



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,  
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

# Vocational education in the Czech Republic

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- Vocational education and training (VET) has always represented a fundamental part of the Czech education system.
- The main body responsible for IVET is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Most VET schools are public and founded by regions.
- IVET is school-based, with a large proportion of practical training (at schools, in workshops, practical training centres, and authorised companies) and/or work placements.
- Representatives of employers are involved in sector skill councils and field groups that set occupational and qualification standards.
- Benefiting from a long tradition of quality, it has developed intensively over recent decades. In the past ten years curricula have been reformed and modernised.

In the Czech Republic is a traditionally **high attainment of upper secondary education**, in particular in vocational education.

Vocational education **accounts for three quarters of all upper secondary education graduates**.

- Three-years study programmes by a vocational certificate examination (EQF 3 and 2).
- Four-years study programmes by a maturita examination (EQF 4) enabling further studies at tertiary education level

**Both educational pathways enable the direct entry into the labour market.**

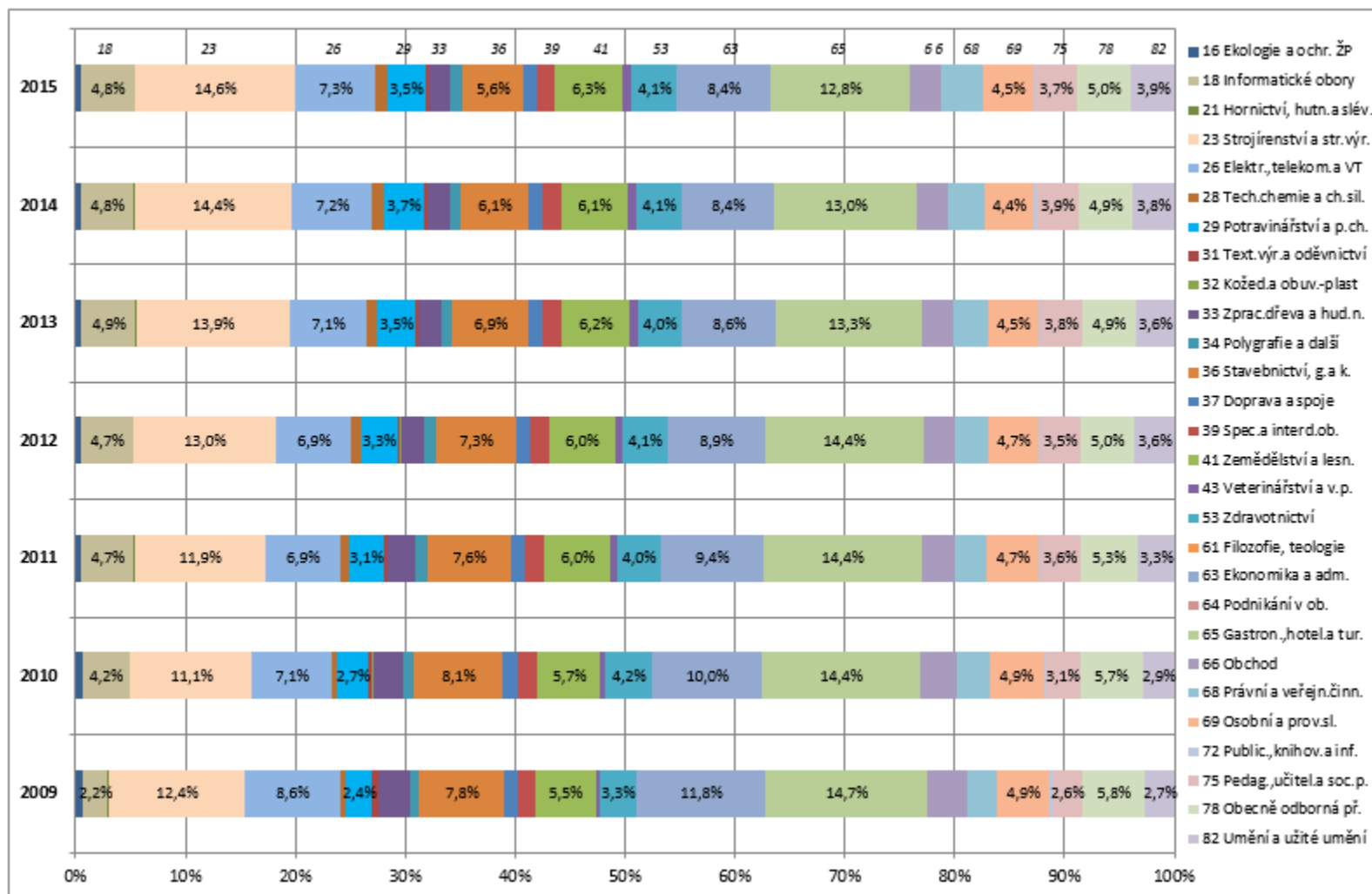


# Distinctive features of VET

- Pupils choose between general and vocational educational pathways at upper secondary level at age 15.
- By age 17 to 19, most VET students have acquired a vocational qualification recognised on the labour market.
- General subjects are a strong component in all types of VET programme. Their proportion varies depending on the programme, representing 30% to 70% of instruction time.
- Many programmes are designed to be combined with working life. The wide variety of continuing VET (CVET) programmes provided outside the formal system is not generally regulated but subject to the free market; nevertheless, a system of validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes has been gradually developing since 2007, when the law on validation and recognition of CVET outcomes came into force.

