>	34.3	26.5	30.1	30.3	2.3

Source: UNDP data, quoted from Filadelfiová, J., Porubánová, S. (2012).

Note: % of all women with children in the age 14-49, N (ethnic Roma) = 919, N (non-Roma) = 231.

<sup>21</sup> Filadelfiová, J., Gerbery, D., Vittek, J., Škobla, D. (2012), page 14.

Filadelfiová and Porubánová (2012) explicitly state in their survey that extremely early motherhood of Roma girls is not a result of their free personal decision<sup>22</sup>. Hesitation of ethnic Roma to complete secondary education (regardless of whether general or VET) is interlinked with doubts about the increased likelihood of their employment after graduation and with predominantly negative experience from education offered in schools originally designed for the majority population with a comparably higher schooling maturity and understanding of the language of instruction. Therefore, early childhood interventions are promoted as the best way for prevention of low educational performance and early school leaving<sup>23</sup>.

## **C. Measures to reduce drop out from VET**

### **1. Measures to prevent drop out from school-based VET**

There are no specific measures on the national level to prevent from dropping out from school-based VET. There are of course regional or school-based preventive actions in place as already mentioned (see Box 3). National policies aimed at completion of compulsory education (that can be partly fulfilled in a VET school) and at motivation of children to complete secondary education (very often a VET programme) is coupled with social policies in support of socially disadvantaged families (receiving benefits in material need or families with the average net income up to subsistence minimum during last 6 months). Respective measures can be broken by type of addressee:

#### **i. Families**

Families in material need (below subsistence minimum income) are given additional EUR 17.20 monthly per child in compulsory education. This measure was introduced in September 2009 originally with a contribution of EUR 16.60 monthly and originally aimed at motivation of better learning performance of children in compulsory education. In contrast to this, it has been offered since 2009 for simple attendance (with less than 15 hours of unauthorised absence monthly) that is often criticised by people who consider this going beyond positive discrimination as families are paid for obeying the law. Nevertheless, success in compulsory education is currently an inevitable precondition for obtaining qualification valued by the labour market. Numbers of benefitting families are presented in Table 8 above.

#### **ii. Individuals**

Scholarships are offered to secondary VET students from families receiving benefits in material need or with income below subsistence minimum. The amount of monthly scholarship depends on the level of students' performance (see Box 2 for more). The

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<sup>22</sup> Filadelfiová, J., Porubánová, S. (2012), page 77.

<sup>23</sup> A "Study on the effective use of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in preventing early school leaving (ESL)" conducted in Slovakia by the Institute for Labour and Family Research as part of the international project led by Public Policy and Management Institute Vilnius that is just in progress is therefore considered very important.

average scholarship in the 2011/2012 school year was EUR 33.01. The maximum for best performing students was EUR 44.41. In both cases it is significantly less than the activation allowance of EUR 63.07 offered within the active labour market policies<sup>24</sup>.

### iii. Schools

Although the aforementioned subsidies for meals and textbooks, school stationary and learning aids help families to cover respective costs the more important impact is to improve the learning environment in schools educating socially disadvantaged children.

To encourage mainstream basic schools to accept socially disadvantaged pupils and to create the individually adjusted learning environment for them a specific per capita contribution for inclusion of these pupils/students in amount of EUR 100 per student per year is offered for school budgets. In public basic schools with over 100 pupils from the socially disadvantaged environment 50 % of this contribution must be used for remuneration of teacher assistant – a specialist for working with pupils from socially disadvantaged families. Better quality of ISCED 2 education is expected to contribute to improved chances of these children to achieve at least the ISCED 3C level of education.

Any other complementary measures, e.g. information on consequences of early school leaving, early warning strategies, guidance and counselling and any other support for learners, are interrelated with everyday activities of schools supported by counselling services offered by school own psychologists and/or specialists from Centres of Educational and Psychological Counselling and Prevention. Improvement of the quality of contacts of schools with parents is crucial (see Box 3) and in particular in contacts with Roma families.

Career management skills were incorporated into educational programmes from ISCED 2 level. Nevertheless, curricula related activities are less efficient for people lacking interest in education.

