



**Knowledge Management System  
Theme 5**

**Continuing vocational education and training**

**Slovakia**

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This study was prepared for the eKnowVet database of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). There are in total 11 themes in the database broken into detailed topics (the so-called islands). Respective paragraphs and references in the text are coded in accordance with respective codes of the database. These codes are applied by the member states, and the visitors of <http://www.trainingvillage.gr>, button National VET Systems, can find under them information about respective topics across Europe.

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Since 1989 the Slovak Republic (which became an independent country in 1993) has been transforming its political and economic system into a democracy with a market economy. These changes, together with the accession of the country to the European Union, have strong influence on the evolution of CVET.

At present, there is a relatively broad range of educational opportunities for adults. They can undertake short-term as well as long-term courses oriented towards acquiring, improving and updating their competences and qualifications. Alongside these programmes, many activities focus on serving learners' personal interests (e.g. socio-cultural education, hobby education, education for seniors). Current provision of educational opportunities for adults can be divided into the following categories:

- Adults have a choice to integrate into the system of initial formal education and undertake (on the same basis as all pupils and students) long-term study programmes leading to recognised certifications (e.g. ISCED 3A, 3C, 4, 5A, 5B). This possibility is offered by state, as well as private educational institutions (e.g. secondary schools, universities). Adult learners undertaking courses within initial educational system are often interested in individualized and flexible forms of study (e.g. part-time, external, distance courses) that are provided by some institutions. Costs of initial educational programmes within state and public institutions are covered by public funds. However, many public universities have been charging unofficial fees to part-time/external students (for more details see part 0502 “Publicly promoted CVET for all”). Costs of initial education programmes within private institutions are covered primarily by participants.
- Adults can participate in various forms of CVET activities and programmes:
  - training activities focused on the development of knowledge, abilities and approaches that are necessary for their job practice (e.g. language, ICT, and office administration courses). These programmes are provided mainly by private educational institutions, and their costs are generally covered by participants;
  - retraining activities and training programmes for the unemployed and people interested in employment. This type of CVET is operated by the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, and financed from the State budget and the European Social Fund;
  - enterprise-affiliated training activities focusing on employees. Such activities are financed mainly by employers;
  - training activities and programmes for specific professions (e.g. medical and pedagogical professions, professions within public administration, various financial sector professions). These activities are provided mostly under the responsibility of the respective ministries (e.g. the quality assessment of the CVET activities for medical professions is provided by the Ministry of Health) and they are financed predominantly from public funds;
  - training activities focusing on the drop-outs from the initial educational system. They are financed by public funds.
- Adults can undertake educational activities linked to their hobbies and free-time interests (e.g. music or fine arts courses). Such courses might be attended within

various structures: for example, so called “centres of leisure time” (centrum voľného času) or “basic schools of arts” (základná umelecká škola). Seniors can also enrol in academic courses at “universities of the third age” (univerzita tretieho veku) that are proposed by some tertiary educational institutions. These activities do not lead to any recognised certifications. Hobby educational activities are provided by both public and private institutions, and they are financed by participants, as well as public funds (e.g. “universities of the third age”).

Provision of adult education is organised mostly on a local basis. There is only one non-state training institution operating nation-wide – Academy of Education (Akadémia vzdelávania) - with a network of more than 30 centres across the country. Academy of Education inherited this network from the educational institution acting before 1989. There are however other institutions able to offer services nation-wide. Internet portal [www.education.sk](http://www.education.sk), that is being operated by the company Education, s.r.o., disposes of the biggest database of educational activities for adults in the Slovak Republic.

As far as the schemes aimed at teaching computer skills, the continuing training activities related to ICT literacy have been recently promoted throughout various national projects, such as Open School (Otvorená škola), Infovek (Infovek) or Digital Sturism (Digitálne štúrovstvo, the project is named after the 19th century enlightened personality Ľudovít Štúr). For more details see part 05010503 “New learning environments”. Moreover, the ICT basics courses focusing on the unemployed and people interested in employment are often provided by the offices of labour, social affairs and family. The ICT development was also enhanced by an important strategic document - the National Lisbon Strategy of the Slovak Republic (Lisabonská stratégia pre Slovensko, 2005). The document stresses the importance of development of a high-quality and affordable information and communication infrastructure within the Slovak Republic.

Training activities focusing on the development of foreign language skills of adults are provided by diverse institutions, which propose a variety of programmes. Most adult participants attend foreign language courses in private or non-state institutions, and cover the costs of these educational activities themselves. Foreign language training is also frequently provided by employers, especially in medium and large companies with foreign investments. The adults without basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, might apply for courses focusing on the drop-outs from the initial educational system. Such courses lead to certification of completed basic education, i.e. ISCED 2 level (for more details see part 0503 “Training for unemployed people and others vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market”). Yet, it must be stressed that the country’s early school leaving rate is very low.

Current provision of adult learning in the Slovak Republic is characterised by the following weaknesses:

- participation in adult education and training is low;
- no mandatory sources for financing CVET have been identified so far (Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education lists all the possibilities of financing of CVET, but no incentives for allocation of own means towards companies and individuals have been set);
- lack of mechanism for mapping adult learning needs within different regions;
- lack of mechanism for evaluation and quality assurance of adult education;
- absence of system of recognition of learning outcomes of CVET (the Slovak Republic has not yet set up a system of recognition of non-formal education outcomes;

- absence of a complex, up-to-date information system and guidance services concerning learning possibilities for adults;
- lack of national statistics on adult education and training. (e.g. there are almost no statistical data on enterprise-affiliated CVET activities focusing on employees);
- adult education has been treated marginally, compared to other components of educational system.

## Statistics

National statistics on adult education can be considered a weakness of the Slovak Republic. It is estimated that there are around 2500 providers of adult non-formal educational activities and programmes. However, the national institute collecting data on adult non-formal education providers (Institute of Information and Prognoses in Education, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva, ÚIPŠ) disposes data from less than 400 of them. Besides, the Slovak Republic did not participate in CVTS2 survey (conducted in 2000/2001 by Eurostat), so there are almost no data on enterprise-affiliated training activities focusing on employees.

In order to present statistics on adult education in the Slovak Republic, the following data will be used:

- LFS ad-hoc module on Lifelong Learning, 2003, Eurostat;
- Labour Force Survey data, 2005, Eurostat;
- UOE Data collection, 2003, Eurostat.

Concerning the European benchmark on participation of adults in lifelong learning (12.5% of 25-64 years old participating in education and training in 2010), the Slovak Republic still lacks behind the EU objective: in 2005, within the last four weeks before the survey, only 5% of adults participated in education and training activities.

Statistics from LFS ad hoc module on participation in lifelong learning, 2003 (reference period of this survey is 12 months) allow a more detailed analysis of the participation of adults in formal and non-formal education:

The survey data demonstrate that the Slovak Republic is characterised by low participation of adults in formal education. It is also evident that adults participating in formal educational system are relatively young.

**Table 1: Rate of adults (%) in formal education by age group**

	<b>Total 25-64</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	1	2.6	0.7	0.1	0.1
<b>EU-25</b>	4.5	10.7	3.6	2.1	0.9

Source: Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on Lifelong Learning 2003. Target population: 25-64 years, reference period: 12 months.

As regards participation of older students (adult learners) in tertiary education, the proportion of these students among all tertiary education students was 23.1% in 2003. At the same period, 36.7% of all European tertiary education students were over 24 years old (Eurostat, UOE Data collection), which means that the Slovak Republic is considerably below the European average. This might be caused by a lack of flexibility of formal educational system (e.g. lack of part-time, open and distance courses; absence of national schemes for validation of non-formal and informal learning; absence of professionally-oriented post-secondary education).

When it comes to participation in non-formal adult education, the SR with its 20.5% of adults participating in non-formal learning stands above the EU-25 average (Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on Lifelong Learning 2003). As for gender distribution, men seem to participate slightly more than women (the imbalance becomes more pronounced in older age, 55+). Age is another important factor effecting participation in non-formal learning activities: participation rate between the ages of 25 and 54 is rather high (23.4%), but it decreases significantly after the age of 55.

**Table 2: Rate of participation (%) in non-formal education by sex and age group, 2003**

Age	Males					Females					Total				
	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
SR	25.6	25.2	24.0	11.4	22.9	21.0	21.4	21.1	4.2	18.1	23.4	23.3	22.5	7.5	20.5
EU-25	20.0	19.0	16.3	8.7	16.5	19.7	19.4	16.7	8.3	16.4	19.8	19.2	16.5	8.5	16.5

Source: Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on LLL 2003. Target population: 25-64 years, reference period: 12 months.

Participation rates in non-formal education according to the highest level of educational attainment are characterised by a relatively small proportion of low educated adults (adults with lower than upper secondary education), and an important proportion of high educated adults: in 2003, 41.2% of persons with higher educational attainment, in comparison to 19.7% with medium educational levels and 6.7% with lower than upper secondary education, followed non-formal education. In other words, participation is about six times higher for high educated people than for low educated ones.

**Table 3: Rate of participation (%) in non-formal education by educational attainment, 2003**

Educational attainment	Low (up to ISCED 2)	Medium (ISCED 3, 4)	High (ISCED 5, 6)
SR	6.7	19.7	41.2
EU-25	6.5	16.4	30.9

Source: Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on LLL 2003. Target population: 25-64 years, reference period: 12 months.

With regards to working status, in 2003, 28.5% of the employed, 6.5% of the unemployed and 2.2% of the inactive participated in some kind of non-formal education. Compared to the EU figures, the country might be characterised by a relatively high proportion of employed adults in non-formal education, and a low proportion of unemployed and inactive ones.

**Table 4: Rate of participation (%) in non-formal education by working status, 2003**

Working Status	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive
SR	28.5	6.5	2.2
EU-25	20.6	13.5	5.6

Source: Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on LLL 2003. Target population: 25-64 years, reference period: 12 months.

## 050101 - National definitions and boundaries

In the context of the Slovak educational system, the boundaries between initial education and continuing education and training have not been clearly delimited so far. Yet, the tendencies for distinction between initial education and CVET might be identified through various documents, such as national legislation or strategic papers.

*Note:* Prior to presenting these documents, it is important to note that there is only one Slovak expression - “*d’alšie vzdelávanie*” - corresponding to the English expressions “*continuing education and training*” and “*further education*”. This means that in the context of the Slovak Republic, these two expressions are considered as synonyms. Most of the Slovak documents translated into English, translate the expression “*d’alšie vzdelávanie*” with the term “*further education*”.

The strategic paper National Programme of Education and Training in the Slovak Republic for the Next 15-20 Years (Koncepcia rozvoja výchovy a vzdelávania v Slovenskej republike na najbližších 15-20 rokov), adopted in 2001, characterises continuing/further education as follows:

*“Further education broadens the education and training provided for children and young people at schools within the formal educational system. Further education means the education and training for adults, and it includes short-term as well as long-term programmes and courses oriented towards acquiring, improving, updating or changing people’s competences and qualifications. It also incorporates retraining for the unemployed and the second-chance education for those who did not make use of previous educational possibilities. Socio-cultural education, hobby education and education for the seniors (e.g. “universities of the third age”) are also considered a part of further education system.”*

Another important source of information on the tendencies for the distinction between initial education and continuing education and training is the Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education (Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o d’alšom vzdelávaní). Before its amendment in 2001, the Act defined continuing/further education as follows:

*§2 (1) “For the purposes of this Act, further education is education which makes it possible for each individual to supplement, widen and deepen his education, retrain or satisfy his interests or which enables him to prepare for the attainment of an educational level within the structure of the school system.”*

The types of further education are listed in the §3 of the latter Act:

- *education, which prepares the participant for the acquisition of a certain educational level; the acquisition of an education leading to a desired level and issue of educational certificates is performed by the primary schools, secondary schools and universities in accordance with special legislation;*
- *professional education and training, which enables the participant to widen, deepen or replenish his knowledge and proficiency, attain a qualification to perform a certain activity; professional education also includes retraining according to special legislation; certificates proving acquisition of such education are issued by institutions for further education accredited according to this Act;*
- *special-interest education, civil education and other education, which enables the participant to satisfy his interests and get fully involved in the life of the society;*

*certificates proving the acquisition of such education, are issued by institutions for further education that realize such educational activities.*

Some important changes were incorporated into the Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education in 2001. The amendment No. 567/2001 (novela č. 567/2001) of the latter Act excludes very explicitly from the system of continuing education all educational activities leading to the achievement of higher education degrees (ISCED 5A, 5B, 6). This means for instance that any adult (even a senior) entering a part-time, external or distance university course leading to a bachelor's or master's degree, would not be described as undertaking continuing education or training. At the same time, any person entering a part-time course provided by the same university, but not leading to a recognised level of education (e.g. short-term foreign language course) would be considered as undertaking continuing education. As far as the achievement of educational levels ISCED 2, ISCED 3A, ISCED 3B and ISCED 4A, the amendment No. 567/2001 does not exclude the possibility to follow the preparatory courses for the achievement of these levels within CVET system. However, at the same time it does not state, that it is possible to acquire a recognised level of education in the latter system.

