

Partnership between schools and enterprises in the Czech Republic

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There is **no formal apprenticeship program** along the lines of the dual system in the Czech Republic, i.e. there is **no program that includes contract between the apprentice and the employer** and there is no shared responsibility between employer and the school related to the training (as it the case e.g. in Germany or Austria). **Schools are exclusively responsible for education** and training and **curriculum shows a high proportion of theory in comparison with practical training.**

Work-based training and work placements are integrated into IVET curricula as a mandatory part The conditions regarding the **quality** should be stipulated in the contract between the company and the school.

- The company appoints instructors to take care of the students (the instructor is selected for the company employees and it is not a separate profession and may undergo an accredited course of basic pedagogy, but it is not mandatory.

The school teachers bear responsibility for controlling the quality of the workplace learning – however:

- quality assurance mechanisms are not sufficient
- students performing in some companies only auxiliary tasks and not developing their vocational skills

Social Partnership

Enhancing the role of employers and increasing their participation in VET is one of current national priorities.

➤ **supported by several strategic documents of the Ministry of Education:**

- Strategy for Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic (2007).
- National Action Plan to support vocational education and training (2008)
- The Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System (2011-15) (2010)
- Long-term Regional Plans for the Development of Education
- New measures fostering vocational education and training (2013)
- Education Policy Strategy of the Czech Republic 2020 (2014)

Cooperation between employers and secondary schools is the strongest in the area of VET

Aim:

- **to support both the quality of learning outcomes**
- **employability of graduates,**
- **support the attractiveness and credibility of VET**

Social Partnership

The Education Act (adopted in 2004) strengthened powers of social partners and their involvement in VET.

Representatives of social partners participate in:

- **formulation of national curricula (RVPs);**
- final exam committees of secondary vocational programs (ISCED 3C);
- cooperate at the newly introduced uniform assignments for final examinations (ISCED 3C);
- profile (vocational) parts of *maturita* exams (ISCED 3A);
- **Provision of practical training/work placement in a real work environment** (working conditions of students in practical training are governed by the Labor Code)

The National Curricula:

- contain the minimum requirements for education stipulated by the State
- created for each of 281 individual fields of education
- focused mainly on learning outcomes and key competences

Based on the National Curricula, secondary schools design their own **school curricula** which allow:

- more flexible shaping of graduate profiles in line with regional needs
- development of the relevant field, interests and capacities of students

Social Partners

Involved in:

