

COUNTRY POLICY REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Czech Republic



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Secretariat
Østre Stationsvej 33
DK-5000 Odense C Denmark
Tel: +45 64 41 00 20
secretariat@european-agency.org

Brussels Office
Rue Montoyer, 21
BE-1000 Brussels Belgium
Tel: +32 2 213 62 80
brussels.office@european-agency.org

www.european-agency.org



Section 1: Country priorities for education

The text below presents the main country priorities in the field of education, with special attention to the development of inclusive education.

Country priorities

In 2016, the Czech Republic implemented major amendments to the Education Act of 2015 (Act No. 82/2015 Coll.), which significantly modified the rules for education, especially regarding inclusion. These subsidiary regulations include the following:

- Decree No. 27/2016 Coll., on the education of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and talented pupils
- Decree No. 197/2016 Coll., which amends Decree No. 72/2005 Coll., on the provision of counselling services and facilities in schools, and certain other decrees.

The latest goals and priorities are described in the [Strategy for Education Policy until 2020](#) document, approved by the Czech Government in July 2014.

A new Strategy ('2030') is about to be prepared. According to the Strategy Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), working groups will open their sessions.

The main challenges in the development of inclusive education are outlined below. These are the issues where the Agency and its member countries could possibly help with concrete recommendations.

6.3.1 Teaching assistants

The MEYS aims to put teaching assistants in groups of pupils, instead of the current approach, where assistants restrict their care to a particular individual. In addition, their contracts are limited to two years. Currently there are too many assistants in the system. The MEYS wants to:

- reduce the number of teaching assistants;
- improve the quality of those who remain;
- link teaching assistants' activity to teams of learners, so as to prevent the attachment of an individual learner with SEN to an assistant and to allow them to integrate into the team (i.e. actual inclusion).

6.3.2 Diagnosing and assessing children in school counselling facilities

Regions establish school counselling facilities. These facilities perform diagnostics of learners with SEN and issue recommendations for their educational support. The MEYS aims to ensure the unification of diagnostic procedures and outputs based on a unified methodology and a set of diagnostic tools used across the regions of the Czech Republic. This will also ensure the standardised quality of diagnostic procedures and consultancy services. Standardised diagnostic outputs are key to the administration of



Country priorities

support for learners with SEN, on which the invested resources of the state budget and teaching work depend.

6.3.3 Lack of special education teachers and (school) psychologists in the labour market

The labour market in the Czech Republic does not offer enough special education teachers and psychologists to deal with learners' SEN. One possible way of providing professional support to learners with SEN is the professionalisation of a high number of teaching assistants.

6.3.4 Preparedness of mainstream school teachers and the possibility of operational solution of unsuccessful integration of children with SEN

Initial teacher education in the Czech Republic does not prepare teachers to work with learners with SEN. The MEYS aims to support existing teachers through effective career development programmes, to compensate for insufficient competencies in the area of support for learners with SEN. It will also be necessary to negotiate with teacher training faculties about resolving the problem of teaching courses' syllabi and graduate teachers lacking in special education skills.

6.3.5 Division of services, especially assistant services, between the Ministry of Education and other ministries (responsible for social and health services)

Support for learners with SEN, including learners with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities and others, comes (almost exclusively) from teaching staff. However, some activities are not primarily teaching. The MEYS aims to find an effective sharing model for staff within the education, social services and health care departments who work with learners with SEN. This would ensure that all learners' needs are met and that state budget funds are effectively spent on professional (teaching) positions in cases and activities where they are needed.



Section 2: Analysis grid

Measure 1: To improve inclusive education and to ensure that good quality education is accessible for all

