



Introduction

This report has been drafted by the EQAVET National Reference Point of Slovakia and describes the main quality assurance arrangements in vocational education and training.

SECTION A - DESCRIPTION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Part 1 – Description of quality assurance arrangements and of recent developments

The quality assurance in initial VET is based on:

- External evaluation of VET providers by state school inspection;
- External evaluation of the education system by inspection as well as standardised assessments;
- System-level involvement of stakeholders in the design of VET policies and qualifications
 - this was reformed in 2009 to support stronger stakeholder involvement;
- Internal planning at provider level is related to the requirement for schools to develop school-level curricula and assessment plans. School curricula provide information on the internal system of monitoring and evaluation of quality.

In CVET the main developments in the past decade have been:

- Reform of the accreditation procedure for publicly funded CVET courses which will link programmes to nationally defined qualifications standards – this work is currently in progress;
- Development of an information system in CVET.

The development of a qualifications system and framework will affect quality assurance of qualifications design and awarding in both IVET and CVET.

Quality assurance arrangements at system level in initial VET Context

Initial VET in Slovakia is school-based. Schools are thus the main providers of VET when it comes to education and training at upper-secondary as well as post-secondary level. Quality assurance in VET is to a certain extent identical to quality assurance in general education, in particular when it

comes to the QA requirements for schools and teaching staff¹. However, there are certain aspects that are specific to VET and these are regulated by specific legislation (see below).

The governance of VET has three levels⁵⁴¹:

- National level
- Regional level
- School level

The bodies involved in VET governance at **national level** are:

- Mainly the Ministries of Education, Home Affairs, and Health Care. Other ministries (labour, industry, development, transports and infrastructure, agriculture, culture and environment) contribute to the definition of VET requirements
- Regions
- Representatives of employers and of sectors/ professions
- Trade unions

National level decisions concern the overall organisation of the education system, strategies of education policy and preparation of legislation. VET framework programmes are also defined nationally (see below).

Those involved at **regional level** are:

- The regional education office and public employment office (these are regional branches of national institutions)
- The regional governing body
- The regional education council (advisory body at regional level)
- Employer representatives and trade unions

Regions make suggestions to the Ministry regarding changes in the education infrastructure, opening and closing of schools and of programmes. They also make decisions regarding funding allocations to schools and funding of buildings and equipment. Regions also have other responsibilities related to quality assurance such as the nomination of examination committees or the gathering of statistics. **School councils** (at the level of the individual school) are set up by those organisations that set up the school. The composition and responsibilities of school councils are defined at national level².

The general framework for quality assurance

At national level, the main institutions in charge of quality assurance are the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports (the Ministry of Education later in the report), the Slovak State School Inspectorate (Inspectorate later in the report) and the National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NUCEM). Other national agencies involved are:

- The State Vocational Education Institute (SIOV) which, among other things, defines national curricula for secondary VET
- The national pedagogical institute (SPU) which defines the national curricula for general education subjects

¹ The Education Act (245/2008 Z.z.) and the Act on pedagogical staff and professionals in education (317/2009 Z.z.) cover pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary education. ⁵⁴¹ The Act on vocational education and training (184/2009 Z.z.)

² Act on public administration in education and education governance (596/2003 Z.z.) ⁵⁴³
<http://www.radavladayovp.sk/statut-8.html>

- The methodological and pedagogical centre (MPC) that provides in-service teacher training and supports the quality of teaching and learning
- The Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (CVTI) which carries out statistical analysis of the education and training system

There is also an advisory body at national level called the Government Council for VET⁵⁴³ which brings together representatives of the State, employers/ professions and employees. Its role is to advise the government and the Ministry of Education on VET policy. It has a number of sectoral working groups.

Stakeholders have a role in the national QA process regarding definition of qualifications and framework VET programmes.