- Within the formal schools system, there is a two-level **curricula system in primary and secondary education**.
- The **National Curricula** (Framework educational programmes) were developed within the period 2007 - 2012 in accordance with the School Act approved in 2004.
- They contain the minimum requirements for education stipulated by the State and currently there exist 286 framework educational programmes for individual fields of VET. They are focused mainly on learning outcomes and key competences.
- Based on the National Curricula, secondary schools design their own **school curricula** (School educational programmes). The objective is to allow for a more flexible shaping of graduate profiles in line with regional needs, the development of the relevant field and the interests and capacities of students.

## Počty žáků ve SOŠ přijatých do 1. r. (E+H+M+L0 denní) – zdroj statistika NÚV



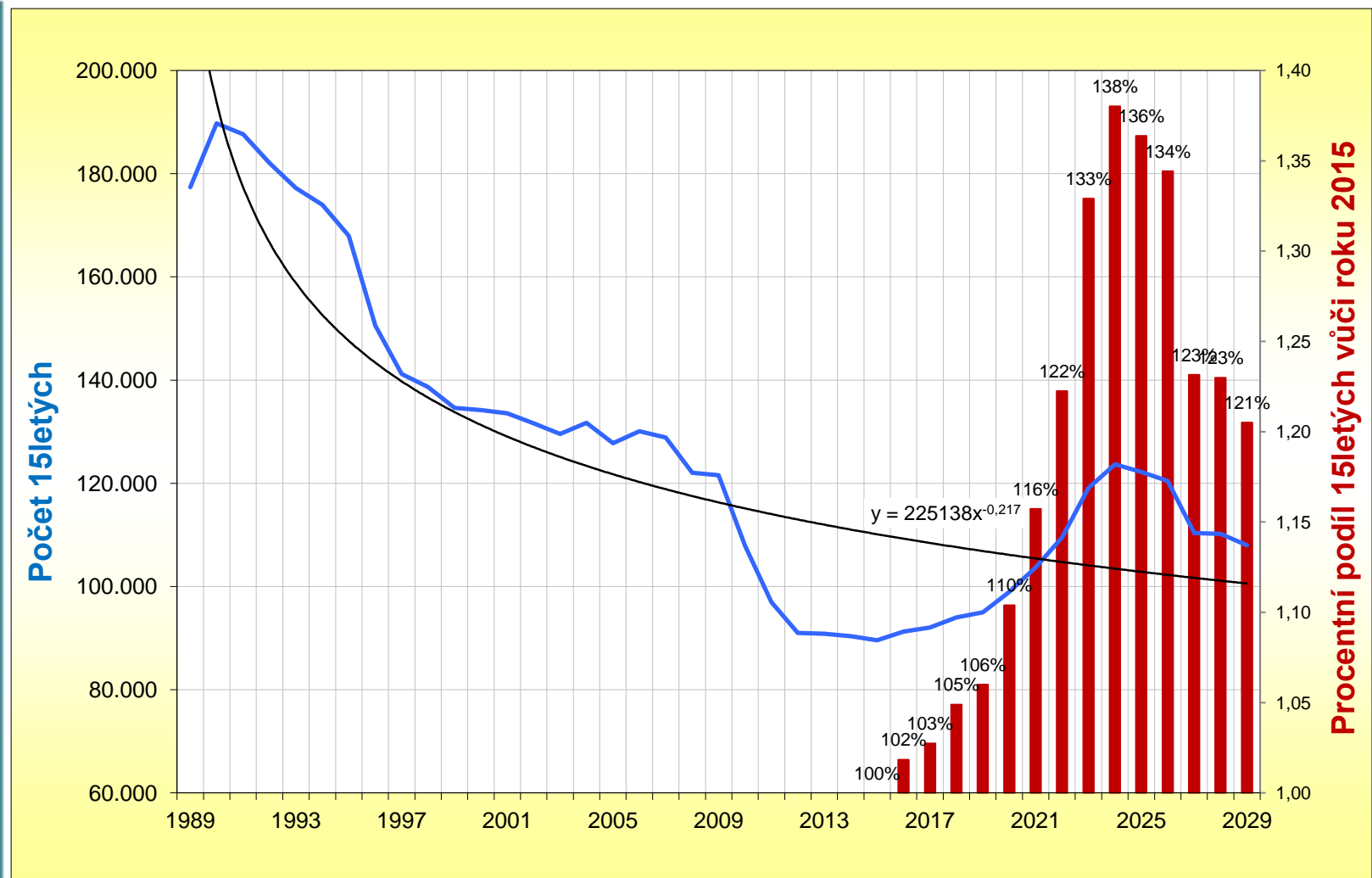
# Vocational education and training

- Early leaving from education and training is very low (around 5.5%), partly due to a wide choice of education pathways and various education programmes combined with a high level of permeability.
- Demographic developments have led to a decreasing number of young learners.
- IVET schools have become more active in providing CVET programmes for the general public. This not only provides school teachers with an opportunity to develop their skills in teaching adults, but also helps increase young and adult learners' awareness of CVET as an integral part of life.



# Development of 15-year-olds

(statistics NUV)



## Dual system of education

- There is no formal apprenticeship programme along the lines of the dual system in the Czech Republic.
- There is no shared responsibility between employer and the school related to the training and pupils are not employers of individual companies (as e.g. in Germany or Austria).
- **On the other hand, the current Czech system allows for some elements of the dual system** (e.g. tax incentives, agreement between pupil and a company on a voluntary basis, cooperation of school and company during the completion of study programmes, preparation of teachers of vocational subjects in cooperation with employers, etc.)
- Schools are exclusively responsible for education and training of pupils and curriculum shows a high proportion of theory in comparison with practical training. However, practical, **work-based training and work placements** are integrated into IVET curricula as a mandatory part.

**Social partners** can influence vocational education at national and regional levels particularly through co-operation on the preparation of curricula.

Their representatives:

- participate in the final exam committees of upper secondary vocational programmes,
- cooperate at the newly introduced uniform assignments for final examinations (EQF 3) and profile (vocational) parts of matura (leaving) exam (EQF 4) in study programmes at secondary technical and vocational schools.

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

## National level Tax incentives were recently introduced for IVET.

Since 2014, direct and indirect funding of secondary and tertiary vocational education by is deemed as tax-deductible expenses:

- deductible amount of equivalent of approximately 7EUR per hour of practical training or internship provided to a pupil/student on the tax-payer's premises; costs of the assets at least partially used for the purposes of vocational training. In addition, the limit of tax deductible amounts for corporate scholarships has been increased.