With regards to the previously mentioned documents, a strong tendency might be observed to consider continuing education only as the learning that complements the achieved level of initial education, taking place after the person has finished formal education. However, the criteria for the distinction between initial and continuing education are quite obscure for the most users of the Slovak educational system. The boundaries seem to be vague especially when it comes to the educational and training activities for the early school leavers, and part-time secondary-school or university programmes. Therefore, there seems to be a need for clear official and legal national definition.

On the basis of presented documents, the conclusion is that:

- *age of the participants, type of provider* (public/private), *form of study* (full-time, part-time, external, distance) do not play a role in distinguishing between initial education and CVET;
- *labour market status* plays role only in retraining activities for the unemployed;
- *type of certification* might be considered the main factor in distinguishing initial education from continuing education and training: there is a tendency to exclude from the system of CVET the educational and training activities leading to a recognised level of education (recognised certifications).

For the purpose of this analysis, the following educational activities will be considered the CVET activities:

- training activities open to all citizens, focusing on the development of knowledge and abilities necessary for job practice, but not leading to a recognised level of education;
- retraining activities and programmes for the unemployed;
- training activities focusing on the drop-outs from the initial educational system, leading to ISCED 2 or ISCED 3 levels;
- enterprise-affiliated training activities;
- training activities and programmes for specific professions (e.g. medical and pedagogical professions, diverse professions within public administration).

## **050102 - Development of adult learning**

The Slovak Republic has quite a long tradition of adult education. Its development was enhanced by industrial and technological progress that took place after 1945. During the period of communism, in centrally planned economy, adult education was directed and planned by the State. All interested adults could undertake the educational activities at the State institutions, such as Academy of Education (Akadémia vzdelávania), or within various “cultural centres” (kultúrne strediská). The CVET activities and the special interest activities within these institutions were usually provided for payment (however the fees were very affordable and sometimes only symbolical). This period was also characterised by a well established system of enterprise-affiliated CVET. The majority of large State enterprises had their own training centres providing CVET for their employees.

Transformation of political system and introduction of market economy in the 90s, influenced considerably the development of adult education and training. Sectoral industry-affiliated CVET centres closed down and traditional state adult education providers started to operate as any other private body, offering education and training demanded by the market (e.g. foreign language and ICT courses). The current development of enterprise-affiliated training has been influenced by the arrival of a number of foreign investors who transfer their CVET know-how to various sectors of the Slovak economy. Besides, higher education institutions have been expanding their provision of adult education through centres of continuing education (or lifelong learning) established at several universities. The number of private and non-state CVET providers has increased significantly: It is estimated that at present there are around 2500 providers of continuing education and training in the Slovak Republic.

### **Current legal provision related to adult education and CVET**

At present, continuing education and training reposes on several legislative documents. These documents are mentioned in the various part of this report (for more details see bibliographical references). The Acts listed below are particularly important with regards to CVET provision:

- Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education and its Amendment No 567/2001 (Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní v znení neskorších predpisov a jeho novela č. 567/2001) codify the current stage of development of CVET. The act lists different types of institutions providing continuing training, types of continuing training activities, conditions of accreditation, issuance of certificates of training completion and possible sources for financing continuing training.
- Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov) stipulates instruments of active labour market policy, including labour market training provision (for more details see chapters “Training for the unemployed and other vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market” and “CVET at the initiative of enterprises or social partners”).
- Act No. 311/2001 Coll. of the Labour Code (Zákon č. 311/2001 Z. z. Zákonník práce v znení neskorších predpisov) regulates employers’ and employees’ responsibilities for upgrading skills (for more details see chapter “CVET at the initiative of enterprises or social partners”).
- Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (the “Trades Licensing Act”), as amended (Zákon č. 455/1991 Zb. o živnostenskom podnikaní (živnostenský zákon) v znení

neskorších predpisov) stipulates that the provision of continuing training is a free trade (i.e. no professional qualification and experience is requested from the potential CVET providers when filing for registration).

## **Review of national strategic documents linked to adult education and CVET**

Recent tendencies and issues related to the development of adult learning and CVET can be identified through different strategic documents that have emerged since 2000. The elaboration of these documents was advanced mainly by the need to comply with European strategies and policies.

In 2000, the Slovak Republic adopted the Concept for Further Development of Higher Education in the Slovak Republic for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Konceptcia d'alsieho rozvoja vysokeho skolstva na Slovensku pre 21. storočie). The concept promotes the development of continuing education and training within higher education institutions. As stated in the document, activities and programmes of continuing education should be open not only to university graduates, but also to all interested adults. Besides, the concept promotes the idea of a credit system for continuing training that would be linked to the higher education credit system (ECTS). This would connect the CVET programmes with the three-level system of higher education (Bachelor/Master/PhD) that was set up by the Bologna process.

In 2001, the National Programme for Education and Training in the Slovak Republic for the forthcoming 15-20 Years, so called "Millenium" programme (Konceptcia rozvoja výchovy a vzdelávania v Slovenskej republike na najbližších 15-20 rokov, projekt Milénium), was adopted. With regard to continuing training, the document states that the supply of CVET activities should be extended in scope, and improved in quality. The objective is to promote effective participation of secondary schools and universities in the provision of CVET activities. The programme encourages the development of a system of various incentives that would stimulate employers as well as individuals to invest in their education and training.

The Concept of Continuing Training in the Slovak Republic (Konceptcia d'alsieho vzdelávania v Slovenskej republike) was designed and approved by the Government in 2002. It characterises the current situation of continuing training and discusses major preconditions for its development until 2010.

National Action Plans for Employment 2003 and 2004-2006 (Národný akčný plán zamestnanosti 2003, Národný akčný plán zamestnanosti 2004-2006) underline the importance of development of integrated national information and advice system for CVET. With regard to non-formal and informal learning, the documents promote the development of a system of recognition of learning outcomes. Besides, the emphasis is put on a need to propose the tax incentives for employers who invest in the education and training of their employees. Like the previous documents, the National Plans for Employment formulate a need to expand CVET activities and programmes at higher education institutions. Finally, there is a proposal for the establishment of regional councils for lifelong learning.

In 2003, the Slovak Republic prepared a National Development Plan (Národný plán rozvoja) and then moved towards the planning documents needed for Structural Funds: the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources (Sektorový operačný program Ľudské zdroje) and the Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3 (Jednotný programový dokument NUTS II Bratislava Cieľ 3).

The Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources focuses one of its priorities (see priority “Improved Qualifications and Adaptability of People in Employment and Those Entering the Labour Market”) on CVET. The aim is to ensure that the labour force possesses the skills which are demanded on the labour market. In order to achieve this goal, the cooperation between the educational system and the labour market services is promoted.

One of the priorities of the Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3, focuses on the improvement of competitiveness, adaptability and quality of employment in the Bratislava region through human resource development (see priority “The development of lifelong learning and the support for research and development in the context of human resources quality improvement”).

In 2004, the Government adopted the Concept of Lifelong Learning in the Slovak Republic (Konceptia celoživotného vzdelávania v Slovenskej republike). The Concept reflects various European strategic documents, such as the “Memorandum of Lifelong Learning” and “Making the European Area of LLL a Reality”. The document recognizes following necessities:

- to develop and implement a system of recognition of skills and competences acquired through non-formal or informal learning, or through work experience;
- to increase financial investment into education and training;
- to promote quality assurance of CVET;
- to open the system of initial and continuing education to innovations;
- to boost the development of CVET activities focusing on basic skills, such as ICT, foreign languages, communication skills.

### **Recent initiatives and issues on the policy agenda**

With regard to the issues stipulated within various strategic documents, some recent initiatives related to CVET should be pointed out.

At present, an agency affiliated to the Ministry of Education (Academia Istropolitana) conducts a project supported by the European Union called “Design, Development and Implementation of an Open System of Lifelong Learning in the Slovak Republic for the Labour Market” (Tvorba, rozvoj a implementácia otvoreného systému celoživotného vzdelávania v SR pre potreby trhu práce). This project will prepare a proposal for a new legislation in the area of lifelong learning (Lifelong Learning Act). The Lifelong Learning Act (Zákon o celoživotnom vzdelávaní) is supposed to be approved by the end of 2007 (as stated in the Programme of the Ministry of Education for Years 2006-2010). The Act should create a framework for the recognition of skills and competences acquired through non-formal or informal learning, specify the sources for financing continuing training and enhance quality assurance of CVET.

Besides, the validation of non-formal and informal learning will be enhanced by the creation and development of a national system of qualifications. The National System of Qualifications, NSQ (Národná sústava kvalifikácií, NSK) should be harmonized with the European Qualifications Framework by 2010 (as stated in the Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning).

## 050103 - Evaluation

When it comes to evaluation, the system of initial education differs significantly from the system of CVET. All programmes falling within initial education are regulated by the Ministry of Education and supervised through the State School Inspection (at primary and secondary schools). University programmes are approved by the Accreditation Commission affiliated to the Government. However, there are no nationally approved quality standards for CVET programmes and activities. There is a lack of legal regulations, lack of national/regional organisations carrying out evaluations. Only a few types of CVET are related to evaluation activities:

- Quality of continuing vocational education and training is partly guaranteed by the State through evaluations carried out by the Accreditation Committee of the Ministry of Education (so called “small accreditation”). Competences of the Committee were enhanced by Amendment No. 567/2001 of Act No. 386/1997 Coll. On Further Education (Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o d’alšom vzdelávaní v znení neskorších predpisov a jeho novela č. 567/2001). At present, the following CVET activities must be accredited by the Ministry of Education:
  - education and training activities focusing on public servants;
  - activities financed from the state budget (however there are some exceptions; for more details see part 050304 “Quality Assurance”).

In order to acquire an accreditation, educational institution is obliged to submit a formal overview of the educational activity (a project and pedagogical documentation, documentation related to teachers and trainers, statement on technical back-up). Each project is evaluated by a team of experts selected by the Ministry of Education. The awarded credit is valid for the period of five years. However, during this period, the quality control of the accredited activities is not further checked.

The educational activities that do not focus on public servants and are not financed by State budget, do not have to be accredited. However, a lot of CVET providers are interested in the accreditation of their activities, and they apply for it. For many companies and organisations providing continuing education and training, the accreditation signifies a useful marketing tool: it is a sign of credibility of the educational institution.

- Special rules apply to accreditation of CVET activities and programmes for specific professions (e.g. medical professions, pedagogical professions, diverse professions within public administration). Accreditation of these activities is provided under the responsibility of the respective ministries (e.g. the quality assessment of all CVET activities for medical professions is provided by the Ministry of Health).
- As for the enterprise-affiliated CVET activities focusing on employees, it might be supposed that the efficiency and benefits of these activities are regularly monitored and evaluated (especially within large enterprises with foreign investments). However, the outcomes of these evaluations are not publicly accessible.
- Retraining for the unemployed initiated by offices of labour, social affairs and family (and financed from public resources), is another type of regularly monitored CVET.