Overall rules for quality assurance are embedded in several legislations:

- The School Act (245/2008 of Coll. as amended) defines the principles, rules and requirements for education and training in schools. It contains a section on monitoring and measurement of quality of education and training
- The Act on vocational education and training (61/2015 of Coll.) complements the above by defining certain specificities of VET, in particular the roles of stakeholders;
- The Act on pedagogical staff and professional employees in education (317/2009 Coll. as amended) defines the requirements for teacher qualifications and continuous development
- The Act on public administration in education (596/2003 of Coll. as amended) defines the responsibilities of the education governance structures at different levels (national, regional and school level)

Planning at VET system level and requirements for evaluation and review

The Act on public administration in education (596/2003 of Coll. as amended) and the Act on VET (61/2015 of Coll.) state that the Ministry has responsibility for the overall formulation and strategy of the education and training system in Slovakia. There are no formal requirements for regular review of formulation documents and at present there is no established tradition of issuing and reviewing strategic plans in education and training policy.

The same legislation defines that regions/municipalities have to set up investment plans and plans for resource allocation to schools (including VET schools).

When it comes to ensuring that the supply of VET graduates meets the demands of the labour market the following requirements for planning are defined in the Act on VET (61/2015):

- The Ministry of Education together with representatives of employers and professions identifies those VET programmes which provide too high a number of graduates compared to the demands of the labour market (note that in Slovakia the current problem of VET is that some programmes have very high graduate unemployment rates) and also VET programmes where there is an insufficient supply of graduates.
- Representatives of professions and employers develop forecasts of labour market needs.
- These findings are presented to the regional education councils.

Regions are required to collect statistical information. NUCEM carries out national testing of students but only in general education subjects (see also below).

The Inspection monitors the quality of education and training using a set of defined indicators (see below). The Inspection prepares an annual report on the state and level of education and training, summarising the results of the inspections in the year under review, and presents the data against some of the indicators (but not all). There is a separate section on upper-secondary schools but not on VET as such. The report presents some of the data distinguishing general education subjects and vocational subjects.

Due to high unemployment rates in certain VET programmes, the ministry of education has relatively recently paid particular attention to the analysis and publication of information on unemployment rates of VET graduates¹.

Stakeholder involvement, identification of training needs

Stakeholders are involved in VET at system level in the following manner⁵⁴⁵:

- The above- mentioned Government Council on VET comprises more than one third representatives of employers, sectors and employees. The remaining seats are shared between representatives of regions and ministries.
- The representatives of employers and professions issue forecasts of labour market needs, develop materials which serve as a basis for describing competences and skills for carrying out occupations in line with labour market needs, participate in development of graduate profiles in terms of knowledge, skills and competence and also of requirements regarding material and technical equipment in schools.
- They are also expected to cooperate with VET schools in the development of VET school curricula, comment on the design of examinations in vocational subjects which are part of the upper-secondary certificate.
- Employers and employees should also be represented in governance structures at regional level. Their participation in governance of VET schools is not required by legislation (which defines the rules for both general education and VET). However, it is possible for those organisations which set up school councils to invite representatives from the labour market to be members of school councils. Parents are always members of school councils.

Certification, assessment and validation of learning

There are different types of VET programmes in Slovakia but in general they lead to⁵⁴⁶:

- A final examination (does not give access to higher education) and achievement of the 'vocational certificate' which qualifies for an execution of an occupation or a group of related occupations.
- The upper-secondary leaving examination (Maturita – which gives access to higher education) and the achievement of the 'vocational certificate' for some VET programmes (ISCED 354).
- Graduate examination and achievement of the title 'qualified specialist' for postsecondary VET programmes.

VET qualifications at secondary level are based on national curricula defined at national level. The state curricula contain a section called 'graduate's profile' which define the knowledge, skills and competence expected from a graduate. They also provide guidelines for the teaching process in terms of objectives, numbers of taught hours for different fields of education and training, recommended sources and equipment needed.