Assistance to learners that need more support is stressed together with the recently increasing promotion of integration and inclusion policies. It is up to providers of in-service training to submit programmes of continuing professional development for accreditation, as a market has been fully open for public and private entities since 2010. A significant share of continuing professional development programmes and ESF funded projects are aimed at creation of personalised learning environment and integration/inclusion of socially disadvantaged pupils (predominantly ethnic Roma)<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> In 2008-2012, the activation allowance was offered for the period of maximum 6 months for the so-called small municipal works (maximum 20 hours weekly), since 2013 for 10-20 hours weekly.

<sup>25</sup> One of crucial contributions is expected from a large ESF funded project "Inclusion of Roma communities through education of teachers".

## 2. Remedial measures related to VET

There are no remedial measures related particularly to VET. Nevertheless, there are two types of measures relevant also to VET.

Schools are encouraged to accept early school leavers to come back to school and to continue and complete education within three years after officially announced interruption and to accept adults for part-time secondary VET studies offered in public schools for very reasonable fees. Policies aimed at re-engaging young people in IVET depends on regional educational authorities that are responsible for decisions on allocation of per capita means to respective schools and programmes. Creation of conditions for re-entry in formal IVET are up to a director of VET school and although it is not possible to re-enter school at any time of a school year a director can offer an individualised programme accommodating learners' needs and schools' capacities.

The activation allowance of EUR 63.07 per month was originally introduced by Act No. 599/2003 Coll. on assistance in material need to motivate people in material need unrestrictedly (employed or unemployed) to go back to school, to enter labour market training organised by labour offices, or to work (within small works organised by municipalities or labour offices). This measure was intended to motivate people to enter part-time studies and other forms of studies leading to completion of at least the secondary level of education and maximum the second cycle of higher education. It did not target early school leavers but it opened the door for early school leavers to achieve qualification valued in the labour market supported by the aforementioned benefit for 24 months. Two unintended negative consequences were observed

- early school leaving to qualify for activation allowances for performing small works as already discussed above;
- leaving full-time studies before obtaining qualification to enter part-time studies or other form of studies for receiving activation allowance<sup>26</sup>.

It was reported by social workers that early school leaving of socially disadvantaged young people was caused by higher attractiveness of activation allowance compared to motivational scholarships. There were on average 906 young people under 18 years old qualifying monthly for the activation allowance instead of staying in school in 2011, and 864 in 2012<sup>27</sup>.

Two measures were discussed to address this. The first was to offer the activation allowance for full-time secondary studies to all people in material need under the age of 18. It was rejected as having impact on the state budget in the period of harsh fiscal consolidation needs. The second proposal, in fact being discussed permanently over decades, was to

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<sup>26</sup> This is however marginal behavior in contrast to the first case.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, Information System for Management of Social Benefits

increase compulsory education until the age of 18 instead of current 16 years of age. Such a proposal would make upper secondary education compulsory. Finally, a simpler and cheaper policy is preferred: From 1 January 2013 people under 18 years old do not qualify for activation allowances for working, but only for activation allowances related to training.

Social policies are designed and redesigned by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. They are publicly discussed and a variety of NGOs active in support of socially disadvantaged people contribute to changes in policies<sup>28</sup>. Additionally, there is a variety of projects funded by ESF aimed at increasing employability of people, in particular vulnerable groups at risk of social exclusion. Three categories of disadvantaged people are currently dominantly addressed due to high unemployment – graduates of schools, elderly and people from the marginalised communities featuring a high level of early school leaving.

ESF second chance schools projects were also conducted, however without a significant effect. Instead of bringing adults back to basic schools offering them general education, short-term VET programmes with the opportunity to obtain qualifications for simple works are more preferred.

Re-entry opportunities into formal education are not considered fundamental for improvement and are questioned concerning their efficiency. Improvement is expected from the opportunity to achieve qualification via validation of informal and non-formal learning and via newly to be developed short-term vocational courses to offer qualifications needed in the labour market. A precondition for this is a renewal of the qualifications system that already started in 2013, inter alia by launching two ESF funded projects. One is aimed at creation of the learning outcome-based National Qualifications System and qualification standards that can be used by authorised institutions to recognise knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education, and the second one is aimed at aligning initial VET to labour market needs and exploring opportunities for introducing elements of the dual system<sup>29</sup>.