The evaluations are based on the proportion of the unemployed who found employment after completing a training activity. Yet, this tool is not considered to be the most appropriate for evaluation of real efficiency of CVET for unemployed. It is supposed, that many unemployed would have found an employment even if they had not followed a training activity. However, the current system of monitoring, and consequent evaluations, do not take this in account.

Having listed all the evaluated CVET activities and programmes, it is evident that there is a lack of quality assurance for most publicly accessible CVET educational activities financed by participants. (e.g. foreign language, ICT, office administration courses). It is only up to the market to eliminate low quality CVET. Development of a quality assurance framework seems to be particularly important in the context of the Slovak Republic, where many educational providers establish their activities under the Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (the "Trades Licensing Act"), as amended (Zákon č. 455/1991 Zb. o živnostenskom podnikaní (živnostenský zákon) v znení neskorších predpisov). This Act considers the provision of training as a free trade and when filing for registration, no professional qualification and experience is requested.

Some efforts to establish a quality control have come from the Association of Adult Education Institutions (Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých, AIVD). This Association (in cooperation with two faculties) has developed a system for the certification of lecturers and its web site ([www.aivd.sk](http://www.aivd.sk)) proposes a list of certified trainers together with their field of activity. However, this system cannot be considered legally binding, since the AIVD is not a certifying or accrediting authority.

#### **050104 - Planning and forecasting**

Early identification of skills needs on national and regional levels, and consequent planning of CVET can be considered a weakness of the Slovak Republic. The country is characterised by insufficient connection between economic policy (especially economic prospective), employment policy and VET policy. As a matter of fact, offices of labour, social affairs and family frequently stress the lack of information on professions the unemployed should be retrained for. One reason for this deficiency is the rapidly changing economic environment, in which the forecasting of skills is a difficult task. Even so, there are some strategic papers that define the priorities for skills development (e.g. Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources, Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3, National Action Plans for Employment 2003 and 2004-2006). Besides, an interesting project related to planning and forecasting of skills needs has been conducted, since 2004, by Academia Istropolitana, an agency affiliated to the Ministry of Education. This project, called "Design, Development and Implementation of an Open System of Lifelong Learning in the Slovak Republic for the Labour Market" (Tvorba, rozvoj a implementácia otvoreného systému celoživotného vzdelávania v SR pre potreby trhu práce), is financially supported by the European Union. One of its objectives is to make a proposal for a system of monitoring of learning needs within the Slovak Republic.

With regards to sectoral forecasting of skills needs, an interesting initiative is linked to the automotive sector, which is the most progressive sector of the Slovak economy. Arrival of significant investors, such as Peugeot/PSA, Kia/Hyundai, and the expansion of the Volkswagen production, create a need for qualified automotive-sector labour force. In 2005, a contract of vocational training partnership was signed between PSA Peugeot Citroen, the

Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Education of France and the Association for the Vocational Training of Adults (AFPA, France). Consequently the project called “Campus of Trades” (Kampus povolání) is being implemented in Bratislava and Trnava. The project involves one university (Slovak Technical University, Bratislava) and three secondary specialised schools (Secondary Specialised School of Mechanics, Bratislava; Secondary Specialised School of Electrical Engineering and Mechanics, Trnava; Secondary Specialised School of Transport, Trnava). The aim of the “Campus of Trades” is to try to solve the labour force shortage in the automotive sector. The project will embrace about 1.800.000 hours of VET and will focus on:

- training of about 50 Slovak VET teachers who will take part in the training of PSA Peugeot Citroen employees and the development of Slovak technical teaching;
- training of 3.500 employees of PSA Peugeot Citroen in Trnava;
- training of employees of various Slovak automotive suppliers who will request it.

Learning needs within large companies (especially those with foreign capital) are normally evaluated internally, by specialised unit assigned to human resources department. These evaluations constitute the core for planning and forecasting of enterprise-affiliated CVET activities and programmes. Smaller companies often use external audit services in order to identify the learning needs of their employees and plan their CVET activities.

With regards to private and non-state providers, planning and forecasting of their CVET activities is based on market demands. The most required areas of training are foreign languages, ICT and office administration (especially accountancy).

### **050105 - Alternatives modes of delivery**

There is a quite limited supply of alternatives modes of delivery and pedagogical approaches in the Slovak Republic. The Slovak educational system might be characterised as a system based on traditional school settings and full-time schemes. Nevertheless, some provision is ensured for the learners who are not able to follow educational activities and programmes within the established settings and schemes.

The Slovak Republic has a long tradition of “external” form of study at higher education institutions. This form is frequently chosen by employed adult learners, because compared to full-time requirements, the number of compulsory-attendance courses is reduced. Moreover, “external” courses normally take place during weekend, which is very convenient for the adults who have other engagements during the week. This form of study leads to recognised certification (ISCED 5B or ISCED 5A). The main difference between “external” study and distance learning is that “external” students are not provided with any specialised study materials, while distance learning uses particular learning support and communication media. Basically, “external” students must accomplish the same tasks as full-time students, but they do so with a reduced amount of direct contact and limited pedagogical assistance. “External” form of study is sometimes provided also by secondary schools. It focuses on adults interested in re-integration into a secondary school programme in order to get a qualification.

Full-time university or secondary school students can also apply for “an individual study plan”. In this case, the students are exempted from some compulsory courses and provided with additional pedagogical assistance (individual tutoring). Nevertheless, “an individual study plan” is applied only exceptionally (e.g. to sports representatives, to students with disabilities or serious medical problems, etc.).

With regards to the listed alternative modes of delivery, it should be stressed that there is a tendency in the Slovak Republic to exclude educational and training activities leading to a recognised level of education (e.g. ISCED 3A, 3C, 5B, 5A) from the system of CVET (for more details see part 050101 “National definitions and boundaries”). Therefore, the above mentioned alternative modes of delivery are not considered a part of continuing education and training system.

As far as the initiatives defined clearly as CVET, training firms (cvičné firmy) for unemployed people (with special focus on unemployed graduates) must be pointed out. A training firm can be described as a simulation of economic reality that supports the development of a wide range of skills and competences, such as entrepreneurship skills, teamwork, language skills, etc. Such skills and competences are supposed to improve the position of unemployed people on the labour market. The majority of training firm projects for the unemployed are managed by the Slovak Centre for Training Firms (Slovenské centrum cvičných firiem - SCCF), established at the State Vocational Education Institute (Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania, ŠIOV) and they are financially supported by the European Social Fund. For the time being, the training firms for the unemployed represent only about 5% of all the registered training firms (95% of the registered training firms exist within the secondary school system).

On-the-job training provided by some large foreign investors might also be considered as an alternative mode of delivery. Its provision is supported by legislation. Large foreign companies creating new jobs in the Slovak Republic are entitled to apply for a State financial support, in order to train their newly hired employees (§54 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services). This contribution was recently accorded to the companies, such as Samsung Electronics (electronics), Universal Media Corporation (electronics and optical media products), KIA Motors, Mobis Slovakia and PCA Slovakia (automotive sector).

### ***05010501 - Open and distance learning***

The Slovak Republic is characterised by a limited provision of open and distance learning, and there does not exist any national scheme promoting this type of learning. Distance learning is promoted mostly by various European initiatives, and supported by the European funds. The current provision of distance learning is not monitored on national level, and consequently no national survey exists on this issue.

Initiatives in the area of distance learning are predominantly associated with higher education institutions. While the provision of complete distance programmes is still very limited, universities start to provide distance learning courses integrated into their regular full-time programmes. Nevertheless, many universities do not distinguish between “distance” and “external” forms of study and this is why they often describe themselves as providing distance learning, though they do only provide “external” form of study (for more details see part 050105 “Alternatives modes of delivery”).

Current provision of distance learning is primarily connected with the Phare programme “Multi Country Co-operation in Distance Education”, which was conducted between 1995 and 1999. The Phare programme initiated the following activities:

- creation of the National Centre for Distance Education (Národné centrum dištančného vzdelávania).

The Centre was established within the Slovak Technical University (Bratislava) and became a member of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU) in 1998. It has organised several seminars and conferences, as well as prepared methodological and conceptual materials for the development of distance education in the Slovak Republic. The first nine distance courses were delivered in 1996 and they attracted more than 1000 students. The first complete graduation programme started in autumn 1998.

- creation of the Slovak Distance Education Network (Slovenská sieť dištančného vzdelávania; network of the universities implicated in the above mentioned Phare programme).

The National Centre for Distance Education ceased operating in 2000, but the Slovak Distance Education Network (network of the universities in Košice, Zvolen, Nitra, Bratislava and Žilina) has remained in operation until now. The current distance learning provision within some of the universities that were involved in the Phare programme “Multi Country Co-operation in Distance Education” is described in the table below.

**Table 5: Current provision of distance learning at some universities that were involved in the Phare programme „Multi Country Co-operation in Distance Education“ which led to the introduction of distance learning activities**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Provision</b>
<b><i>Slovak Technical University, Bratislava (Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave)</i></b>	<p>Local Centre of Distance Education (Lokálne stredisko dištančného vzdelávania) was established in 1996. The principal mission of the centre is to support the development of flexible learning provision at the universities in Bratislava region.</p> <p>Presently, Local Centre of Distance Education proposes the following educational activities: courses for secondary school students who would like to continue their studies at the Slovak Technical University; a course focusing on the basics of e-learning techniques; a preparation course for the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) certificate.</p>
<b><i>Technical University, Košice (Technická univerzita v Košiciach)</i></b>	<p>The distance learning provision at the Technical University, Košice started in 1996 by the creation of the Institute of Lifelong Education (Inštitút celoživotného vzdelávania). The Institute is a part of the Slovak Distance Education Network, and among its other activities, it coordinates the provision of distance education in its region.</p> <p>At present, the Institute of Lifelong Education offers one complete ISCED 5B programme (in the field “Logistics”) and several CVET courses that combine computer-support training with attendance-course training (e.g. Basic Computer Skills; Risk Management; Training for Adults with Low Initial Education; “Person APEL“ course that provides information on the approaches and principles of accreditation of prior and experimental learning).</p>
<b><i>Technical University, Zvolen (Technická univerzita vo Zvolene)</i></b>	<p>The distance learning at the Technical University, Zvolen was initiated in 1996 within the above mentioned Phare programme. At present, the distance learning activities are maintained only within one faculty (Faculty of Wood Technology, Drevárska fakulta). The faculty offers one complete ISCED 5B distance learning programme in the field “Business Management“, and around 20 courses combining computer-support training with attendance-course training (these courses are integrated into regular full-time study programmes). These semi-distance courses are followed by around 500 students of the faculty.</p>

***Agricultural University,  
Nitra (Slovenská  
poľnohospodárska  
univerzita v Nitre)***

The distance learning at the Agricultural University, Nitra was initiated in 1996 by the establishment of the Local Centre of Distance Education (Lokálne stredisko dištančného vzdelávania). The distance learning courses used to be offered by several faculties. Today, the distance education is maintained within the Faculty of Economics and Management which proposes one ISCED 5B distance learning programme, “Management in Agriculture“.

Preconditions for further development of distance learning within the Slovak higher education institutions were created by the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education (Zákon č. 131/2002 Z. z. o vysokých školách a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov). The act explicitly identifies distance education as a form of study that can lead to recognised higher education certifications (ISCED 5B, 5A).

Outside public universities, there are some educational institutions (private or non-state) that provide CVET distance learning courses and programmes: e.g. City University Bratislava (which introduced distance learning already in 1990); Academia Istropolitana Nova (AINova); Academy of Education (Akadémia vzdelávania); Humboldt Institutes For Distance Education; The First Czech School Of Correspondence; European School Of Correspondence Courses (ESKK); German Correspondence Academy (NKA).