The final examination (which does not give access to higher education) has to be composed of a written, oral and practical part. Schools define the content of this examination. The upper-secondary leaving examination (Maturita) has three parts:

¹ <https://www.minedu.sk/9242-sk/nezamestnanost-absolventov-strednych-skol/> ⁵⁴⁵ The Act on vocational education and training (61/2015 of Coll.) ⁵⁴⁶ Education act (245/2008 Z.z)

- External testing of certain general education subjects, namely mathematics, Slovak language and foreign languages.
- Internal testing that concerns other general education subjects or vocational education subjects
- A practical part.

The state curriculum also contains:

- Guidance for schools on how to define the upper-secondary leaving certificate for the vocational part of the assessment; and
- A generic set of assessment criteria to be applied by the school.

These guidelines are generic, and apply to a full group of qualifications/ programmes of the same type. They are not specific to a given field of study.

These guidelines should be translated into a more detailed and specific plan at the school level. Final assessment for vocational subjects is defined by the school in line with the above guidance. The assessment has to be carried out in front of a committee, the composition of which is defined by legislation (School Act). The committee for vocational subjects should include a representative of the relevant professional organisation or sector if they are nominated by the relevant body representing employers or professions.

Who can deliver VET and under what conditions

Schools can be set up by public or private legal entities as well as by the church. The conditions for setting up a school are clearly defined in the Act on public administration in education (596/2003 of Coll. as amended).

Among a range of documents regarding the capacity of the institution to deliver educational activities, the legal entity concerned has to provide a statement from the region on the setting up of the school. In the case of VET schools, the related national administration (for those fields of study where the administration is a key stakeholder such as health care) or the employer representative needs to issue a positive statement on the setting up of the school.

Private, public and church schools comply with the same requirements as defined in the School Act and other acts listed above.

Monitoring inspection and use of indicators

The improvement of the quality of education and training is among the key aims of the State School inspection. The results of inspections are expected to be used by schools to improve the quality of education and training, school management, education outcomes and conditions of education and training. The results are also expected to be used by school founders and by the regional education councils in the management of education and training provision¹.

The Inspection monitors the performance of the education system based on the results of school inspection visits. The inspection monitoring is based on a defined set of indicators.

The indicators for VET used in 2014/2015 covered the following areas²:

¹ Skolska Statne Inspekcia (2011) *Vyrocna sprava*

² [http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/SOS\(1\).pdf](http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/SOS(1).pdf)

- School management:
 - School curriculum
 - Pedagogical process
 - School management and internal quality assurance
 - School climate and culture
 - School services
- Conditions for education and training:
 - Human resources
 - Facilities
 - Equipment
 - Use of facilities and equipment
 - Health and safety
- Teaching process and outcomes:
 - Teaching by teachers
 - Learning by students

The results of this monitoring are compiled into a thematic annual report on the state of education in Slovakia, which is made available to the public⁵⁴⁹.

The inspection also monitors and reports on the conditions in which VET schools carry out final assessment and the school-based part of the upper-secondary leaving examination (Maturita)⁵⁵⁰.

The main changes to QA at system level introduced since 2009 (Adoption of the EQAVET Recommendation)

A key issue for quality assurance in VET, since the adoption of the 2009 act on VET and its revision in 2015, is strengthening participation of VET stakeholders. Two major national level projects (ESF funded) were implemented in the years 2013 - 2015:

- Development of the national qualifications framework and system (underpinned by a register of qualifications). The national qualifications system had been defined in the Lifelong Learning Act since 2009 but was not operational. The national project, implemented in 2013 – 2015, developed 1000 qualifications and assessment standards which will serve as the basis for the definition of VET national curricula as well as for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (see below) and CVET programmes. Further steps are required, namely the adoption of new ordinances introducing the Slovak Qualifications Framework and National Qualifications Register at system level.
- Development of upper-secondary VET. This project, also implemented in 2013-2015, was aimed at introducing elements of the dual system of education, as well as assessing the quality of teaching and training materials in VET, piloting the introduction of work-based programmes in VET, developing vocational career guidance and designing and implementing a method of analysing graduate unemployment. On the basis of this national project, the new Act on VET (61/2015 of Coll.) was adopted in 2015.