## **D. Conclusions**

### **1. Effectiveness of policies and measures reducing early school leaving**

A long-term low share of early school leavers (as measured by LFS) is undoubtedly a result of traditionally high value of education in population (as can also be documented by an extremely high increase of the level of education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century) and an inherited educational system offering a variety of secondary VET programmes offering ISCED 3C certificates after a minimum of three years of education. Introduction of the level of lower secondary VET qualification into legislation in 2008 partly helped early school leavers, as

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<sup>28</sup> See the newest important critical feedback from NGOs in Lajčáková (2013).

<sup>29</sup> Projects titled "Creation of the National Qualifications System" and "Development of secondary vocational education".

they got the opportunity to receive official qualification (ISCED 2C). A next step allowing for the provision of ISCED 2C education at secondary VET schools together with specific courses for completion of general ISCED 2 education opened the door for these students to better qualification as schools are financially motivated to retain student in school for a longer time.

Despite favourable aggregate data there is a segment of population with a high share of early school leaving. Ethnic Roma from segregated settlements feature an extremely high share of early school leavers (up to 80 % according to estimations or case studies). The following are the measures considered inevitable to reduce early school leaving of Roma from the marginalized communities that are partly put in place:

- bringing VET schools closer to their settlements, thus opening dependencies of VET schools directly in their settlements;
- preventing low performance in basic schools by improving early childhood education and early childhood intervention to assist children and families to meet challenges of mainstream education at basic schools;
- preventing dropping out from basic schools (an inevitable precondition for obtaining qualification within formal IVET) caused by a non-stimulating environment in families by day care programmes of basic schools (already tested<sup>30</sup>) and/or boarding schools (suggested based on a long-term good practice example of a boarding school<sup>31</sup>);
- supporting integration and inclusion of children from socially disadvantaged families by creation of conditions in mainstream schools to accommodate their needs;
- opening the door to obtaining qualification outside formal IVET by creation of the National Qualifications System.

## **2. Obstacles to reduce dropping out from VET**

No substantial improvement in the educational attendance of children and young people from marginalised communities of ethnic Roma can be observed despite many efforts suggested by strategies<sup>32</sup>, specialised measures in place and generous investment with a high share of ESF funding<sup>33</sup>. A radical solution is seen in structural changes of the education system that are permanently under discussion

- extension of compulsory education up to the age of 18 (covering at least 9 years of basic education and 3 years of upper secondary vocational education);

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<sup>30</sup> A model of a basic school with a day care programme was elaborated, evaluated by national and international experts, and introduced in 200 basic schools for piloting in 2012 (Metodologicko-pedagogické centrum (2011)).

<sup>31</sup> A questioned proposal due to high costs and criticised for separation of children from families.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. a positively seen Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the integration of Roma up to 2020 (Government of the Slovak Republic (2011b)).

<sup>33</sup> ESF Operational Programme Education, Measure 3.1 "Enhancing educational level of members of marginalised Roma communities" (Ministry of Education (2007)). At least a partial impact analysis of investment within Operational Programme Education is unfortunately pending in contrast to the attempt to identify barriers and propose remedies based on the analysis of projects addressing Roma within 2007-2013 Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion (Škobla, D. (2013)).

- compulsory education from 3 years old to prepare all children to meet challenges of basic education.

The first measure is seen controversial by the analysts criticising “capturing” the young workforce by schools and suggesting shortening compulsory education to 9 years equal to duration of education needed for ISCED 2 general education that should be followed by work-based vocational training to achieve qualification valued at the labour market.

The second measure is criticised by well-off families and Christian families preferring not to shorten the childhood spent in families, and/or feared by the institutionalised influence outside the control of the family. Even alternative, more moderate proposals, e.g. suggesting obligatory education in kindergartens one year prior to entering basic school, are rejected from similar positions.