The sectoral initiatives related to open and distance learning are not monitored on the national level, and consequently it is difficult to give an exhaustive overview on this issue. Yet, the banking sector seems to be quite active in the field of distance learning. The programme of preparation for “European Foundation Certificate in Banking” might be an example of initiatives that take place in this sector. The objective of this programme is to provide participants with a wide spectrum of the latest knowledge necessary for a qualified performance of a bank employee's work in the European Union environment. The programme is accredited by the Accreditation Panel of the European Bank Training Network, and by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic.

With regards to the present provision of distance learning in the Slovak Republic, it is evident that the further development of this alternative mode of delivery will require an extensive theoretical and practical preparation of teachers and trainers. Moreover, the development of specific learning materials (i.e. learning support based on various communication media) will involve significant financial expenses. This is why it is important, that one of the planning documents for Structural Funds (the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources) promoted the idea of alternative modes of delivery, and supported the development of the centres of distance learning (see priority “Improved Qualifications and Adaptability of People in Employment and Those Entering the Labour Market”, Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources). The financial support from the EU funds should have a positive influence on further development of distance learning in the Slovak Republic.

### ***05010502 - E-learning***

E-learning is currently under development within various contexts. However, compared to the EU figures, the Slovak Republic is still characterised by an underdeveloped information and communication infrastructure, which influences the provision of e-learning activities and programmes. Besides, there is a lack of summarized information on different e-learning initiatives that take place across the country.

With regard to preconditions for the development of e-learning provision, it is important to point out the National Lisbon Strategy of the Slovak Republic, 2005 (Lisabonská stratégia pre Slovensko, 2005). This strategic document stresses the importance of development of a high-quality and affordable information and communication infrastructure within the Slovak Republic. According to the document, the broad-band Internet access, with an emphasis on modern wireless technologies, should be made accessible to all citizens, ideally both at home and at public institutions.

The development of e-learning in the Slovak Republic was promoted by the Open Society Foundation (OSF) programme “Internet Distance Education Program (IDEP)”. The programme was launched in 2000 and finished in 2003. It was aimed at supporting open and distance education at Slovak universities, especially the forms using the Internet. The basic idea was to help universities with the development costs of their new courses, hoping that they would be able to cover running and updating costs without more support from the Foundation. The IDEP supported financially the development of e-learning courses integrated into ISCED 5B and ISCED 5A programmes, as well as various CVET courses provided by the respective universities. In 2000, grants were provided for thirteen courses, in 2001 for nine, in 2002 for fifteen, and in 2003 for three.

**Table 6: Example of a project financially supported by “Internet Distance Education Program” (IDEP) of Open Society Foundation**

<p><b><i>“Distance Learning Course on Biodiversity Conservation (BIODIS) for civil servants, State Nature Conservancy and for the self-government – the updating and development of a new module“, The Faculty of Natural Sciences, Comenius University (Bratislava), Department of Ecosozology and Physiotactics, Duration: September 2001 – March 2004</i></b></p>	<p>The project was partly connected with the distance courses that were developed and realized during the Tempus Phare project IB JEP 141 69/1999 in 1999-2001. The project was intended to reach the civil servants and the employees of the self-government (primarily professionals in the field of environment). A new educational module was developed for this target group in collaboration with the Association of the Communes and Cities of the Slovak Republic (ZMOS).</p>
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Implementation of information technologies into education is systematically promoted through international conferences that take place in the Slovak Republic. Two of them might be mentioned:

- International conference “Virtual University”, Virtuálna univerzita (8<sup>th</sup> conference, in 2007) organised by the Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava; the Technical University, Košice and other partners. Its goal is to support continuous development in the field of e-learning in Central and Eastern Europe;
- International conference “ICETA” - Information and Communication Technologies in Learning, Informačné a komunikačné technológie vo vzdelávaní (5<sup>th</sup> conference, in 2007) organised by several partners (private companies, universities).

At present higher education institutions seem to be particularly active in the field of e-learning. However, there is a big gap between the level of development of e-learning initiatives within technical and non-technical universities. This is primarily due to the fact that e-learning initiatives are only related to individual activities of different faculties and departments, and there is not any national scheme for e-learning development within higher

education. Consequently, technical universities are far ahead in e-learning provision compare to non-technical ones.

With regard to e-learning activities at primary and secondary schools, the precondition for their development is a sufficient technical infrastructure (e.g. computer equipment, the Internet connectivity). Activities focusing on getting primary and secondary schools online started in 1996 and they were run by the Soros Foundation. Later, the school Internet connection projects were taken over by the Ministry of Education. Following governmental changes in 1998, the Slovak Ministry of Education launched in 1999 a project called “Infovek”. The aim of the project is to integrate ICT into education at primary and secondary schools. In order to achieve this, the project focuses on:

- provision of schools with ICT facilities and the Internet connection;
- ICT training for teachers;
- development of innovative educational content.

Due to the project “Computers for Schools” (a sponsor’s gift of Deutsche Telecom), in 2004 all basic and secondary schools in the Slovak Republic obtained computers, and most of them also an internet access purchased from Infovek funds. In 2005, the project Infovek focused on ICT training for teachers and school employees. The goal was to provide, by the end of 2006, every teacher with the skills necessary for efficient implementation of ICT into education (this part of the Infovek project was called “PIRŠ” - projekt informatizácie regionálneho školstva, Regional Schools Informatisation Project).

Computer based continuing training for teachers and trainers, has been also enhanced through e-learning courses designed with the financial support from the European Social Fund. Such courses were developed in the field of various subjects, and they focus on teachers of the respective subjects (e.g. mathematics, Slovak language and literature). They are provided by in-service teacher training institutions called methodological-pedagogical centres (MPC, metodicko-pedagogické centrá).

Several e-learning activities are linked to private and non-state sector. With regard to enterprise-affiliated training, many medium and large companies with foreign investments use e-learning methods as an integral part of their CVET activities and programmes. This is very common especially within financial or ICT companies. Alongside enterprise-affiliated e-learning activities, several private and non-state providers propose various e-learning courses (e.g. foreign language, ICT) that are open to all interested adults.

Some examples of good practice can be found within public institutions as well. One example of such initiatives is a national project promoting computer literacy of civil servants. Within the project, a CD-ROM containing a preparation course for the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) was developed and distributed to various ministries. The project is financially supported by the European Social Fund and, at present, it is managed by the Ministry of Finance (previously it was managed The Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications). Other interesting initiatives are related to the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic. In 2006, the Ministry and a private e-learning provider Kontis Slovakia s.r.o. signed a contract on the implementation of the leading learning management system iTutor. This system of management and evaluation of e-learning activities was implemented into the intranet and into other information systems of the Ministry of Economy. Alongside,

various e-learning courses (e.g. English language, Health and safety at work) are currently under preparation at this Ministry.

### ***05010503 - New learning environments (incl. learning organisations)***

The Slovak Republic is characterised by low participation of adults in education and training. In this sense, the creation of new learning environments could significantly improve access of individuals to different educational opportunities.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic launched the project called “Open School” (Otvorená škola). The aim of the project is to support interaction between schools and their local communities. One part of the project focuses on the expansion of lifelong learning activities provided by primary and secondary schools, especially CVET courses for adults.

Another interesting initiative called “Digital Sturism” (Digitálne štúrovstvo, the initiative is named after the 19th century enlightened personality Ľudovít Štúr) is aimed at increasing the Internet access and digital literacy within the local communities. The basic idea of the project is to open all educational institutions involved in the project Infovek (for more details about project Infovek see part 05010502 “E-learning”) to their local communities, and promote access to the information technologies even in the less developed parts of the Slovak Republic.

The concept of new learning environments has been also promoted by many higher education institutions through the establishment of centres for lifelong learning. These centres are attached to universities and might be considered as places where higher education institutions share their knowledge and expertise with their local community.

Regional development concept, in which the main stakeholders (i.e. politicians, policy-makers, chambers of commerce, trade unions, higher education institutions, public research establishments and companies) should be connected with each other and open to learning processes, has been promoted recently: the idea appeared in the planning documents needed for Structural Funds (Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources, Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3). The Banská Bystrica region might be an example of regions that applied for the European financial support, in order to implement this innovative concept. A national programme for the development of regional learning processes (“National Programme for Learning Regions”, Národný program pre učiace sa regióny) is supposed to be prepared by the Ministry of Education in 2007.

Creation of new learning environments is also linked to another important document: Strategy of Development of Slovak Librarianship by 2006 (Stratégie rozvoja slovenského knihovníctva do roku 2006). One of the ideas promoted by this strategic paper is direct involvement of libraries in the provision of lifelong learning (e.g. the creation of self-access zones within libraries).

The concept of learning organisations is not yet very well spread within the Slovak Republic - it is promoted especially by large companies with foreign investments.

With regards to the entitlement of employees to educational leave, the §154 of the Labour Code (Zákon č. 311/2001 Z. z. Zákonník práce v znení neskorších predpisov) specifies: “...

*An employer shall be obliged to instruct an employee to undergo further education with the aim of deepening his/her qualification. Participation in education shall be the performance of work, for which an employee shall be entitled to wage compensation.” Moreover, the §155 enables the employer and the employee to sign a specific CVET contract related to educational leave: “An employer may conclude an agreement with an employee by which the employer commits himself/herself to enabling the employee for increasing his/her qualification by providing time off, wage compensation and reimbursement of other costs pursuant to study, and the employee commits himself/herself to remaining in an employment relationship with the employer for a determinate period upon completion of study,...”*

Specific rules related to educational leave apply to some professions. For example, since 2002, particular measures apply to educational leave of civil servants. These measures are stipulated in the Act No. 312/2001 Coll. on the Civil Service (Zákon č. 312/2001 Z. z. o štátnej službe). The §77 of this Act, “Deepening and Extending Qualification of Civil Servants”, stipulates that the Service Office should provide civil servants with a minimum of five working days of time-off within each calendar year, in order to allow them to deepen their qualification. Civil servants are entitled to their wage compensation during this period. The civil servants who want to extent their qualification (especially those who would like to get a university degree) are eligible for supplementary time-off and during this period are entitled to their salary. However, a formal engagement of a civil servant to stay in the civil service after the completion of a degree might be required.

As the job rotation schemes concerns, there is no legal provision in the Slovak Republic promoting models where the unemployed are systematically trained to substitute for employed workers while they go into continuing education and training.

The design of training plans within large companies is usually a task of a specialised unit assigned to the human resources department. Such plans are based on the internal evaluations of learning needs. Smaller companies often use external audit services in order to identify the learning needs of their employees and plan their CVET activities. Nevertheless, in many enterprises in the Slovak Republic, the planning of training activities is treated very marginally. Several companies have neither a strategy of human resources development nor a systematic approach to training of their employees.

Organised methods of on-the-job learning were recently enhanced by the §54 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov). This paragraph stipulates that a financial State contribution for on-the-job training of newly hired employees can be accorded to the investors creating new jobs in the Slovak Republic (for more details see part 050401 “Measures to guarantee provision in enterprises”). Alongside, a study conducted in 2000 by “Management Partners Group” (association of companies) in 100 enterprises with more than 50 employees might be mentioned. According to the study, the on-the-job training method (i.e. training that takes place within an enterprise) was used in 58% of enterprises participating in the study.

#### ***05010504 - Flexibilisation and differentiation***

The methods and structures that would make CVET more flexible are not yet sufficiently spread in the Slovak Republic. Nevertheless, some initiatives, such as modularisation of educational programmes, might be found. Most of them are financially supported from the EU funds. For example:

- Several initiatives introducing flexible schemes to CVET provision are related to the company Transfer Slovakia. One of such initiatives was the project conducted under the Leonardo da Vinci programme, called “Extended Technology and Management Training for SMEs”. Ten countries were involved in this project. The project focused on SME managers and owners, as well as on those outside the labour market (unemployed, students). The aim of the project was to develop a tool enabling SME managers and those interested in entrepreneurship to acquire knowledge and competences vital for the efficient running of the enterprise. Ten training modules of distance learning were designed.
- Modular distance course called “Person APEL” has been provided by the Institute of Lifelong Learning of the Technical University, Košice. This course focuses on personnel managers of enterprises, employees in higher education, training providers and career guidance specialists with a minimum of completed upper-secondary education. It is composed of ten modules, and provides information on the principles of accreditation of prior and experiential learning.
- Modular programme for career guidance specialists called “Modular Distance Learning for European Mobility Career Counsellors (MODILE-EUOCARCO)” was designed in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme, and it involved ten partners from six different countries. Five institutions from the Slovak Republic were involved. The aim of the project was to develop an innovative learning tool for career guidance specialists. Eleven modules and a distance learning package were designed.