➤ **Field groups**

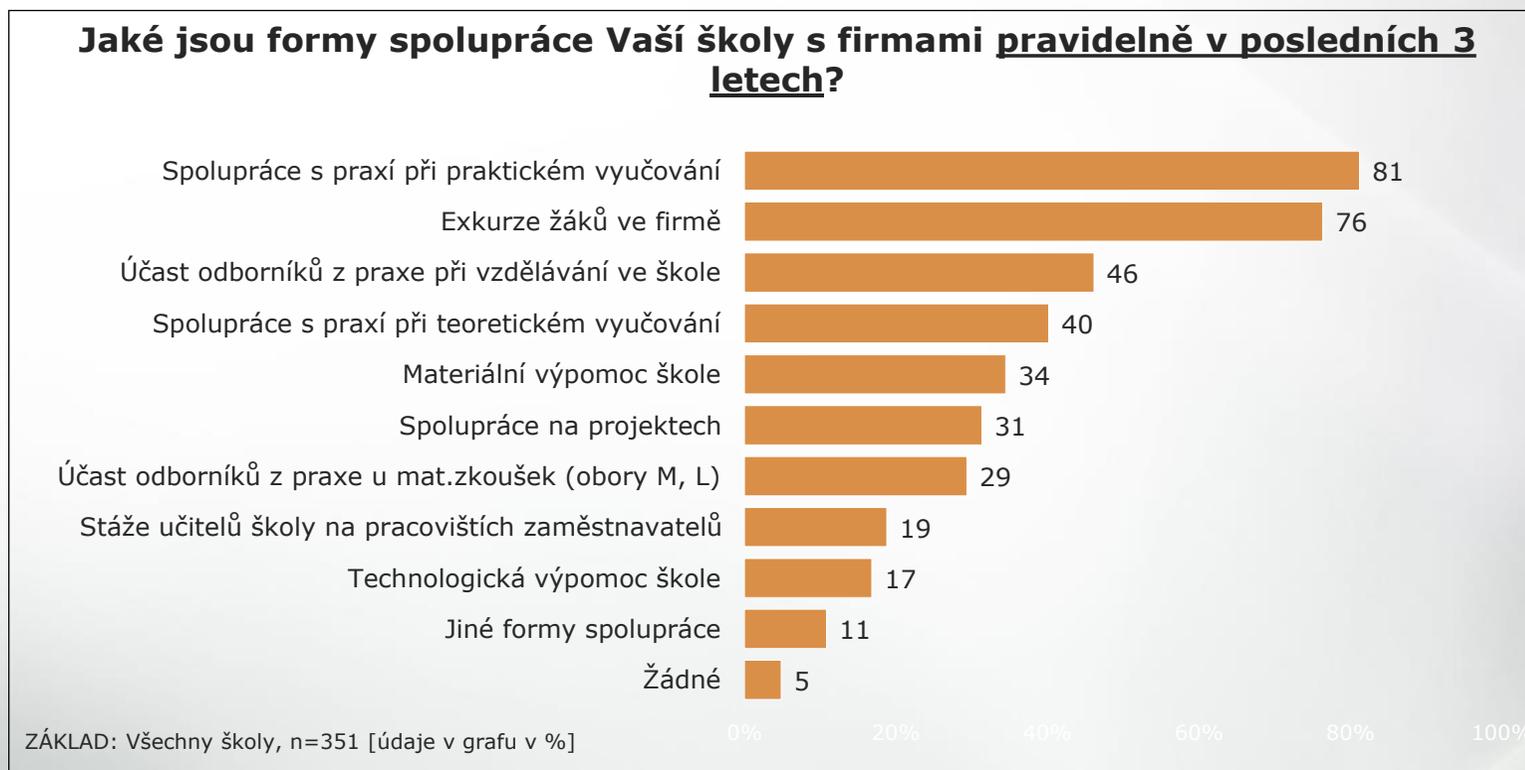
- 25 field groups operating under the governance of the National Institute for Education (NÚV)
- consist of experts from the area of education, labour market and occupations.
- established based on the need to foster, on national level, creation of the national curricula whose objectives and contents are in line with the labour market needs

➤ **Sector councils**

- 29 sector councils consisting of the representatives of employers, educators and ministries working on the qualification standards and skills needs analysis in particular sectors
- Work on standards of vocational qualifications in relation to occupations and jobs defined in the National Register of Occupations
- involved in the process of defining occupations and qualifications (primarily until now 673 finalised and approved vocational qualification standards prepared within the National Qualifications register (NSK)).