The main changes introduced since 2003 (beginning of EU cooperation that led to the adoption of the EQAVET Recommendation)

The main changes in IVET quality assurance since 2003 are:

⁵⁴⁹ See for example Statna Skolska Inspekcia (2012) *Správa o stave a úrovni pedagogického riadenia, procesy a podmienok výchovy a vzdelávania v strednej odbornej škole v školskom roku 2011/2012 v SR* [http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/141_142_KI_TI_SOS\(1\).pdf](http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/141_142_KI_TI_SOS(1).pdf)

⁵⁵⁰ <https://www.ssiba.sk/Default.aspx?text=g&id=2&lang=sk>

- Greater autonomy of schools in defining school curricula as introduced by the School Act (there is a general state curriculum for certain branches; the detailed school curriculum is for each school to define). This requires a completely new approach to planning education provision at school level (see also below).
- The adoption of the Act on vocational education and training in 2009 and its revision in 2015. This legislation in particular sets the legal basis for strengthening the role of stakeholder representatives in defining VET priorities and VET programmes.
- Over the last decade the approach of school inspection has changed and a new monitoring indicator framework was introduced, covering both general education (different levels) and VET.

Quality assurance arrangements at provider level in initial VET

Quality assurance at provider level in Slovakia is based on:

- Regular school visits of the state school inspection.
- The requirement for headteachers to issue a strategy for school development and to present its evaluation to the school council.
- Activities supporting self-evaluation at school level: each school curriculum must contain information on the internal system of quality monitoring and assurance. Furthermore, each VET school delivers a report on education processes.

As described above, school inspection visits follow a defined set of indicators (see above). The inspection can result in a set of recommendations for the school; if the findings are more serious the school will need to develop an official plan to address the recommendations. In the most serious cases, the inspection report can lead to sanctions. The individual school-level inspection reports are not made available to the public in Slovakia. The results of inspections are discussed by the governance structures of the school. There is currently a certain willingness among academics and school inspection officials to supplement external evaluation done by school inspection with internal evaluation but this is not yet common practice¹.

The school director is required to provide the school council with a report on the education processes of the school. The report is for the approval of the school council and therefore it still remains a formal act⁵⁵². The director is also required to present a school development programme. However, there are no further requirements regarding how the information on progress and on the state of the school should be collected.

Self-assessment at school level is not required in Slovakia but school directors can decide to do it. There is currently no information on the extent to which schools (of any kind, including VET schools) are using this option.

At the same time, there are activities that aim to support the development of self-assessment by schools (all schools, not just VET schools) in Slovakia. Namely:

¹ Novak (2011) *Prehľad kľúčových javov, vlastností, posudzovaných činností vrátane tvorby inštrukčných a meracích nástrojov merania kvality školy* ⁵⁵²

Idem ⁵⁵³ <http://www.ssiba.sk/Default.aspx?text=g&id=25&lang=sk> ⁵⁵⁴

http://www.mpc-edu.sk/library/files/inovacie__v_sebahodnoten___koly.pdf

- The State School Inspection has introduced a project called *External school assessment supporting self-assessment and development of schools*¹ in 2009 - 2013. This ESF- funded national project had two objectives:
 - To train external assessors (inspectors) to use new methods and approaches to external evaluation aimed at continuous improvement rather than the more traditional approach to control.
 - To develop a self-assessment model for schools and to pilot it with a sample of schools.
- The national methodological and pedagogical centre (MPC) offers courses on school self-assessment to pedagogical staff and school headmasters².

The above-mentioned project of the inspection refers to cooperation on quality assurance in school education as part of the standing international conference of the inspectorate.

The State Vocational Education institute (SIOV) is also developing a methodology/guidance for the self-assessment of providers. This will be a voluntary tool at provider level. The document is currently being designed and is expected to be closely based on the EQAVET cycle.