There might be several other initiatives related to the implementation of methods and structures that would make CVET more flexible. However, these initiatives are not monitored at the national level, and consequently it is difficult to give an exhaustive overview related to this theme.

## **0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL**

There are very few CVET initiatives in the Slovak Republic that are open to all interested adults and, at the same time, financed or co-financed by public authorities. In other words, the adults who want to undertake an educational activity open to general public, can not at the whole count on a financial support from public sources. However, there are some exceptions:

As stated in the part 0501 “Introduction to continuing vocational education and training”, all interested adults have a choice to undertake (on the same basis as all pupils and students) long-term study programmes leading to recognised certifications (e.g. ISCED 3A, 3C, 5A, 5B). Many universities propose flexible schemes of study (so called “external” programmes), which are very convenient for employed adult learners. Costs of the programmes leading to a recognised level of education within state and public institutions are covered by public funds. Nevertheless, many public universities, in cooperation with affiliated NGOs, have been charging unofficial fees to external students. The amendment of the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education, already in preparation, will legalise fees for external students, and universities will be able to charge such fees officially. However, it is important to note that the study programmes leading to recognised certifications (e.g. ISCED 5A, 5B) are not defined as CVET programmes in the context of the Slovak Republic (for more details see part 050101 “National definitions and boundaries”). This is why, such programmes will not be analysed in this chapter.

There are many programmes and courses open to all interested citizens that do not lead to a recognised level of education. However, public authorities participate in the financial coverage of these programmes only very occasionally. Some support schemes might exist on a regional and local level. Foreign language courses provided by so called “State Language Schools” (štátna jazyková škola) - institutions providing foreign language training for all interested adults - are an example of such initiatives: the costs of these courses are partly covered by regional funds. Besides, regional and local authorities might sometimes propose non-financial support (e.g. non-commercial lease of buildings and classrooms to CVET providers), in order to promote CVET activities open to all interested adults. In addition, European financial support is frequently used to cover (at least partially) costs of various CVET activities. For instance, a non profit organisation called European Educational Institute (Európsky vzdelávací inštitút n.o.) provides at present various courses completely free of charge for all adults working within the Bratislava self-governing region. These courses are financially supported by the European Social Fund.

### **050201 - Target groups and provision**

Publicly promoted programmes and courses open to all interested citizens that do not lead to a recognised level of education might have very diverse duration, content and setting. Yet, most of the courses can be described as short-term and the most popular training is related to foreign languages, ICT and office administration (in particular accountancy). With regards to outcomes, these CVET activities do not lead to certifications comparable to those obtained through the system of initial/formal education and training. The participants habitually receive only a certificate of completion of their educational activity. The provision is organised mostly on a local basis.

With regards to publicly promoted education and training for adults, the principal weakness of current arrangements is related to the fact that the State subsidies directly only initial/formal education and training and CVET of some specific (and very restricted) targets (e.g. the unemployed). There are almost no activities that might be described as “publicly promoted CVET for all”.

### **050202 - Providers**

Publicly promoted programmes and courses open to all interested citizens might be provided by public (e.g. secondary schools, higher education institutions), private or non-state providers. With regards to private providers, the establishment of their activities is regulated by diverse legislation such as:

- the Act No. 513/1991 Coll. Trade Code as amended (Zákon č. 513/1991 Zb. Obchodný zákonník),
- the Act No. 34/2002 Coll. on Foundations (Zákon č. 34/2002 Z. z. o nadáciách),
- the Act No. 83/1990 Coll. on Associations of Citizens (Zákon č. 83/1990 Zb. o združovaní občanov), and
- the Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing as amended (Zákon č. 455/1991 Zb. o živnostenskom podnikaní v znení neskorších predpisov).

## 050203 - Access

Participation in this type of CVET is generally not conditioned by any entry requirements. However, there might be some specific entry assessment (e.g. language schools might assess the language skills/level of people interested in their courses, in order to place them in the most appropriate group). Access of employed adults to the CVET activities is facilitated by the fact that a number of courses take place in the evening. Yet, there are no child-care support schemes for the parents taking care of small children and wanting to undertake a CVET activity (some support schemes are stipulated in the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services, § 46 (10), but these schemes focus only on job seekers and people interested in employment).

## 050204 - Quality assurance

As stated in the part 050103 “Evaluation”, quality of continuing vocational education and training is partly guaranteed by the State through evaluations carried out by the Accreditation Committee of the Ministry of Education (so called “small accreditation”). The following CVET activities must be accredited:

- education and training activities focusing on public servants;
- activities financed from the state budget (however there are some exceptions; for more details see part 050304 “Quality Assurance”).

Accreditation of the educational activities is also frequently requested from those providers, who want to apply for a financial support from the European funds.

Besides, all CVET providers who are interested in accreditation of their activities might apply for it (for more details see part 050103 “Evaluation”).

## 0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET (INCL. STATIS

High level of unemployment has been the most sensitive point of socio-economic development of the Slovak Republic since the 1990's. The country is characterised by high share of long-term unemployment, very high unemployment of the Roma, unemployment of youth, and significant regional differences. Since 2002 unemployment has been moderately decreasing. This trend is related to favourable economic development, new labour market policy and renewed job creation.

*Table 7: Evolution of annual average unemployment rates in the Slovak Republic and in the EU*

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Registered unemployment according to the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</b>	13.8	17.5	18.2	18.2	17.8	15.2	14.3	11.6
<b>Unemployment rate according to LFS of the Statistical Office of the SR</b>	12.5	16.2	18.6	19.2	18.5	17.4	18.1	16.2
<b>EU – 25 unemployment rate</b>	9.4	9.1	8.6	8.4	8.8	9.0	9.1	8.8

Source: Eurostat, Statistical Office of the SR

CVET activities and programmes for unemployed people and others vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market have been recently promoted through various strategic documents, as well as through adoption of the new legislation:

- Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov), which came in force on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004, establishes conditions for flexible organisation and provision of employment services, including CVET for unemployed and people interested in employment;
- National Action Plan for Employment 2003 (Národný akčný plán zamestnanosti 2003) reflects the main objectives of the European Employment Strategy;
- National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2006 (Národný akčný plán zamestnanosti 2004-2006) resulted in the implementation of new active labour market measures;
- Two strategic documents related to the European Social Fund resources (Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources and Single Programming Document NUTS II Bratislava Objective 3 - Sektorový operačný program Ľudské zdroje a Jednotný programový dokument NUTS II Bratislava Cieľ 3) define specific objectives of the Slovak Republic in the field of human resources development.

Nevertheless, as statistically demonstrated in the following paragraph, participation of job seekers in continuing vocational education and training remains low.

### **Statistics on training for unemployed and people interested in employment**

Training of job seekers has begun to develop in 1991. With regard to available data, it is not possible to provide all requested indicators of participation in this type of CVET. Nevertheless, some data offering general overview of participation of job seekers in CVET can be provided.

With regards to working status, in 2003, 28.5% of the employed, 6.5% of the unemployed and 2.2% of the inactive participated in some kind of non-formal education. Compared to the EU figures, the Slovak Republic might be characterised by a relatively high proportion of employed adults in non-formal education, and a low proportion of unemployed and inactive ones.

**Table 8: Rate of participation (%) in non-formal education by working status, 2003**

<b>Working Status</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Inactive</b>
<b>SR</b>	28.5	6.5	2.2
<b>EU-25</b>	20.6	13.5	5.6

Source: Eurostat LFS, ad-hoc module on LLL 2003. Target population: 25-64 years, reference period: 12 months.

Data below indicate that 34 000 unemployed people undertook a non-formal educational activity in 2003. The proportion of women was higher than the proportion of men (59.4% compared to 40.6%) and a large proportion of participants (60.4%) were those aged between 20 and 34 years.

**Table 9: Unemployed in non-formal education by gender and age, 2003**

Gender, age	Unemployed in non-formal education	
	Thousands	%
<b>Total 15-64+</b>	34.0	100.0
<b>Males</b>	13.8	40.6
<b>Females</b>	20.2	59.4
<b>15-19</b>	(2.7)	(0.8)
<b>20-24</b>	10.1	29.8
<b>25-29</b>	4.8	14.2
<b>30-34</b>	5.6	16.4
<b>35-39</b>	(2.4)	(7.0)
<b>40-44</b>	(3.3)	(9.7)
<b>45-49</b>	(2.9)	(8.6)
<b>50-54</b>	(1.1)	(3.3)
<b>55-59</b>	(0.7)	(2.0)
<b>60-64</b>	(0.3)	(1.0)
<b>65+</b>	-	-

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Labour Force Survey Ad hoc module 2003

() data not reliable

With regards to the length of unemployment, a significant proportion of the unemployed who undertook a non-formal educational activity in 2003 were those who had been unemployed for more than 12 months.

**Table 10: Unemployed in non-formal education by length of unemployment, 2003**

Length of unemployment	Unemployed in non-formal education	
	Thousands	%
<b>Total</b>	34.0	100.0
<b>Less than 1 month</b>	5.4	16.0
<b>1-3 months</b>	(2.6)	(7.7)
<b>3-6 months</b>	5.8	17.2
<b>6 -12 months</b>	7.6	22.3
<b>12 months+</b>	12.5	36.8

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Labour Force Survey Ad hoc module 2003

() data not reliable

Data related to the highest level of educational attainment of the unemployed who undertook a non-formal educational activity are not very reliable. Nevertheless, available data indicate a high proportion of those who attained ISCED 3 level.

**Table 11: Unemployed in non-formal education by highest level of educational attainment, 2003**

Highest level of educational attainment	Unemployed in non-formal education	
	Thousands	%
<b>Total</b>	34.0	100.0
<b>ISCED 2</b>	(1.9)	(5.6)
<b>ISCED 3</b>	29.2	86.4
<b>ISCED 4</b>	-	-
<b>ISCED 5</b>	(2.7)	(8.0)
<b>ISCED 6</b>	-	-

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Labour Force Survey Ad hoc module 2003

() data not reliable

As stated in the report Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2004 (Realizácia nástrojov aktívnej politiky trhu práce v roku 2004), 815 071 job seekers were entitled to apply for various active labour market policy (ALMP) instruments in 2004. (Note: This number comprises the number of job seekers who were registered at the labour offices on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003, and the number of job seekers who registered in 2004.) In 2005, 702 016 job seekers were entitled to apply.

**Table 12: Job seekers who could apply for various ALMP instruments in 2004 and 2005**

<b>Job seekers and people interested in employment who could apply for various ALMP instruments in 2004</b>			<b>Job seekers and people interested in employment who could apply for various ALMP instruments in 2005</b>		
No. of people who were registered at the labour offices on 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	No. of people who registered during the year 2004	Total for 2004*	No. of people who were registered at the labour offices on 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2004	No. of people who registered during the year 2005	Total for 2005*
452 224	362 847	815 071	383 155	318 861	702 016

Source: Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, reports: “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2004” and “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2005”

\* This number comprises the number of job seekers who were registered at the labour offices on 31<sup>st</sup> December of the previous year (i.e. 2003 and 2004 respectively), and the number of job seekers who registered during the following year (i.e. 2004 and 2005 respectively).

With regards to continuing vocational education, 3.34% of these citizens were placed in some training activity in 2004, and 5.08% in 2005. It can be also observed that a CVET course was proposed to only around 50% of job seekers who showed interest in a CVET activity in 2005. This was mainly due to financial limitations. Furthermore, CVET, as one of the instruments of ALMP, is not distributed equally within the Slovak Republic: 13.32% of job seekers from the Bratislava region were placed in training in 2005, while one of the labour offices in the southern part of Slovakia (Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family Nové Zámky), proposed a CVET activity only to 2.32% of job seekers during the same period.