- The principle objective of the measure is to compensate part of entrepreneurs' costs and motivate new companies to commence cooperation with the schools.
- The principle objective of the measure is to compensate, at least partially, for the incurred costs and motivate new companies to commence co-operation with the schools.
- Two tax incentives are included in the Czech legislation:
  - costs for employees' training are deemed as a part of overall business costs for taxation purposes;
  - individuals can deduct the costs for exams in line with the Act on validation and recognition of the outcomes of CVET from their tax base

## **National level Tax incentives were recently introduced for IVET.**

- Additional deduction of 50% or 110% of the costs of assets acquired and at least partially used for the purposes of vocational training should also help to achieve desired development.
- The actual amount of the deduction will depend on the extent of the usage for educational purposes.
- This particular incentive will ensure that the pupils and students are trained on the same machinery, which the relevant companies currently use.
- In this case, the tax-payer is an individual or a legal person who has concluded with the school an Agreement on the contents and scope of practical training and on whose premises is the practical training or a part of accredited study programme implemented, provided that they are authorised to perform activities related to a given field of study or study programme.

# Concrete support measures at national level

In late 2012 a **national system project POSPOLU (Together)** was implemented by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic from 2012-2015.

- It piloted a closer co-operation between schools and employers and subsequently drafted new proposals for legislation and other changes in the system.
- For main areas towards the targeted support of cooperation between schools and companies were identified:
  - **to enhance to entrance of graduates from school into labour market**
    - increase the range of the period of practical training in real work environment
  - **to increase the quality of competences of graduates in order to meet the employers' needs**
    - modernise the general education in VET programmes, support the personal assurance of cooperation between school and companies- position of coordinator, practical training of teachers, quality assurance of practical training in companies, completion of study programmes in cooperation with employers, linkage between IVET and CVET qualifications
  - **to match the VET programmes supply with changes of qualification needs of the labour market**
    - reform of financing schools, coordination of VET
  - **to enhance the attractiveness of VET for young people**
    - strengthen the carrier guidance and ensure the better permeability of VET system

- In 2013, the Government adopted a paper called **New measures fostering vocational education and training** that defines main steps related to organisation, administration and legislation planned for the next few years to enhance participation in VET and its quality.
- In August 2013, the **Ministry of Education launched a new call (Nr. 44) under the operational programme co- financed from the ESF**. It is aimed to support technical and science fields of education and similar issues.
  - It provides financial resources to regions proposing their own design of the measure according to their needs and allocate the financial resources further to the schools.