Quality assurance arrangements at system level in continuous VET context

This area of education is governed by the Act on Lifelong Learning (568/2009 of Coll. as amended) which entered into force gradually from 2010 onwards and its implementation is still a work in progress. In Slovakia further education is defined as follows by Act on LLL (note that the text below is not an exact translation):

Further education builds on school education or higher education and gives the learner the possibility of acquiring a partial or full qualification or to complement, upgrade, broaden or deepen an existing qualification.

It covers CVET but also other forms of adult learning. For clarity, this text uses the term further education.

This act brought several major developments into the process of quality assurance in further education in Slovakia (CVET, as well as the rest of adult learning). It builds on the previously existing system of accreditations. However, due to the fact that the system introduced by the 2009 legislation is not yet fully implemented, the comprehensive system, especially in the area of VNIL, remains only partly operational.

The law on lifelong learning combines the following pillars:

- Accreditation of programmes and the requirements for accredited programmes.
- Recognition of non-formal and informal learning.
- A qualifications register and related information system.

Accreditation is one of the requirements for the programme to be eligible for funding from public employment services³.

Resulting from the introduction of the Slovak Qualifications Framework and National Qualifications System (and register) the relevant legislative norms are to be revised and amended.

¹ <https://www.ssiba.sk/Default.aspx?text=g&id=25&lang=sk>

² <http://www.mpc-edu.sk/vzdelavacia-cinnost/akreditovane-vzdelavacie-programy>

³ Act on employment services (5/2004 of Coll. as amended)

National framework: who is in charge of what

According to the legal text, full and partial qualifications that can be achieved through further education will be registered in the national register of qualifications. The maintenance and updating of the register is the shared responsibility of the ministry of education, employers and employee representatives, representatives of regions, representatives of further education providers and other ministries.

The ministry of education together with other relevant ministries and in particular the ministry of labour define the framework conditions for the accreditation of programmes and for other pillars of the Act on LLL.

Publicly funded further education is part of policies to support employability. Public employment services tender for the provision of training activities. Only accredited courses, with some exceptions, are funded.

Employers can receive a reimbursement for part of the training costs when it comes to training for people in employment. There are no conditions regarding the quality assurance of such training in the relevant legal framework (the Act on employment services - 5/2004).

Planning at CVET system level

The main planning document for reforms and policy development in further education in Slovakia is the Lifelong Learning Strategy, first adopted in 2007 and updated in 2011. The Strategy defines the main areas for action when it comes to government intervention in the area of LLL. The 2011 update of the strategy is supported by an action plan that defines concrete measures to be implemented by 2015.

One of the key areas for action identified is the need to ensure better matching between labour markets needs and the supply of further education, currently judged insufficient¹.

Stakeholder involvement

The above mentioned Lifelong Learning Strategy intends to strengthen the role of stakeholders in defining the need for further education. This takes place through the work of sectoral councils. Twenty-four sectoral councils are operational⁵⁵⁷ and a number of examples of good practice in cooperation between stakeholders and further education providers have been identified within the dual system of education.

Who can deliver CVET

Further education in Slovakia can be delivered by a range of public and private organisations. It can be delivered by schools, universities, NGOs as well as private companies.

Only organisations accredited to carry out a given training programme recognised as 'further education' under the Act on LLL can issue certificates/ qualification certificates linked to these programmes.

Certification, assessment and validation

The Act on LLL defines:

- That all accredited further education programmes have to include a final assessment (which is available to candidates who took part in at least 75% of the training programme); that the final

¹ See for example Barosova, Kosta, Dovalova and Keselova (2011) *Vzdelavanie a priprava pre trh prace*

⁵⁵⁷ <http://www.kvalifikacie.sk/sektorove-rady>

assessment focuses on knowledge, skills and competence in the professional activities targeted by the programme; that those programmes that lead to full or partial qualifications have to be assessed in front of a jury. Education institutions have to demonstrate how these conditions are satisfied for the given programme to be accredited.