**Table 13: Registered job seekers placed in a training activity**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Total number of registered job seekers who could apply for various ALMP instruments</b>	815 071	702 016
<b>Registered job seekers who applied for a training activity</b>	*	71 646
<b>Registered job seekers who were placed in a training activity</b>	27 208 (3.34% of total)	35 689 (5.08% of total)

Source: Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, reports: “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2004” and “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2005”

\* data not available

The proportion of women participating in CVET funded by labour offices is higher than the one of men. Besides, a relatively large proportion of the unemployed participating in training activities are disadvantaged job seekers. Many people undertaking this type of CVET are long-term unemployed.

**Table 14: Registered job seekers who were placed in a training activity according to gender and target group**

	2004		2005	
<b>Total</b>	27 208		35 689	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Females</b>	16 458	60.49	21 925	61.43
<b>Males</b>	10 750	39.51	13 764	38.57
<b>Disadvantaged job seekers</b>	15 734	57.83	21 092	59.10
<b>School graduates</b>	2 170	7.98	2 994	8.39
<b>Older workers (50+)</b>	3 645	13.40	5 425	15.20
<b>Long-term unemployed</b>	10 937	40.20	13 268	37.18
<b>Disabled citizens</b>	684	2.51	1 264	3.54

Source: Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, reports: “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2004” and “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2005”

About a third of job seekers who participate in CVET, find employment after having completed their training activity. For example, in 2005, 12 264 job seekers from those placed in CVET courses, found employment. It is interesting to note that most of them, 4 392 job seekers, found a job almost immediately after completing their CVET activity (they found a job during the period varying from one to three months). Nevertheless, the labour market absorption of the unemployed who undertook a CVET programme is related to regional disparities: it is lower in the regions with high rate of unemployment.

#### **Statistics on school leavers /school graduates practice**

School graduates practice started to operate in 2002, and since 2004 the programme is co-financed by the European Social Fund. This ALMP instrument is focusing on school leavers without any work experience and on the unemployed individuals up to 25 years. As it can be observed in the table below, the number of school leavers who have been placed in the programme has been rapidly growing.

**Table 15: Registered job seekers who were placed in the school leavers practice programme**

	2003	2004	2005
<b>Registered job seekers who were placed in the school leavers practice programme</b>	2 738	14 462	24 838

Source: Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, reports: “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2004” and “Application of Instruments of ALMP in 2005”

However, the participation rates vary from region to region. Participation is higher in the regions with the high share of unemployment, and lower in the regions characterised by low unemployment rates.

With regards to different target groups, participation of women is significantly higher than participation of men (9 847 women against 4 617 men in 2004; 16 638 women against 8 198 men in 2005). Most of the job seekers participating in the programme are defined as disadvantaged job seekers (young unemployed, long-term unemployed).

The proportion of job seekers placed in school graduates practice during the years 2004 and 2005 who found a job was 19% by the end of 2005.

## 050301 - Target groups and provision

Training of job seekers is a part of active labour market policies (ALMPs), stipulated in the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov). The Act came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004. Compared to the previous legislation (Act No. 387/1996 Coll. on Employment, Zákon č. 387/1996 Z. z. o zamestnanosti), it introduces a more flexible organisation and provision of employment services. The active labour market policies stipulated in the Act No. 5/2004, are related to various National Projects, for which the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, ÚPSVaR) is responsible. They are financed by the European Social Fund and the State budget. The National Projects and the respective ALMPs are listed in the table below:

**Table 16: The National Projects and the respective ALMPs**

<b>ESF National Projects</b>	<b>ALMPs Stipulated in the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services</b>
<b>National Project 1</b> “Support for employment of job seekers with an emphasis on disadvantaged jobseekers”	§49 contribution to self-employment §50 allowance for employers of disadvantaged job seekers
<b>National Project 2</b> “Support for employment of citizens with disabilities”	§56 contribution to creation of protected workplaces for disabled citizens §57 contribution to self-employment for disabled citizens §59 contribution to activity of a work assistant (entitled are disabled jobseekers) §60 contribution to operational costs of workplaces for disabled, contribution to travel expenses for disabled
<b>National Project 3 (3A)</b> “Education and training for the labour market”	§44-46 training and re-training of job seekers and people interested in employment
<b>National Project 5</b> “Activation of the unemployed and low-motivated unemployed who are dependent on financial assistance”	§52 allowance for activities related to maintenance of work habits of unemployed (recipients are both the institution which provides small work and voluntary services, and the unemployed)
<b>National Project 7</b> “Increase of the scope and quality of employment services through guidance and counselling services”	§43 partial reimbursement of travel expenses of the job seeker (expenses related to career guidance sessions)
<b>National Project 8</b> “Increase of the scope and quality of employment-services delivery”	§32 partial reimbursement of travel expenses of the job seeker (expenses related to a job interview with a potential employer)
<b>National Project 9</b> “School graduates practice/School leavers practice ”	§ 51 allowance for young graduate’s practice (recipients are both the graduate and the employer)

With regards to CVET, the following national projects are particularly important:

- National Project No.3 (3A) “Education and training for the labour market” (Vzdelávanie a príprava nezamestnaných pre trh práce);
- National Project No.9 “School graduates practice/School leavers practice” (Absolventská prax);

- National Project No.5 “Activation of the unemployed and low-motivated unemployed dependant on financial assistance” (Aktivácia nezamestnaných a nezamestnaných s nízkou motiváciou odkázaných na dávku sociálnej pomoci);
- National Project No.7 “Increase of the scope and quality of employment services through guidance and counselling services” (Zvýšenie kvality a rozsahu služieb zamestnanosti prostredníctvom informačných a poradenských a odborných poradenských nástrojov a služieb).

It is also important to note that according to the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov), job seekers can apply for additional consultancy services in order to design their professional insertion project Individual Action Plan (individuálny akčný plán). Besides, people with disabilities and the long-term unemployed can be provided with consultancy services of the Agencies of Supported Employment (Agentúry podporovaného zamestnávania). These services might include also CVET guidance.

### **Education and training for the labour market**

As it was already mentioned, CVET activities for job seekers began to develop in 1991. They used to be called the „re-qualification“. However, this term has been gradually replaced by the expression „education and training for the labour market“. This is due to the fact that most job seekers do not get any “new qualification” through CVET funded by the labour offices. As stated in the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov), re-training courses do not lead to the acquisition of any formal education level, and participants generally get only a certificate of successful completion of CVET. However, the exceptions are related to the programmes focusing on the drop-outs from the initial educational system. Such programmes, leading to the achievement of ISCED 2 or ISCED 3 levels, might at present be financed through the National Project “Education and training for the labour market”. (More details about the programmes focusing on the drop-outs will be given at the end of this section, i.e. at the end of 050301).

The targets for CVET founded by the offices of labour, social affairs and family are the registered unemployed and registered people “interested in employment” (i.e. people who register at the labour office in order to find a different job). With regards to registered unemployed, *“the Office may provide a contribution toward education and preparation for the labour market of the jobseeker amounting up to 100% of the cost of the first education activity, up to 75% of the cost of the second education activity and up to 50% of the cost for every further education activity during two years from the day of the entry in the first education activity by the job seeker, ...”*. In some particular cases (defined by the §46 (5) of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services) the unemployed might be eligible for total reimbursement of the second, third and further educational activities. As far as the people interested in employment, *“the Office may provide a contribution toward education and preparation of the person interested in employment for the labour market, amounting up to 100% of the cost per one educational activity in the course of two years during which he has been registered as a person interested in employment, ...”* The employed people might also be eligible for this ALMP measure. The Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services states that the labour offices can cover up to 90% of training expenses of an employee. However, an engagement on an employer’s side is needed: the latter should employ the participant for at least 12 months after the completion of the training activity. The labour offices might also

contribute towards the employer's training expenses, if the training activities avoid downsizing.

The CVET funded by offices of labour, social affairs and family has a common national framework (re-training policies are regulated by the National Programme of Education and Training for the Labour Market), but the provision is organised mostly on a local and regional basis. This means that different labour offices within the Slovak Republic may organise specific courses according to identified regional/local priorities. Duration of the programmes is variable.

### **School leavers/school graduates practice**

This ALMP instrument was introduced in 2002, and has been co-financed from the ESF (as National Project No. 9) since 2004. This measure is focusing on school leavers (the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services defines a school leaver as “*a citizen below 25 years of age, who has completed his/her systematic vocational preparation in full-time study course less than two years ago and failed to acquire his/her first regularly paid employment*”) and on unemployed individuals up to 25 years of age. Aim of the programme is to adjust the skills of young job seekers to the labour market needs. The maximum length of this traineeship is 6 months (20 hours of work a week). During this period, the graduate, as well as the employer, receive an allowance from the labour office. At the end of the traineeship, the employer delivers a certificate on the completion of the programme. For the time being, public institutions seem to be more interested than private ones in engaging these trainees.

The school graduates practice has a common national framework (defined by the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services), but its provision is organised mostly on a local basis.

With regards to measures supporting labour market insertion of school graduates, training firm projects for unemployed people (with special focus on unemployed graduates) must be pointed out. Such projects are financially supported by the European Social Fund (for more details see part 050105 “Alternatives modes of delivery”).

### **Activation of the unemployed and low-motivated unemployed who are dependent on financial assistance**

This measure is aimed at maintaining work habits of the unemployed (especially low-motivated unemployed). Participants carry out work organised by the municipality, aimed at the improvement of economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions of the inhabitants of the municipality. The targets for this ALMP instrument are the long-term unemployed. The duration of the programme varies between 3 and 9 months.

### **Increase of the scope and quality of employment services through guidance and counselling services**

The goal of this measure is to reinforce preventive schemes for the elimination of unemployment (especially long-term unemployment). It focuses on the extension and modernisation of guidance and counselling services throughout the creation of new information and guidance centres, diagnostic centres and “labour clubs”. The principal target groups for this ALMP measure are unemployed people, people interested in employment and students. The guidance provided might be related to CVET.

## **Individual Action Plan**

Besides the listed measures, the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services promotes individualized approaches through the elaboration of an Individual Action Plan (individuálny akčný plán). All job seekers who have been unemployed for more than three months receive intensified assistance for the elaboration of their working assertion project (Individual Action Plan). This project might also include CVET activities. The fulfilment of objectives defined in the IAP is regularly monitored and evaluated. In 2004, public employment services elaborated IAPs for more than 300 000 job seekers.

## **Consultancy services for disabled citizens and long-term unemployed citizens**

As stated in the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services, disabled citizens and long-term unemployed citizens can be provided with a service facilitating their labour market insertion. This service is offered by the Agencies of Supported Employment (agentúry podporovaného zamestnávania). The guidance provided by these bodies might also be related to CVET.

The current provision of CVET for unemployed citizens is characterised by several weaknesses. It is evident that:

- The participation rate of unemployed in training is low;
- The quality assurance for this type of CVET is insufficient;
- there is a need to enhance the evaluation of the learning outcomes of this type of CVET;
- there is a need to enhance an early identification of skill needs within various regions of the Slovak Republic;

## **Other educational and training initiatives focusing on groups vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market**

With regards to other educational activities for groups vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market, the initiatives focusing on early school leavers must be pointed out. While early school leaving rate remains very low in the Slovak Republic, the citizens who did not manage to get any qualification and those who did not even finish their basic education, are the most vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market. In order to increase their chances to find an employment, various initiatives and measures were undertaken.