Furthermore, a lack of places in kindergartens caused by reducing capacities in the period of a severe decline of population is a severe obstacle in the time of shortage of means in the state and municipalities budgets. Instead, a target of 50 % of children from marginalised communities attending pre-primary education in kindergartens in 2015 was set in 2011<sup>34</sup>, followed by postponing this target until 2020 in 2012<sup>35</sup>, and by setting a general target of 95 % attendance of children over 4 years old by 2020<sup>36</sup>.

A specific problem is the provision of places in kindergartens close to Roma settlements and in a way appropriate and accepted by families from the socially marginalized communities.

No doubts, without massive early interventions before entering compulsory education aimed at preparing children for entering mainstream schools and without educating their parents (and in particular mothers), chances for children from the marginalised communities to obtain a qualification needed in the labour market will not improve and IVET will not be seen as a way to employment and better living conditions. Early school leaving and earlier qualifying for social benefits will remain seen as a preferred life strategy, especially for poor families living in segregated Roma settlements.

Furthermore, acquiring knowledge, skills and competences and subsequently a qualification needed in the labour market offered in coincidence with social support must be explored. Short-term vocational training programmes and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired at work must become a real alternative to traditional formal IVET for obtaining a qualification.

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<sup>34</sup> Government of the Slovak Republic (2011a).

<sup>35</sup> Government of the Slovak Republic (2011b).

<sup>36</sup> This goal set by the National reform programme of the Slovak Republic 2013 has not addressed explicitly children from marginalized communities (Ministry of Finance (2013a)).

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## Annex A

Table A1. Number of students in secondary VET schools (SOŠ) in 2008-2012

School year	School ownership	Number of schools	Full-time study		Part-time study	
			Total	Female	Total	Female
2008/2009	Public	396	176 602	79 277	5 601	3 291
	Private	86	14 576	7 499	3 198	2 296
	Church-affiliated	20	4 166	2 876	887	778
	Total	502	195 344	89 652	9 686	6 365
2009/2010	Public	386	171 405	76 160	6 027	3 467
	Private	85	15 554	8 091	3 036	2 158
	Church-affiliated	19	4 024	2 796	989	839
	Total	490	190 983	87 047	10 052	6 464
2010/2011	Public	382	161 967	71 046	6 602	3 771
	Private	88	15 482	8 109	2 989	2 032
	Church-affiliated	19	3 895	2 697	1 259	1 066
	Total	489	181 344	81 852	10 850	6 869
2011/2012	Public	365	150 547	65 609	6 731	4 017
	Private	89	15 670	8 281	2 726	1 849
	Church-affiliated	19	3 925	2 641	1 300	1 097
	Total	473	170 142	76 531	10 757	6 963
2012/2013	Public	362	140 316	61 258	5 916	3 564
	Private	86	15 030	7 940	2 586	1 766
	Church-affiliated	19	3 775	2 548	1 023	893
	Total	467	159 121	71 746	9 525	6 223

Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education.

Table A2. Average gross monthly wage by education in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2012 and 2013

(EUR/month)

Education/AGW*	2012	% of AGW*	2013	% of AGW*	2013 Increase (%)**
ISCED 2	539	62.2	580	66.0	-
ISCED 3C (without CoA)	613	70.8	641	72.9	13.7
ISCED 3C (CoA)	645	74.5	666	75.8	5.2 (19.7***)
ISCED 3A (MSLC) + CoA	772	89.1	788	89.6	19.7
ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET	815	94.1	839	95.4	5.6
ISCED 3A (MSLC) GEN	822	94.9	821	93.4	0.9
ISCED 5B	891	102.9	906	103.1	8.4
ISCED 5A – Bc	932	107.6	951	108.2	4.6
ISCED 5A – M	1 326	153.1	1 287	146.4	42.3 (62.7****)
ISCED 6	1 289	148.8	1 361	154.8	-2.8
Total	866	100.0	879	100.0	-

Source: Trexima Bratislava, ISCP (MPSVR SR)1-04 Survey.