- The conditions under which individuals can obtain recognition of knowledge, skills and competence gained through forms of learning other than formal education or completion of accredited programmes. This form of assessment can only be carried out by accredited organisations and under defined conditions. In practice, the intention is that these organisations will be VET schools or in some cases professional chambers (in cooperation with VET schools). The assessment has to follow the assessment standard, be carried out by a committee and included theoretical and practical parts.

A major change in quality assurance of CVET in the years to come is expected to arise from the implementation of the national qualifications system. This defines national standards for qualifications as well as the related assessment standards which have to be followed by all CVET providers.

Monitoring and evaluation

Under the Act on LLL, an information system for further education was developed¹. This comprises:

- A register of further education institutions that deliver accredited programmes.
- A register of accredited programmes.
- A register of persons participating in further education.
- A system for the assessment of further education needs.

The Act introduced the obligation on further education institutions to provide data on a number of aspects regarding the programmes they deliver, such as participation and completion.

Main changes since 2009

The Act on LLL which brought in the vast majority of the aspects described above was adopted in 2009 and amended in 2012.

Quality assurance arrangements in continuous VET at provider level

The accreditation of the programme is the main quality assurance instrument in further education that defines the conditions which CVET providers have to comply with. The Act on LLL, which regulates the accreditation process, defines a number of programme design and delivery characteristics that providers have to comply with, such as:

- Definition of the programme target group.
- Entry conditions.
- Graduate profile (in terms of knowledge, skills and competence and relationship with professional activities).
- Education methods.
- Scope of the programme in terms of hours of training.
- Education programme and curriculum description.
- Final examination.
- Material and technical equipment.

Key aspects of the requirements defined in the accreditation process are:

¹ <http://isdv.iedu.sk/>

- The nomination of a professional grantee who guarantees the quality of the programme. The conditions for who can be a grantee are defined in the accreditation manual¹.
- The profile of lecturers/ trainers is also defined in the accreditation manual. They have to possess the professional competences required in the programme area as well as the competence to design and deliver training.

The accreditation process does not require further education institutions to demonstrate that they have a system for internal quality assurance. However, the Act on LLL defines the requirements for the documentation of accredited programmes, including the requirement for institutions to collect learner feedback in the form of quality assessment.

SECTION B – INTERACTION BETWEEN NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EQAVET

National Reference Point – Introduction

The National Reference Point is located within the State Vocational Education Institute (SIOV). As noted above, SIOV is the agency in charge of VET development directly governed by the ministry. It designs state curricula in VET and also has an advisory role in defining VET policies and practice. The institute also takes a leading role in defining and implementing projects that support the development of VET and VET schools in Slovakia.

The NRP does not have a legally defined statute in terms of its activities but has an agreed scope of responsibilities and activities². The NRP was nominated by the ministry of education based on the previous involvement of SIOV in the process of EQAVET. The NRP was formally nominated in 2011. The mission of the institution in which the NRP is located is to carry out analytical/ research activities on quality assurance and quality.

The NRP was assigned a specific budget for the year 2016. The unit in which the NRP is located (3 people) is also in charge of EQF NCP and ECVET NCP (membership in the user group). Before 2016, all activities of the NRP were funded from the existing SIOV budget.

Currently the main activities of the NRP are:

- Participation in national events and presentations of the topic of quality assurance and EQAVET.
- Cooperation on the development of strategic documents.
- Participation in European activities.
- Advisory role – responding to queries from other institutions about EQAVET and general quality assurance in VET.

NRP is working on developing a guidance tool/ methodology for the self-assessment of VET providers, adapted to the Slovak context.

National approach to enhance quality assurance

There is no explicit strategic document at national level that defines the measures of quality assurance in VET in Slovakia. However, work on such a document is proceeding.

The main developments in the field of quality assurance in IVET are linked to school reform and the introduction of school curricula and school-level planning, not only of curricula but also of further

¹ Ministerstvo Školstva Pokyn na vypracovanie žiadosti o akreditáciu vzdelávacích programov

² <http://siov.sk/index.php/sk/europske-iniciativy/eqavet-1>

training and assessment of teachers. These measures were contained in the 2008 legislation. In CVET, the main changes to quality assurance are contained in the 2009 legislation on LLL. As explained in part one of this report, a number of elements are still missing.

