



European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Slovakia – National commitment

*Employment,
Social Affairs
and Inclusion*

COUNTRY	Slovakia
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Ministry(ies)	The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
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Overview of apprenticeship

General information on apprenticeships	
Overview	<p>In Slovakia, secondary vocational schools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary vocational schools; • Secondary industrial schools; • Secondary medical schools; • Business academies; • Hotel academies; • Police secondary vocational schools; • Secondary schools of fire protection. <p>The designation is based on the characteristics of educational, study, or teaching fields in which the school provides vocational education and training.</p>
Number of apprentices	9 347 (as of 15 December 2022)
Legal basis	<p>Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (the School Act) and related amendments.</p> <p>Act No. 61/2015 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training and related amendments.</p>
Target group	Apprenticeships primarily target young people aged 15 and above; however, there is no upper age limit up for applicants seeking to apply for a study or teaching field.

Scheme(s) specific information				
	<i>Lower secondary vocational education</i>	<i>Secondary vocational education</i>	<i>Complete secondary education - gymnasium</i>	<i>Complete secondary education</i>
EQF level	2	3	4	4
Duration	2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 8 years	4 - 5 years
Status of the apprentice	<i>Learner</i>	<i>Learner</i>	<i>Learner</i>	<i>Learner</i>
Access to HE possible?	NO <i>The final certificate serves as proof of education and outlines the focus of the activities that the student is capable of performing.</i>	NO <i>The final exam certificate serves as evidence of the level of education achieved, while the qualification certificate is recorded on a training sheet.</i>	YES <i>The school leaving examination certificate serves as proof of the conferred degree and qualification.</i>	YES <i>Evidence of the obtained degree includes the graduation exam certificate and the diploma.</i>

Funding	<i>State scholarship</i>	<i>State scholarship, dual education contract (between school and employer), learning contract (between pupil, legal representative of the pupil and employer)</i>	<i>State scholarship, dual education contract (between school and employer), learning contract (between pupil, legal representative of the pupil and employer)</i>	<i>State scholarship</i>
Apprentice remuneration or compensation	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed

Implementation of the national commitment

Progress and main achievements

In 2022, the Act No. 61/2015 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training was amended. Article 19, which addresses learning contracts, redefined the requirements for the content of learning contracts between students and employers, including the conditions under which they are concluded and terminated. Similarly, Article 21b concerning chief instructors and Article 22 regarding instructors reviewed the criteria defining these roles, with a particular focus on the educational background requirements for the profession. Additionally, Article 49, which pertains to experimental verification, revised the concept of subjects and objectives of experimental verification, as well as the conditions for submission and the necessary points to be included in the proposal for verification.

Update of the national commitment

Planned reforms and initiatives

Slovakia is in the process of drafting a new Act on Adult Education and preparing a reform of Act No. 61/2015 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training. Additionally, Slovakia plans to implement several initiatives such as establishing the **Centres of Vocational Excellence** (CoVEs) system. The main objectives include the methodical setup and operationalisation of the CoVEs system, implementation and support of CoVEs in key sectors, and effective coordination and project management.

The introduction of a comprehensive quality management system in vocational education and training (VET) and adult education aims to ensure a high-quality, efficient, transparent, and flexible education and qualification system at all levels of VET. The project **"Improving the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training in connection with the needs of the labour market"** focuses on increasing the quality, flexibility, and attractiveness of VET in Slovakia, aligning it more closely with labour market needs. This will enhance employment opportunities for young people and foreigners and help reduce unemployment.

Supra-company training centres are intended to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and self-employed individuals in joining the dual education system. These centres, established by employers, will aim to improve the quality, attractiveness, and excellence of VET within the dual education system or other forms of work-based learning (WBL), utilising resources from multiple employers and coordinating VET with social partners.

The twin digital and green transition

Several initiatives in the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) aim to support the twin digital and green transition. A project within **REPowerEU** will focus on one reform and one investment aimed at the "modernisation and adjustment of study programmes or modules, including technical and other conditions that will make it possible to ensure a sufficient number of teaching staff and graduates of the respective study programmes, who will be able to support the green transition through green skills."