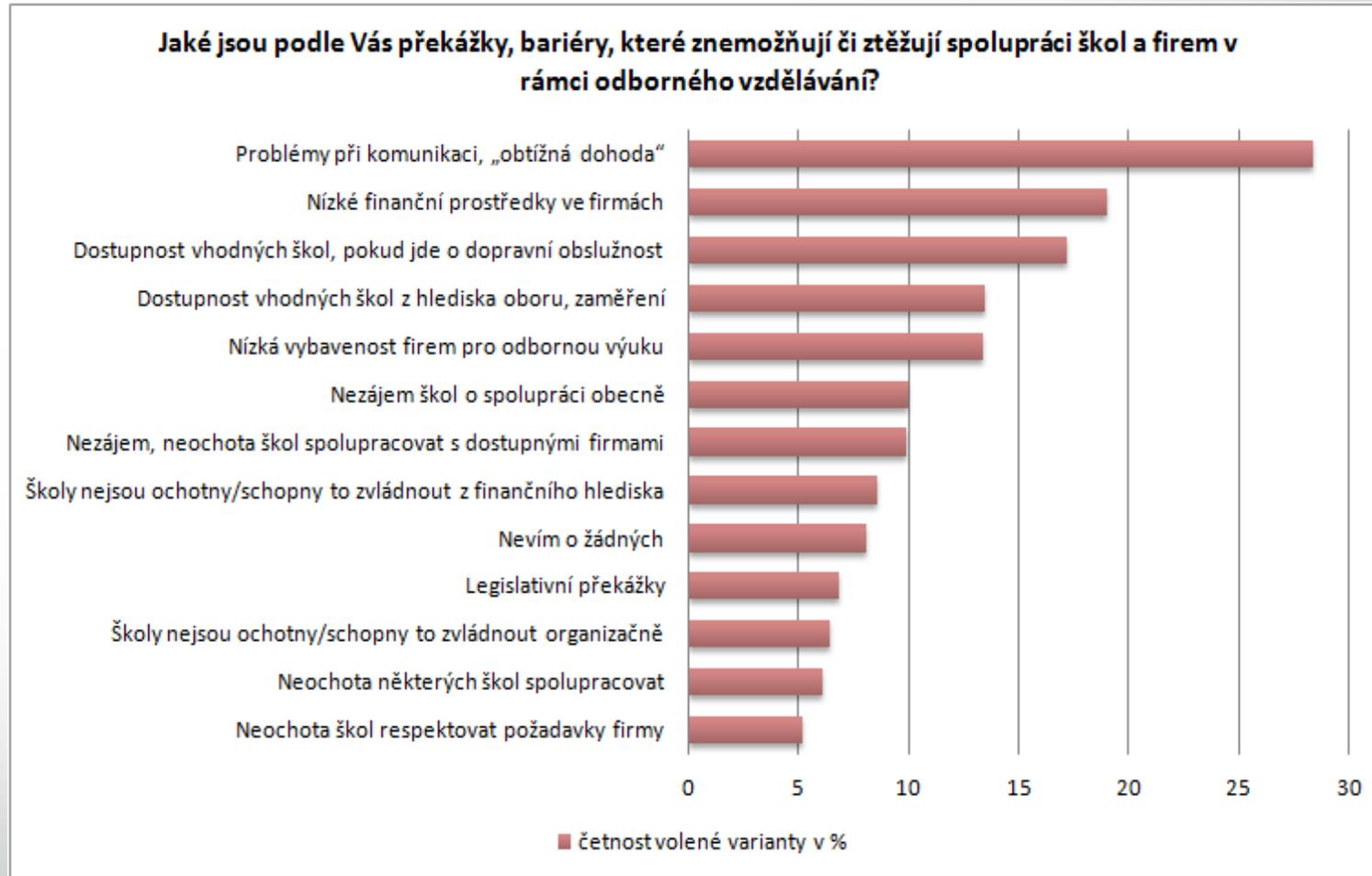
Most frequent forms of cooperation between schools and social partners in the Czech Republic:

- Cooperation with practical training and work placements;
- excursions in companies;
- participation of experts from practice participates in education of pupils;



Barriers of cooperation between schools and companies:

- Problems in communication and difficult agreement;
- low financial sources in companies;
- accessibility of schools (transport)



Agreements between schools and social partners

The **responsibility for education as well as the practical training is in hands of the educational provider**, pupils are not employees of the company.

The **companies** in which students do their practical training **sign contracts with the school**. There exist **some** examples of good practice as to **agreements between pupils and company**.

The quality of contracts between school and company is not sufficient especially as to the content, expected learning outcomes are missing and the quality assurance as well. Workplace training and it's quality is therefore often criticized, usually not sufficient external quality control at the workplace done by the Czech School Inspectorate.

In accordance with the School Act agreements on content and conditions for the performance of practical training between schools and companies are concluded, usually for 1- 3 years.