- In 2014, a **development programme fostering continuing education of teachers and pedagogical staff was launched** by the Ministry of Education.
  - The programme aims at deepening the cooperation between secondary technical/vocational schools and employers, increasing of vocational competences of teachers of technical subjects and teachers of practical training, especially in technical fields (machinery, electrical engineering, chemistry, etc.)
- Since 2015, **legislation amendments made it possible for directors of schools to employ experts from the world of business** but also from non-profit organisations and State administration.
  - They may educate part-time without having full pedagogical qualification.



- **Several media campaigns** were realized during recent years promoting the choice of VET among school children and their parents or promoting the CVET among the general public (on the initiative of e.g. Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, etc.).
  - A number of promotion media campaigns (often co-financed from the ESF) have been carried out also in regions, in many cases in cooperation with social partners, particularly employers. Regional media campaigns are also carried out by schools in order to attract prospective students.
- **The MŠMT declared 2015 – the year of technical education.** The detailed event programme (media campaigns, seminars, open days, conferences, etc.) has been prepared in cooperation with the Confederation of Industry and other social partners.
  - The outcomes of the Year of Industry and Technical Education include implementation of systemic changes, sectoral agreements in selected industries and more than 400 events. Parents represented an important target group of the activities implemented throughout the Year of Industry. They are the ones who decide to which secondary school their children will go to and they still, in their majority, view vocational schools as a secondary option.
  - A new interactive electronic publication called *Almanac of Technical Education* has been developed for parents. It presents a range of almost 500 secondary schools providing education in technical fields, including 70 good practice examples of cooperation between schools and companies. The Almanac is available on [www.RokPrumyslu.eu](http://www.RokPrumyslu.eu).

# Concrete support measures at national level

- After a long debate, in 2010/11 the so-called '**state maturita**' (EQF 4) was launched. Since then it was made obligatory for all secondary schools. It consists of both common (state) and a profile part (different for individual schools). The MŠMT is responsible for preparation of a standardised exam.
- The reform ended the former practice when schools prepared own exams, thus making exams more objective, comparable across schools/programmes and increase their role as a reference tool. **For vocational certificate (EQF 3) courses standardised final examination assignments** are being developed since 2009. A uniform content for each study programme which is in coherence with national curricula (Framework educational programmes) and also the qualification standards of vocational qualification of the NQF (e.g. bricklayer, toolmaker, baker, hairdresser, etc.) was developed jointly by vocational school teachers and experts with practical experience.
- **Since 2014/15, the use of uniform assignments is expected to become obligatory for all the secondary schools.** The new model of final examination is mandatory since the school year 2014-2015. In cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, the representatives of the employers could influence the development of final examinations topics in terms of existing needs and requirements in practice and the final examination may also take place in a real company workplace.
- **A methodical support of polytechnic education** is provided also through the platform [rvp.cz](http://rvp.cz) where teachers may find digital teaching materials as well as other sources supporting the topic of technical education ([www.rvp.cz](http://www.rvp.cz))

## Current challenges and plans for the future

- Revision of 286 framework educational programmes for IVET
  - Revision of national upper secondary VET curricula is currently being prepared as is reform in financing schools, with the State budget being discussed to promote quality as the main criterion as opposed to the current per capita financing principle. A crucial challenge is the generally low attractiveness of teaching jobs up to tertiary level as the teaching profession is considered undervalued. This is caused mainly by low average salaries compared to other high-skilled professionals and limited opportunities for career development. Adopting the framework for career development for teachers has been debated for many years. A new approach being developed proposes three progression levels and focuses on the quality of teaching. Better matching of skills supply and labour market demand is another challenge
- Verify the possibility of using the standards of vocational qualifications in revision of IVET national curricula
- Analyse the VET fields structure in cooperation with employers and representatives of individual resorts
- Revise the extent and organisation of work placement and practical training in 3- and 4- years study programmes; ensure the practical education in real work placement

# Challenges and policy responses

- One of the main challenges in VET is to improve the quality and attractiveness of secondary VET by encouraging practical training and work placement in companies, supporting the school-to-work transition of graduates.
- Several recent measures have aided cooperation between schools and employers, including tax incentives, developing VET examinations in cooperation with employers, and legislative amendments to enable experts from the business world to be employed in schools.
- Linking VET programmes with qualifications in the national register of qualifications (NSK) is also expected to increase responsiveness to labour market needs.
- To reform the system of financing schools in regions as an important step towards support of quality in IVET (2019)
- Prediction of qualification needs of the labour market
- Further development of carrier guidance and counselling in IVET and CVET

# Thanks for your attention

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