The content of the EQAVET Framework – use and usefulness

The recent legislation cited in section one of this report carries elements that strengthen quality assurance in IVET and CVET. However, these are not explicitly designated as a quality assurance policy approach.

The main concern of school reform (which also covers VET) was to enhance quality and to give schools the chance to provide their programmes and activities in a more flexible manner. Internal quality assurance is expected to be the next step to be tackled.

At the same time, much attention was paid to external quality assurance in policy developments in Slovakia. A key development in this direction is the development of a system of external examinations/assessments for different age groups (age of 10-11, 14-15 and 18-19) – called Monitor 5, Monitor 9 and external “Maturita”. The objective of this project was to develop a system of external evaluation and monitoring of education achievement across specific years of study. This approach also aims to train teachers and pedagogical staff to define assessment instruments, carry out assessments and develop a system of indicators for the monitoring of education and training¹. These assessments concern only general education subjects⁵⁶¹ and initial VET.

Quality assurance in CVET was also strengthened via the reformed accreditation procedure. Quality assurance was one of the key concerns of legislation on lifelong learning. EQAVET has not yet had an impact on the national regulatory framework for quality assurance nor on the system of indicators used for external evaluation by the inspection.

The European quality assurance framework is considered to have had a greater impact than EQAVET on national developments in terms of qualifications design and awarding. At the same time, EQAVET is currently being used as the basis for the development of a guidance/ methodology for self-assessment at provider level. Though the interviewees considered the EQAVET framework as overall coherent, one highlighted that the 'Planning stage' of the EU QA cycle in VET does not refer explicitly to the identification of a problem(s) or gaps, which form the basis for planning.

Partner organisation involvement

The main organisations with which the NRP communicates about EQAVET are the ministry of education, the different agencies noted in part 1 of this document as well as the national agency of the lifelong learning programme, and VET providers (see below).

Given that the activities of the NRP are for the moment mainly based on communication during workshops and events there is no formal plan for engagement with stakeholders.

The NRP is also contacted by the ministry agencies to provide advice on the directions to take to ensure a given document/ action is aligned (or not contradictory) to EQAVET.

Influence of EQAVET on national developments of quality assurance

The direct influence of EQAVET on national developments is in the form of guidance/ methodology for VET provider self-assessment, with clear references to EQAVET.

One interviewee mentioned that the fact that EQAVET was included in the lifelong learning programme calls created some awareness and curiosity among VET providers. More people are now

¹ http://www.nucem.sk/sk/projekt_esf/project/13 ⁵⁶¹ main focus being mathematics, Slovak language and foreign language at higher levels

informed about EQAVET than a few years ago. However, according to interviewees, awareness remains low.

Synergies with other EU level instruments

The development of the qualifications system and framework was an important vehicle for strengthening quality assurance of VET qualifications, in particular in CVET. However, the synergies were more about quality assurance in general than EQAVET in particular (i.e. people and documents do not refer to EQAVET in this context).

When it comes to synergies between EQAVET, EQF, and ECVET these remain mainly about communication and the exchange of information at institutional level. No clear links with quality assurance in higher education were described by the interviewees.

Sources Legislation

596/2003 of Coll. as amended

5/2004 of Coll. as amended

245/2008 of Coll. as amended

317/2009 of Coll. as amended

61/2015 of Coll.

Reports

Štátna školská inšpekcia (2014) *Vyrocna sprava*

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https://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/velka_sprava/sprava_14_15.pdf

fNovak (2011) *Prehľad kľúčových javov, vlastností, posudzovaných činností vrátane tvorby inštrukčných a meracích nástrojov merania kvality školy*

Barosova, Kosta, Dovalova and Keselova (2011) *Vzdelavanie a priprava pre trh prace* Ministerstvo

Skolstva *Pokyn na vypracovanie žiadosti o akreditáciu vzdelávacích programov*

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Websites

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