These agreements are also a condition for tax incentives.

Agreements between schools and social partners

Usual content of agreement:

- Rights and obligations of pupils, school and company (but very general)
- Minimum salary up to 30% of minimum wage
- Training area must meet hygiene requirements and safety conditions
- Work load of pupils (7 or 8 hours a day depending on the age)
- Involvement of instructors – assessment of pupils
- Instruction about work safety
- Practical training will be performed in coherence with teaching plans of the specific field

No specific content in terms of learning outcomes is set in the agreement, the company is very often lacking the knowledge of context- i.e. they are not familiar with the school educational program

Quality Assurance and labour market needs – Example of good practice

Implementation of national systemic project - The new final examination 2 has been prepared within three subsequent system projects lasting from 2005 until February 2015:

The project was and is aiming to:

- support education in vocational fields through the development in the area of final evaluation
- **quality assurance**
- establish **uniform assignment of final examination for all vocational fields** achieving thus comparability of final examination within each field.
- enhance **comparability of learning outcomes and quality of education in particular vocational fields** (study programs at the level of ICED 3 C);
- increase **credibility of vocational certificate** and attractiveness of vocational education as such (i.e. to foster the interest of students and parents in vocational fields);
- involve the **experts from the practice** while determining the contents of final examinations in order to match as much as possible the actual requirements of the practice (employers' needs);
- simplify teachers' preparation for the final examinations

Quality Assurance and labour market needs – Example of good practice

Topics of final examinations are developed under the organizational and methodological support of the National Institute for Education (NÚV) by teams of pedagogues who teach the relevant vocational programs at schools.

The representatives of employers assess developed materials in terms of existing needs in the practice.

Developed topics are provided to all schools on yearly basis – for each vocational field there is a set of topics comparable in terms of contents as well as complexity level.

New system of final examination in qualifications with vocational certificate has been created; currently 84% of schools use it.

The new model of preparation and implementation of final examination is expected to be introduced as mandatory in the course of the school year 2014-2015

Identification of skills needs

The Czech Republic lacks a coherent system for anticipation of skill needs (nevertheless the system development is foreseen by the project announced by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs).

Involvement of Employers in order to be able to regulate openings of fields of study in regions and numbers of pupils.

Employers are becoming more engaged in public discussions at regional and national levels that reflect the need to better match the educational supply with the economy demand.

Various initiatives have been developed at the research level aiming at creating solid methods and individual tools for early identification of skill needs.

They still take the form of single projects that are not inter-related, and their results do not serve as a regular source of information.

Projects are mostly contracted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy* – MŠMT) or social partners.

Most experienced institutions are:

- The National Training Fund – National Observatory of Employment and Training – results presented at web portal Czech Future Skills (www.czechfutureskills.eu)
- The Research Institute of Labour and Social Affairs

Identification of skills needs

- Projects of various other institutions that are not directly concerned with forecasting skill needs but that carry out certain partial activities within this area:

The **National Institute for Education (NÚV)** has developed an Information System on the Situation of Graduates in the Labour Market (ISA) available at the website www.infoabsolvent.cz.

The **Education Policy Centre of the Faculty of Education at Charles University** carried out an analysis of the development of qualification requirements in the Czech labour market to be used as a part of the ISA.

There are also **partial activities at regional or sectoral level** focusing on examining employers' needs and short-term outlooks of regional labour market developments. These analyses and predictions of future development **only exceptionally concern longer periods of development in relation to regional strategies.**

Surveys-NÚV

Needs and requirements of employers monitored by NÚV, publications based on:

- **Direct surveys – among individual employers**

Surveys describing **opinions and needs of employers in individual economic sectors**, concern especially on **required knowledge, skills and competences of current employees** and **requirements on recruited employees** with special emphasis on graduates of schools.