The provision of the activities for the drop-outs from the primary school system is promoted by the § 60 of the School Act (Act No. 29/1984 Coll. on Elementary Schools, Secondary Schools, and Post-secondary Occupational Schools as amended; Školský zákon, zákon č. 29/1984 Zb.) and regulated by the Decree No. 143/1984 Coll. of the Ministry of Education of the SR on Basic Schools as amended by subsequent decrees (Vyhláška MŠ SR č. 143/1984 Zb. o základnej škole v znení neskorších predpisov). The §60 of the Schools Act stipulates that the primary and secondary schools might organise courses focusing on the drop-outs from the primary school system. These courses lead to the certification of completed basic education (i.e. completed nine-year school programme). Such certifications do not replace any vocational qualification, but they allow citizens to continue their studies in the secondary school system and get a qualification. The content of the courses is regulated by the curricula for the 1st-9th Grades of Basic Schools approved by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak

Republic on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2003, No. 520/2003-41, valid as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003 (Učebné plány pre 1.-9. ročník základných škôl, kt. schválilo MŠ SR 14. mája 2003 č. 520/2003-41 s platnosťou od 1. septembra 2003). The courses are funded by public authorities. These educational activities are controlled by the Ministry of Education through the State School Inspection.

In relation to the initiatives focusing on the drop-outs from the primary school system, the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with the Ministry of Education, launched in 2004 a project called “Second-Chance School” (Škola druhej šance). The project was aimed at providing basic education (ISCED 2 level) for low-educated people from East and South Slovakia (mostly of the Romany origin). During the school year 2004/2005, 139 people participated in the project. It enhanced the cooperation between district labour offices, schools and job seekers. Moreover, an experimental curriculum developed by National Institute for Education (Štátny pedagogický ústav, ŠPÚ) was tested. The second phase of the project took place during the school year 2005/2006.

Similar schemes continue to be provided under the ESF National Project “Education and training for the labour market”. Such training might focus not only on the drop-outs from the primary school system, but also on those, who did not finish their last year of secondary school and consequently, did not get any qualification. However, the latter schemes (i.e. the programmes leading to ISCED 3 level) are not yet sufficiently spread: none of the offices of labour, social affairs and family that were contacted in the framework of this report provides them.

### **050302 - Providers**

The employment services are provided free of charge under the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services through:

- The Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, ÚPSVaR);
- Offices of labour, social affairs and family (Úrad práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny);
- Detached (annexed) branch offices of labour, social affairs and family (Detašované pracovisko úradu práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny).

Legislative framework for provision of CVET for job seekers is related to the following legislation: the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov), the Act No. 523/2003 Coll. on Public Procurement (Zákon č. 523/2003 Z. z. o verejnom obstarávaní), and the Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further Education and its Amendment No. 567/2001 (Zákon č. 386/1997 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní v znení neskorších predpisov a jeho novela č. 567/2001).

The CVET for the job seekers can be provided by public, non-state, as well as private institutions. The selection of providers must be based on tendering procedure.

### **050303 - Access**

Access to the CVET courses financed by the labour offices is conditioned by the registration at a labour office (as unemployed or as job-seeker). Yet, the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services does not provide for a legal entitlement to training/re-training. It is up to the office of labour, social affairs and family to decide whether the training activity is

needed. According to the statistics of the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, in 2005, 71 646 job seekers applied for a CVET activity. However, only 35 689 of them were placed in a CVET course. As already mentioned, this has been caused by financial limitations.

The Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services defines the disadvantaged job seekers as:

- young unemployed graduates (under 25);
- older workers (over 50);
- long-term unemployed (12 months and more);
- “women returners”;
- citizens taking care of more than three children;
- citizens who lost their job for health reasons, but are not disabled;
- citizens moving within the EU countries;
- disabled citizens;
- asylum holders.
- 

These job seekers do not have any privileged access to the CVET courses funded by the offices of labour, social affairs and family, but correspond to a large proportion of the job seekers who are placed in training courses. This is particularly true for the long-term unemployed (see statistics).

The Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services introduces some instruments promoting and facilitating access of the job seekers to the training activities:

- job seekers can apply for reimbursement of their travel, accommodation and catering expenses related to a training activity;
- job seekers with the children who have not yet started compulsory school attendance are eligible for a financial contribution to child care services during the period of the training activity.

### **050304 - Quality assurance**

Quality of the CVET activities focusing on job seekers used to be guaranteed by the State through the evaluations carried out by the Accreditation Committee of the Ministry of Education (so called “small accreditation”). Until 2004, each training activity focusing on job seekers (funded by the labour offices) had to be accredited by the Ministry of Education. This obligation was related to the §48 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services. In order to acquire an accreditation, an educational institution was obliged to submit a formal overview of the educational activity (a project and pedagogical documentation, documentation related to teachers and trainers, statement on technical back-up). Each project was then evaluated by a team of experts selected by the Ministry of Education. In 2004, the §48 was abolished, and the accreditation of the CVET activities for the unemployed and people interested in employment is not obligatory any longer. Nevertheless, it is still required by most offices of labour, social affairs and family. The Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services enables the offices to set-up their own requirements of calls for tender and decide, whether the accreditation will be requested or not. In a number of cases, only the providers who propose accredited activities are accepted into tendering procedures.

**0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS (INCL. STATISTICS)**

The Slovak Republic did not take part in the Eurostat's CVTS2 survey, and there are almost no data on enterprise-affiliated training activities focusing on employees. Partial overview of this type of CVET might be given through some smaller national surveys.

In 1997, 157 enterprises participated in a study conducted by the Research Institute of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny). According to the study, about every third employee participated in some kind of enterprise-affiliated training activity between 1996 and 1997. The results of the research indicate that a large proportion of companies organised training activities related to the following fields: accountancy and finance (55% of companies participating in the study organised this type of CVET), technical knowledge and skills (50% of companies) and ICT skills (46% of companies). On the other hand, less attention was paid to foreign languages, re-training or development of personal skills and competences. More details are given in the table below.

*Table 17: Enterprise-affiliated CVET by training fields (Survey conducted by the Research Institute of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in 157 enterprises in the Slovak Republic, reference period: 1996-1997)*

<b>Training field</b>	<b>Proportion of companies organising CVET in the field (%)</b>
<b>Management, team leadership</b>	24.2
<b>Creation of company image</b>	8.9
<b>Re-training</b>	24.8
<b>Technical knowledge and skills</b>	50.3
<b>Group cooperation skills</b>	1.3
<b>Development of creativity</b>	4.5
<b>Communication skills</b>	10.8
<b>ICT</b>	45.9
<b>New production (working) methods</b>	18.5
<b>Advertising, marketing</b>	13.4
<b>Relationship with the client</b>	14.6
<b>Workplace and employer-employee relationships</b>	15.3
<b>Labour law</b>	22.3
<b>Accountancy, finance</b>	55.4
<b>Development of business competences</b>	12.1
<b>Foreign languages</b>	22.3
<b>Other</b>	10.8
<b>Did not respond</b>	17.2

Source: Role of Social Partners in Vocational Training in the Slovak Republic

Another study was conducted in 2000 by Management Partners Group (association of companies) in 100 enterprises with more than 50 employees. According to the study, on-the-job training method (i.e. training that takes place within an enterprise) was used in 58% of enterprises. Off-the-job training scheme (i.e. training taking place outside the enterprise) was organised in 81% of companies participating in the study.

Slightly different results were obtained through the survey conducted in 2003 by the Slovak Rating Agency (Slovenská ratingová agentúra, a.s.) and the company Amrop Jenewein Group in 158 enterprises (mostly medium and large). According to this survey, on-the-job training

method was used in 96% of enterprises, and off-the-job training was organised in 85% of companies participating in the study. Besides, this survey indicates that a large proportion of companies organised training activities related to managerial skills (77% of companies participating in the study organised this type of CVET), as well as to various specialised/technical skills (73% of companies).

Data from LFS ad-hoc module on Lifelong Learning (2003, Eurostat) indicate that 93% of those who undertook a CVET activity, participated in it mainly because of job-related reasons. Moreover, 86.3% of adults who undertook some continuing training followed it during the paid working hours.

Many large companies in the Slovak Republic have their own institutions providing continuing training for their employees. This is also true on the sectoral level and on the level of various professions. For example, the continuing training for healthcare professionals is assured by the Slovak Medical University (Slovenská zdravotnícka univerzita), CVET in the agronomy sector is delivered by the Institute of Agronomy in Nitra (Agroinštitút Nitra) and various training activities for civil servants are provided by an institute of the Ministry of Interior (Inštitút pre verejnú správu).

Besides, companies have a large choice of CVET activities designed by private and non-state providers. The previously mentioned study of the Research Institute of Labour, Social Affairs and Family indicates that approximately 75% of the enterprises contracted some private or non-state CVET providers between 1996 and 1997.

#### **050401 - Measures to guarantee provision in enterprises**

There is quite a wide range of measures promoting (but not always guaranteeing) provision of CVET on various levels: national, sectoral, company, or social partners.

With regards to the national level, the provision of CVET in enterprises is promoted by two main policy documents: the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov) and the Labour Code, Act No. 311/2001 Coll. (Zákon č. 311/2001 Z. z. Zákonník práce).

As already mentioned in section 050301, the §47 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services states that the labour offices might cover up to 90% of training expenses of an employee. However, an engagement on an employer's side is needed: the latter should agree to employ the participant for at least 12 months after the completion of the training activity. Labour offices might also contribute towards the employer's training expenses, if the training activities avoid downsizing: *"The Office may, on the basis of a written agreement, grant contributions to the employer for the employee's education and preparation for the labour market up to 90% of the justified costs of the employee's education and preparation for the labour market, if upon their completion the employer continues employing him/her for at least twelve months, or when the employee's education and preparation for the labour market is being organised within measures toward precluding or restricting collective redundancy."*

Moreover, the §54(2)(e) of the same Act stipulates that an individual financial State contribution for training of newly hired employees can be accorded to the investors creating new job in the Slovak Republic: *"The individual State aid for the investor, approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic, or the European Commission, on the basis of an*

*application for the provision of State aid, pursuant to a special regulation, taking the form of a contribution for the creation of a new job, and a contribution for education of an employee accepted to a newly created job, provided by the Centre in the way and under the conditions, stipulated in the contract concluded between the Centre and the beneficiary of the individual State aid.”*

The Labour Code (Act No. 311/2001 Coll.) contains three paragraphs directly related to the provision of CVET in enterprises. These paragraphs regulate employers' and employees' responsibilities for upgrading of employees skills:

§153 stipulates that *“An employer shall attend to deepening the employees' qualification, or to its increase. An employer shall negotiate with employees' representatives measures aimed at attending to the employees' qualification, its deepening and increase.”*

§154 specifies that:

- *“An employer shall secure acquisition of qualification by means of training or tutoring for an employee who takes up an employment relationship without qualification...”*;
- *“An employer shall be obliged to retrain an employee who is to be transferred to a new workplace or to a new type of work or manner of working, if such is necessary, particularly with regard to changes in work organisation or to the other rationalising measures.”*;
- *“An employer shall be obliged to systematically deepen the qualification for work performance agreed in the employment contract...An employer shall be obliged to instruct an employee to undergo further education with the aim of deepening his/her qualification. Participation in education shall be the performance of work, for which an employee shall be entitled to wage compensation.”*

§155 enables the employer and the employee to sign a specific CVET contract: *“An employer may conclude an agreement with an employee by which the employer commits himself/herself to enabling the employee for increasing his/her qualification by providing time off, wage compensation and reimbursement of other costs pursuant to study, and the employee commits himself/herself to remaining in an employment relationship with the employer for a determinate period upon completion of study,...”*

Besides, all employers in the Slovak Republic have a legal obligation to provide induction training related to safety at work and fire protection for the newly hired employees and update the instructions on the regular basis. This obligation is related to the Act No. 124/2006 Coll. on Safety and Health at Work as amended (Zákon č. 124/2006 Z. z. o bezpečnosti a ochrane zdravia pri práci a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov), the Act No. 314/2001 Coll. on Fire Protection as amended (Zákon č. 314/2001 Z. z. o ochrane pred požiarimi) and the Decree No. 121/2002 Coll. of the Ministry of Interior on Prevention of Fire (Vyhláška Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky č. 121/2002 Z. z. o požiarnej prevencii).