\* AGW – Average Gross Wage of all (see the last line); \*\* compared to the previous row 2013 AGW data in the 4<sup>st</sup> column;

\*\*\* compared to ISCED 2 level data); \*\*\*\* compared to ISCED 3A (MSLC) VET level; 1Q=First quarter; CoA – Certificate of Apprenticeship; MSLC – “Maturita” School Leaving Certificate; GEN – general education stream; VET – vocational stream; Bc – First cycle of higher education; M – Second cycle of higher education.

Sample description (1Q 2013): 892,784 employees from 7,769 employment units containing all units with 100 and more employers and other units stratified according to territorial districts and sectors of economy; with no physical persons and their employees included. Thus, exactly the category of ISCED 3C educated might be influenced substantially.

Table A3. Difference in average monthly wages by ISCO-08 major groups in 2012

Occupation category	Average gross wage (EUR)		Increase* (%)
	Non-business sphere	Business sphere	
Total	754	919	18
Legislators, managers	1 357	2 114	36
Professionals	839	1 447	42
Technicians and associate professionals	752	1 051	28
Clerical support workers	649	754	14
Service and sales workers	552	577	4
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	491	600	18
Crafts and related trade workers	573	786	27
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	623	726	14
Elementary occupations	401	521	23

Source: Trexima Bratislava.

\* Increase in wages in the business sphere compared to the non-business sphere in % business sphere wages.

Table A4. Average gross monthly wage by level of education

(EUR/month)

Education level (ISCED)	2	3C	3A	4+5B	5A-Bc	5A-M	6
N (sample)	472	5 422	26 462	2 563	6 374	31 531	2 311
AGW(EUR)	594	630	741	766	869	1 032	1 156
Difference (EUR)	36	111	25	103	163	124	-
Increase(%)**	-	6.1	17.6	3.4	13.4	18.8 (39.3*)	12.0
17 - 24 aged	556	592	624	612	711	779	
25 - 34 aged	622	649	768	780	876	989	1 071
35 - 44 aged	559	638	788	873	1 002	1 169	1 297
45 - 54 aged	656	634	750	765	921	1 118	1 338
55 +	551	638	750	787	972	1 072	1 178

Source: Dravecký, M., Platy.sk, ad hoc data.

AGW - Average gross wage; 3C – with or without Certificate of Apprenticeship; 5A-Bc – First cycle of higher education; 5A-M – Second cycle of higher education; N – Numbers of people who have filled in the online questionnaire at [www.platy.sk](http://www.platy.sk) between 15 July 2012 and 14 July 2013; \* compared to 3A level; \*\* compared to previous column AGW data.

Table A5. Average gross monthly wage of skilled technicians by level of education

(EUR/month)

Education level (ISCED)	2	3C	3A	4+5B	5A-Bc	5A-M	6
AGW (EUR)	594	630	741	766	869	1 032	1 156
Increase (%)**	-	6.1	17.6	3.4	13.4	18.8 (39.3*)	12.0
AGW (EUR)	594	816	856	861	975	1 052	1 094
Increase (%)**		37.4	4.9	0.6	13.2	7.9 (22.9*)	4.0

Source: Dravecký, M., Platy.sk, ad hoc data.

\* Compared to 3A level; \*\* compared to the previous column AGW data, see explanation of abbreviations under the table above.

Table A6. Median gross monthly wages of respective age cohorts by education

(EUR/month)

Age	Total	2	3C	3C*	3A VET**	3A GEN	3A VET	5B	5A-Bc	5A-M	6
+20	475.25	436.56	447.28	526.84	512.70	491.06	502.09	(u)	-	-	-
20-24	559.26	501.17	497.69	558.05	587.07	570.68	582.26	572.02	646.08	723.21	-
25-29	699.00	547.82	557.44	605.05	684.41	707.01	710.05	680.72	730.30	823.58	824.68
30-34	741.27	519.73	564.56	606.62	703.14	757.97	744.82	800.71	809.43	994.59	907.33
35-39	723.51	509.93	553.33	619.02	724.90	726.89	745.27	821.28	789.42	968.86	986.35
40-44	707.68	497.65	549.90	605.27	711.65	690.44	733.39	836.58	793.50	979.17	1 047.13
45-49	693.72	492.96	550.18	602.32	699.13	691.51	729.33	824.52	769.85	967.93	1 100.71
50-54	690.39	483.58	543.59	597.02	699.33	682.59	731.82	850.97	819.83	1 002.27	1 213.36
55-59	690.78	480.38	568.33	603.27	683.51	691.33	748.16	822.55	808.45	989.99	1 220.33
60+	686.65	447.87	558.11	581.30	680.49	683.16	712.86	703.51	792.00	932.03	1 180.95
Total	693.19	488.85	550.83	600.78	688.65	689.02	719.52	791.87	760.33	952.08	1 084.66