The **"Education for the 21st Century"** project aims to equip all primary and secondary schools with comprehensive digital technology at the entry level. The main objective is to support the acquisition and installation of digital equipment and software. This initiative will promote the active use of digital technologies,

including both the utilisation and creation of digital educational content within the educational process.

EAfA six priorities¹

To support SMEs in maintaining a steady supply of quality and effective apprenticeships, students receive an incentive scholarship monthly during the teaching period. The amount is determined by the average grade each student achieves. Additionally, career counsellors align pupils' development within the SME with their individual requirements, needs, and interests.

The Alliance of Sectoral Councils was established to strengthen social dialogue and actively involve national social partner organisations in apprenticeship development. The Alliance is an association of legal entities that focuses on creating and updating the National Systems of Occupations and Qualifications. Besides determining professional skill standards for work activities, the Alliance establishes sectoral councils and collaborates with them to update the National System of Occupations and set professional skill requirements within sectors. The sectoral councils also work with the Ministry to prepare proposals for education and training projects targeting the labour market.

Targets and/or indicators

"Education for the 21st Century" project:

- 90% of schools with digital equipment;
- 100% of schools with wired and wireless networks.

VET improvement:

- Increase VET graduates entering the labour market within three months (83.6 % in 2023);
- Maintain secondary school attendance at or above 62.0 % (2023);
- Increase practical training with employers (WBL) from 38.2 % (2023).

¹ More information about EAfA six priorities is available in the EAfA Action plan accessible here: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23080&langId=en>

VET and adult education quality management:

- Develop a data collection system for OVP;
- Enhance quality management capacities;
- Ensure quality assurance in VET in eight municipalities and 80 schools.

Budget of the reform/initiative

The project "Improving the Quality and Attractiveness of Vocational Education and Training and Supra-company Training Centres" will receive co-funding from the Swiss Financial Mechanism, with an estimated total budget of €6 764 706. State budget allocations include:

- €15 585 649.43 for Centres of Vocational Excellence;
- €6 964 586.30 for the introduction of quality management in VET.

Additional co-funding from EU sources is anticipated.

Key stakeholders involved

The key stakeholders involved include the eight autonomous regions of Bratislavský, Banskobytrický, Košický, Nitriansky, Prešovský, Trenčianský, Trnavský, Žilinský. Regions are responsible for evaluating the school or school facility's director and establishing or discontinuing:

- Primary art schools;
- Language schools;
- School dormitories;
- School catering facilities;
- School management and centres of professional practice;
- School service centres;
- Outdoor schools;
- Leisure centres within the territorial scope of the self-governing region;
- School centres of interest.

Further measures planned as a follow up to the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships

Further measures planned include the coordination of VET for the labour market at national and regional levels, and the establishment of VET centres in secondary schools.

Support is provided to the operations of the Centres of Excellence in VET at two levels. At the national level, the Centres will involve a range of local stakeholders to create skill ecosystems that foster local innovation, regional development, and social inclusion. They will also collaborate with VET centres in other countries through international cooperation networks.

At the international level, the Centres will be organised according to common interests, such as:

- Sectors or industrial ecosystems;
- Approaches to addressing economic and social challenges (e.g., climate change, digitisation, artificial intelligence, sustainable development goals, integration of migrants and disadvantaged groups, increasing the skill levels of low-skilled individuals, etc.); and
- Methods to enhance the reach, quality, and effectiveness of existing Centres.

Measures planned to support gender balance, social inclusion and internationalisation of apprenticeships

Vocational education and training is accessible to everyone without discrimination.

Article 145a of Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Upbringing and Education (the School Act) and its related amendments provide support measures for pupils with special educational needs.

The goal of the national project is to help reduce early school leaving through an early warning system and targeted support within the counselling and prevention system.

Final overview of national commitment

Below are the objectives covered by the national commitment in a nutshell: *(please tick all relevant options)*

Increase supply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foster quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Promote image	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support mobility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support national apprenticeship coalitions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support SMEs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mobilise local and regional authorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strengthen social dialogue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Engage sectoral social dialogue committees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support the representation of apprentices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Address the twin transition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foster gender balance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support social inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Internationalisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>