As far as the sectoral level and the level of various professions (e.g. medical professions, pedagogical professions, diverse professions within public administration) are concerned, the provision of CVET is regulated by specific legislation and managed by relevant ministries. For example, within the public administration, a specific legislation applies to CVET of civil servants. Its provision is guaranteed by the Act No. 312/2001 Coll. on Civil Service (Zákon č.

312/2001 Z. z. o štátnej službe). More details and examples will be given in the part 050403 (Measures to support training for enterprises in specific economic sectors).

The CVET on the company level is legislatively supported by already mentioned §54 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services which enables investors (jobs creators) to apply for a State financial support in order to train newly hired employees. This contribution was recently accorded to the companies such as Samsung Electronics (electronics), Universal Media Corporation (electronics and optical media products), KIA Motors, Mobis Slovakia, PCA Slovakia (automotive sector).

With regards to social partners, the largest employees' organisation - Confederation of Trade Unions of the SR (Konfederácia odborových zväzov, KOZ SR) and other smaller organisations representing employees, have their own CVET institution Trade Union Education Institute (Inštitút vzdelávania odborov SR, IVO SR). The CVET within the employees' organisations is regulated by a specific policy document - System of Vocational Training - which was approved in 1993. There are two organisations representing employers: Federation of Employers' Associations of the Slovak Republic (Asociácia zamestnávateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky, AZZZ SR) and National Union of Employers (Republiková únia zamestnávateľov, RÚZ). Neither of them has a specialised CVET institution or structure.

Two weaknesses might be identified in the current provision of enterprise-affiliated CVET:

- The principal weakness of the present arrangements is related to the fact that the legislation of the Slovak Republic does not specify any mandatory sources of financing CVET in enterprises (there are no incentives for companies and individuals for the creation of the allocation of CVET funds). However, the idea has already appeared in various strategic documents that have emerged since 2000. It was recently promoted by the National Lisbon Strategy of the Slovak Republic (2005). The document encourages the creation of a model of CVET financing which would combine the means of employers, employees, as well as public resources.
- Continuing training is treated very marginally in many enterprises in the Slovak Republic. Several companies have neither a strategy of human resources development nor a systematic approach to training of their employees.

The arrival of large foreign investors with their CVET know-how might have a positive influence on the development of enterprise-affiliated training in Slovakia.

### **050402 - Measures to support training in SMEs**

Small and medium size enterprises are defined as enterprises having up to 250 employees, and a turnover not exceeding 40 million euros.

The Slovak Republic does not have any specific measures or incentive to support training for people working in SMEs. The CVET within small and medium size enterprises is regulated by the previously mentioned legislation: the Act No 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (Zákon č. 5/2004 Z. z. o službách zamestnanosti a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov) and the Labour Code, Act No. 311/2001 Coll. (Zákon č. 311/2001 Z. z. Zákonník práce). However, there are some schemes supporting the development of entrepreneurship; the CVET activities for those who would like to start up their own business are integrated into these schemes.

The CVET activities promoting entrepreneurship are primarily related to the National Agency for SME Development (Národná agentúra pre rozvoj malého a stredného podnikania). The Agency was established in 1993 as a common initiative of the European Union and the Slovak Government, with the aim to support the SME development in the Slovak Republic. It is a non-profit organisation, associating three legal entities: Ministry of Economy, the Association of Slovak Businessmen, and the Slovak Trade Association. The National Agency for SME Development proposes two programmes focusing on consultancy and training for future, as well as existing entrepreneurs. With regards to consultancy and training for future entrepreneurs, the emphasis is on how to become an entrepreneur and how to develop a business plan. The programme for existing entrepreneurs focuses on various aspects of efficient running of an enterprise. Besides, the National Agency for SME Development runs a database of accredited CVET activities related to various fields.

The development of entrepreneurship skills has been also enhanced throughout training firm projects focusing on unemployed people, with special focus on unemployed graduates. (For more details about training firms see part 050105 “Alternatives modes of delivery”).

Other initiatives supporting training of future entrepreneurs are related to a non-profit association CEPAC Slovakia (Centre for Patronage and Long-Term Care for Starting Businesses, Centrum pre patronát a dlhodobú starostlivosť o začínajúcich podnikateľov) which was created with the support of CEPAC Soissons (France) in the early 90s. The objective of CEPAC Slovakia is to make a contribution towards the development of SMEs in Slovakia through training and counselling services focusing mainly on the unemployed who would like to start up their own business.

Besides, the CVET within small and medium size enterprises was recently promoted by the EU programme Leonardo da Vinci II (period 2000 – 2006). The national website of the Leonardo da Vinci programme (<http://www.saaic.sk/leonardo/>) indicates that many SMEs in the Slovak Republic took an advantage of the European financial support and developed various CVET activities and programmes.

### **050403 - Measures to support training for enterprises in specific economic sectors**

Specific legislative measures apply to CVET related to particular professions, such as medical, pedagogical, justice, financial-sector professions, professions within public administration, etc. For example:

- Since 2002, specific measures apply to CVET of civil servants. These measures are stipulated in the Act No. 312/2001 Coll. on the Civil Service (Zákon č. 312/2001 Z. z. o štátnej službe), which regulates the employment relationships of approximately 36 000 civil servants. The §77 of this Act, “Deepening and Extending Qualification of Civil Servants”, stipulates that the Service Office provides civil servants with a minimum of five working days of time-off within each calendar year, in order to allow them to deepen their qualification. Civil servants are entitled to their wage compensation during this period. The costs of the training are covered by the Service Office. The civil servants who want to extent their qualification (especially those who would like to get a university degree) are eligible for supplementary time-off and during this period are entitled to their salary. However, a formal engagement of a civil servant to stay in the civil service after the completion of a degree might be required.

Besides, in 2004, Government adopted the Concept for Training in Civil Service, Resolution No. 79/2004 (Konceptia vzdelávania štátnych zamestnancov) which defines objectives and priorities of the CVET in the civil services. The priority targets are especially superior officers, newly hired civil servants and the civil servants occupying the posts related to the integration of the Slovak Republic into the European Union.

- CVET for pedagogical staff (teachers and trainers) is regulated by Decree No. 42/1996 Coll. of the Ministry of Education on the In-service Training of the Pedagogical Staff (Vyhláška Ministerstva školstva SR č. 42/1996 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní pedagogických pracovníkov). The training can be organised and provided by specialised in-service training institutions of the Ministry of Education – MPC (metodicko-pedagogické centrum), ŠIOV (Štátny inštitút odborného vzdelávania), ŠPÚ (Štátny pedagogický ústav), etc.; and by various kinds of schools and other establishments.
- CVET for medical professions is regulated by various legislative documents: the Act No. 277/1994 Coll. on Health Care as amended (Zákon č. 277/1994 Z. z. o zdravotnej starostlivosti v znení neskorších predpisov), the Act No. 578/2004 Coll. on Healthcare Providers, Healthcare Workers and Professional Healthcare Organisations, and on Amendment and Supplementation of Certain Laws (Zákon č. 578/2004 Z. z. o poskytovateľoch zdravotnej starostlivosti, zdravotníckych pracovníkoch, stavovských organizáciách v zdravotníctve a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov); the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 213/2004 Coll. concerning further training of healthcare workers (Nariadenie vlády SR č. 213/2004 Z. z. o ďalšom vzdelávaní pracovníkov v zdravotníctve) and by the Medical Directive 93/16/EC. The CVET for medical professions is organised by the Slovak Medical University (Slovenská zdravotnícka univerzita).
- CVET of professional soldiers is organised under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence of the SR, and it is regulated by the §27 of the Act no. 346/2005 Coll. on State Service of Professional Soldiers of Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic and on the amendment of certain acts (Zákon č. 346/2005 Z. z. o štátnej službe profesionálnych vojakov ozbrojených síl Slovenskej republiky a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov). The Ministry of Defence has its own CVET facilities.
- Continuing vocational training of food producers, farmers, entrepreneurs in the field of agriculture and forestry, employees in the field of forestry and water affairs is organised and regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic. CVET for these professions is related to the strategic document Strategy of Education and Training in the Field of Agriculture for the Years 2007-2013 (Stratégia vzdelávania na roky 2007-2013 v odvetví poľnohospodárstva a potravinárstva). The Ministry of Agriculture possesses three specialised training institutions.
- Training activities of police officers, firemen and civil protection workers are regulated by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. The Ministry has its own training facilities.
- CVET of justice professionals (e.g. employees of district and regional courts, jurists, judges) is regulated and organised by the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic.
- Continuing training programmes for meteorologists and climatologists are ensured by the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic. It is ensured by a training centre affiliated to the Slovak Hydro-meteorological Institute (Slovenský hydrometeorologický ústav).
- CVET of customs officers and employees of tax authorities is organised and regulated by the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry has its own training facilities.

Besides, there are several other professions to which apply specific CVET requirements and measures. For instance, particular CVET regulations apply to the professions with a high work-related accident risk (e.g. electricians). The decrees imposing regular safety-at-work training activities within such professions are issued by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. In addition, there are some professions to which various international regulations related to CVET apply (e.g. welders).

As the specific sectors concerns, the CVET is supported especially in the sectors with significant foreign investments. This is due to the fact that large foreign companies are entitled to apply for a State financial support, in order to train their newly hired employees (§54 of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services). Through this measure, the development of CVET in some large automotive-sector and electronics-sector companies was supported recently. Moreover, a specific contract of vocational training partnership was signed in 2005 between PSA Peugeot Citroen, the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Education of France and the Association for the Vocational Training of Adults (AFPA, France). Consequently, the project called “Campus of Trades” (Kampus povolání) is being implemented. The project should enhance the development of IVET and CVET in the automotive sector (for more details see part 050104 “Planning and forecasting”).

#### **050404 - Social partner based schemes to support non-job related training**

With regards to employees’ organisations, the supreme organisation representing employees (Confederation of Trade Unions of the SR, Konfederácia odborových zväzov KOZ SR), and other smaller employees’ organisations have their own CVET institution called Trade Union Education Institute (Inštitút vzdelávania odborov SR, IVO SR). However, the training proposed by the institute is mostly professionally oriented.

There are two organisations representing employers: Federation of Employers’ Associations of the Slovak Republic (Asociácia zamestnávateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky, AZZZ SR) and National Union of Employers (Republiková únia zamestnávateľov, RÚZ). Neither of them has a specialised CVET institution or structure.

Another organisation that might be mentioned is the Slovak Craft Industry Federation (Slovenský živnostenský zväz, SŽZ), which, on a voluntary basis, joins licensed trade associations, small and medium scale entrepreneurs, guilds and bodies uniting craftsmen. Besides its other activities, the Slovak Craft Industry Federation organises and carries out CVET programmes and courses. These programmes might have job related, as well as non-job related content.

As far as individual companies, there is no survey on non-job related training activities provided by enterprises. Yet, the Internet portal [www.education.sk](http://www.education.sk) (which disposes of the biggest database of educational activities for the adults in the Slovak Republic) contains several non-job related courses, such as “how to get stress under control”, “knowing yourself”, “emotional intelligence”. Individual companies are eligible to apply for them.

In some countries, there exist specific surveys that can provide information on what type of CVET was undertaken by individual at their own initiative. Such surveys are not known to exist in the Slovak Republic so far. The national institute collecting data on continuing education and training (Institute of Information and Prognoses in Education, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva, ÚIPŠ) has not yet included this indicator into its reviews.

Some information related to this issue was provided by the LFS ad-hoc module on Lifelong Learning (2003, Eurostat). Data from this survey indicate that 93% of those who undertook a CVET activity, participated in it mainly because of job-related reasons. Only 7% of respondents who participated in some educational activity, followed this activity mainly for personal or social reasons. Compared to the EU figures, the adults in the Slovak Republic are more likely to undertake continuing training for job-related reasons, than for personal or social reasons (EU: 83.9% of citizens undertook a CVET activity mainly for job-related reasons, 15.9% mainly for personal or social reasons, 0.2% did not answer).

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