Source: Trexima Bratislava, ISCP (MPSVR SR)1-04 Survey, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2012 data.

(u) data not included due to a low number of employees/companies in the sample.

2 – ISCED 2; 3C – ISCED 3C without Certificate of Apprenticeship; 3C\* – ISCED 3C with Certificate of Apprenticeship; 3A VET\*\* – ISCED 3A vocational stream with Certificate of Apprenticeship and “Maturita” School Leaving Certificate; 3A GEN – ISCED 3A general education stream with “Maturita” School Leaving Certificate; 3A VET – ISCED 3A vocational stream with “Maturita” School Leaving Certificate; 5B – ISCED 5B, 5A-Bc – First cycle of higher education; 5A-M – Second cycle of higher education; 6 – ISCED 6.

Table A7. Hours of unauthorised absence per student\* at SOŠ in 2009-2012

Region	2009	2010	2011	2012
Bratislava	7.00	8.13	9.17	8.46
Trnava	6.38	6.66	6.41	6.44
Trenčín	6.28	7.01	7.41	9.44
Nitra	6.47	5.92	6.59	6.75
Žilina	6.60	5.99	6.70	6.67
Banská Bystrica	10.14	10.46	10.90	9.93
Prešov	6.05	7.18	8.51	7.55
Košice	8.91	9.87	10.47	12.46
SR	7.17	7.56	8.21	8.40

Source: Slovíková, M., Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education, ad hoc data.

\* A number of all students in regional SOŠ (not only of absentees) in denominator.

## Annex B

Table B1. Scholarships for students of secondary schools, vocational schools and practical schools whose parents are in material need or below subsistence minimum

Period	Number of scholarships									Amount paid (EUR)		
	Material need			Subsistence minimum			Total number of scholarships			2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12			
September	6 519	7 477	8 085	2 151	2 174	2 124	8 670	9 651	10 209	212 191.78	244 514.54	249 485.42
October	7 090	8 354	9 013	2 496	2 558	2 468	9 586	10 912	11 481	319 413.89	356 759.84	386 640.74
November	7 563	8 646	9 321	2 696	2 714	2 582	10 259	11 360	11 903	331 735.40	368 345.85	399 659.32
December	7 834	8 664	9 350	2 741	2 709	2 626	10 575	11 373	11 976	338 243.22	370 649.00	398 307.14
January	7 970	8 670	8 765	2 823	2 767	2 621	10 793	11 437	11 386	344 941.73	377 102.78	405 232.52
February	7 590	8 076	8 462	2 136	1 877	1 733	9 726	9 953	10 195	315 833.53	328 367.25	345 975.45
March	8 102	8 681	9 083	2 391	2 191	2 003	10 493	10 872	11 086	340 171.58	355 373.15	373 246.54
April	8 150	8 722	9 141	2 509	2 222	2 057	10 659	10 944	11 198	344 572.07	357 785.00	377 668.14
May	8 113	8 012	9 098	2 527	2 086	2 092	10 640	10 098	11 190	344 524.88	351 722.88	377 783.42
June	7 309	7 866	8 229	2 047	1 759	1 628	9 356	9 625	9 857	301 710.49	314 511.21	332 460.52
School year	76 240	83 168	88 547	24 517	23 057	21 934	100 757	106 225	110 481	3 193 338.57	3 425 131.50	3 646 459.21
Average scholarship:										31.69	32.24	33.01

Source: Grochová, R., Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education, ad hoc data.