Surveys also deal with „**difficult**“ **fields, forms of cooperation between schools and enterprise** but also to **expectations of employers**

- **Indirect surveys:**

- information from labour offices (an important segment of the complex perspective on the situation of graduates and young people; factors of labour market success, ALMP instruments,)
- Among personal agencies and analyses of job advertisements
(analyses the structure of positions advertised in printed media and on internet, opinions of personal agencies workers)

Example of good practice- POSPOLU

Project POSPOLU seeks to raise schools' and enterprises' awareness of elements and principles introduced by the European tools ECVET and EQAVET that **foster transparency and quality of training and internships and contribute to the improvement of quality of graduates' competencies** and support the **process of defining the required learning outcomes**.

Implementation of ECVET principles at national level- design and creation of units of learning outcomes in tight cooperation with companies:

This approach supports also reflection of labour market needs into curricula or units which can be a supplement of school curricula in order to ensure the up-to date of information, dynamic changes in modern technologies, etc.

CASE STUDY- School of Hotel Management

Hotel School, College of Hotel Management and Language School in Poděbrady

School with a 45 years tradition, having many awards and labels of quality

Seated in historical spa town in the Central Bohemia, about 50 kilometers from Prague

Branch of study: Hotel management and tourism

Length of study: 4 years, final exam (maturita certificate)

Tight interconnection of theoretical and practical training- „Junior Hotel“- accommodation offered to wide public. Plenty of positive reactions on pupils´ professional involvement and behavior towards clients

Two main priorities of the school education program :

- interconnection of the education in school with the world of work -quality of social partners
- scope and quality of foreign-language education

Competences of pupils are developed since the first year of study in the real environment of school restaurant, school bar and school hotel – every pupil is involved and participates on the quality of services and clients- their **work is publicly presented**, as these facilities are open to wide public

Pupils can take part in **many courses which bring them new procedures and technologies which are not always included in the school educational program–** barman and sommelier courses, confectionery, fruit and vegetable decorative cutwork. **Certificate valid on labour market is awarded**

CASE STUDY- School of Hotel Management

The **pedagogical concept of school** supports:

- the principle of **co-responsibility of pupils for own education**
- **understanding the idea and concept of lifelong learning** as well the **importance of own development.**

Cooperation with social partners:

- As the school cooperates with the Office of the President of the Czech Republic or Czech Representative at the Council of Europe pupils are provided with **practical training for special and festive events.**
- Pupils may reach 10 weeks of **practical training**
- **Cooperation with the top hotels** in Prague (Mariott, Hilton, Four Seasons, Savoy, Radisson, etc.) and in some regions as well as abroad; pupils attend practical training since their third year
- **Practical training abroad**, internship also during the summer (2-3 months for adult pupils)
- **Low unemployment of school graduates** (very positive feedback from employers not only those who have contract with schools on provision of practical training).

Social partners provide feedback through questionnaires. They evaluate the competences of pupils and also inform school about other requirements regarding the educational process and it's innovation.

School is very well assessed and therefore addressed by employers with offer on social partnership

CASE STUDY- School of Hotel Management

Principles of Common Assessment Framework are applied

- **The PDCA system is crucial in Podebrady and is implemented in the educational strategy of the school.**
- **It is really applied in practice, based on regular assessment of processes within the school.**

The system focuses pupils as recipients of educational services as well as their participation on the design and quality of the educational program.

The key principle applied in the CAF model is a principle of continuous improvement (in all activities of school).

The school applies a client and labour market oriented attitude in education.

Evaluation

The school prepares every year a Self-evaluation report (not obligatory by law) and every year also a survey on graduates satisfaction with the quality of school is conducted.

After passing each block of practical training **pupils go through the self-evaluation procedure** (they use special books of daily records, where the place and activities done are described, pupils also evaluate acquired experience, development of competencies and the overall benefit of the respective internship or practical training).

Evaluation form is completed also by representatives of employers- they evaluate:

Behavior and performance, communication, tasks fulfillment, planning and time management, punctuality, motivation and engagement for working in the field and vocational skills and competences.

School regularly assesses the quality of learning outcomes and according to results further steps are taken.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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