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>1.1 There is a clearly stated policy for the promotion of quality in inclusive education.</p> <p><i>(Policy aims to widen access to education and to promote full participation and opportunities for all learners vulnerable to exclusion to realise their potential. Policy outlines how education policy-makers need to take responsibility for all learners.)</i></p>	<p>1.1.1 The right of all children to be educated is enshrined in the Constitution of the Czech Republic (<i>Ústava České republiky</i> No. 1/1993 Coll.) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (<i>Listina základních práv a svobod</i> No. 2/1993 Coll.). The Constitution states that everybody is equal in accessing the law. According to the law, everyone has the equal opportunity to receive education, free of charge, at compulsory and upper-secondary level (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.1.2 The Amendment to the Education Act of 2015 (which came into force in 2016) is based on the presumption that everyone has the right to an education where the content, forms and methods reflect educational needs and possibilities. Education should be enjoyed by everyone; it should not be the privilege of a narrowly defined circle of people with disabilities or disadvantages (National Overview, 2018). The new definition of a child with SEN is:</p> <p><i>Every child who needs support measures with reflection of their educational possibilities and/or fulfilment of their rights with regard to health, cultural and/or life conditions</i> (Education Act, Art. 16, par. 1).</p> <p>1.1.3 The Education Act for Pre-Primary, Basic, Secondary and Tertiary Professional Education of 2004 (Education Act) reinforces the trend towards the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. It recognises that pupils with special needs should attend their local school unless their parents choose another school (National Overview, 2018). In general, the emphasis is on integrating pupils with SEN into mainstream classes, which is an important</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>principle of inclusive education and is also stressed in the new Education Act (2.4% of the population falls outside mainstream education).</p> <p>1.1.4 The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. enhanced the education of all learners with SEN in mainstream schools by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • redefining the term ‘child with SEN’ (refer to 1.1.2); • redefining the term ‘support measures’ as ‘necessary modifications in education’ (Art. 16, par. 1); • changing support measures from a non-legally binding possibility to a legally binding one (support measures are an inseparable part of Decree No. 27/2016; once they are prescribed they are obligatory and financed by a claim); • giving schools the legal duty to provide support measures to learners with SEN; • establishing the unit price of every support measure by law (refer to Decree No. 27/2016 Coll.).
<p>1.2 Legislation and policy are consistent with the principles of the UNCRC and the UNCRPD.</p> <p><i>(Legislation and policy upholds the right of all learners to full participation in school with their own local peer group.)</i></p>	<p>1.2.1 One of the most important comprehensive national documents related to people with disabilities is the National Plan of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2010–2014, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The document contains the main aims, tasks and principles for implementing the inclusion policy regarding health, culture, social and educational policy (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>The National Plan of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015–2020 followed the 2010–2014 plan. Its basic objective and purpose is to build on the state policy implemented in this area, to continue promoting and supporting the integration of people</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>with disabilities and to implement individual articles of the UNCRPD through specific measures.</p> <p>1.2.2 A central document on education is the Long-Term National Strategy on Development in Education (<i>Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávání a rozvoje vzdělávací soustavy České republiky na období let 2015–2020</i>), which is discussed and approved by the government and then approved by parliament. The approved document is revised every two years. Reflecting the UNCRPD, the latest version of the document, which was approved in 2015, particularly emphasises inclusive education (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.2.3 In line with the UNCRPD, the Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. guarantees that alternative communication and/or sign language will be available for those pupils who cannot use oral language. The Act on Sign Language, which was approved in 1998 and amended in 2008, legally recognises and highlights the importance of sign language for the education of pupils with a hearing impairment. It also recognises and highlights the use of other alternative communication systems, including specific systems of communication for people who are deaf and blind. The Act guarantees deaf children’s right to education by means of sign language and guarantees access to sign language interpretation for upper-secondary learners and sign language courses for parents of deaf children. The use of sign language in the education of pupils with hearing impairment was already enshrined in the previous Education Act No. 29/1984 Coll. and its amendments (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. guarantees alternative communication as a support measure.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>1.3 The concept of inclusion is clarified in education policy as an agenda that increases quality and equity for all learners.</p> <p><i>(Policy aims to address underachievement of all vulnerable groups including children with disabilities.)</i></p>	<p>1.3.1 The Czech Government adopted the Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018 in 2015. A new document (Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2019–2020) establishes two main strategic methods for the implementation of inclusive education managed and granted by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS). It includes measures on information, data and open communication with experts, the public and other national and local stakeholders, and on involving schools, pedagogues and every pupil.</p> <p>Besides concrete measures and timings, it also states extra priorities based around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the position and role of social pedagogues in schools; • analysis and supportive measures in pre-schools and basic schools with a high population of Roma minority pupils; • the pre-and post-graduate education of pedagogues targeted on inclusive education. <p>Strategies are being prepared in each region (a total of 14 regions in the Czech Republic are relatively independent in local education policy).</p> <p>The Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020 states how each region will manage the implementation of inclusive education in particular areas. Each region should also have an action plan at the end. The document summarises the situation around equal opportunities in education, the main actors (cross-sectoral approach) and stakeholders, a plan of key steps and a time schedule. The material covers all areas of each region and is adopted by its representation.</p> <p>1.3.2 At local level, so-called Local Action Plans are being implemented. One of their tasks is to facilitate the discussion on inclusive education at local level.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>1.4 Legislation and policy for inclusive education is cross-sectoral.</p> <p><i>(Policy outlines procedures to ensure the efficient co-ordination of services, as well as clearly defining roles and responsibilities.)</i></p>	<p>1.4.1 The MEYS is responsible for the administration of education, youth issues and sports.</p> <p>1.4.2 In matters related to pre-primary, comprehensive, secondary and higher education, vocational training and adult education, the MEYS is assisted by its expert institutions: the National Institute for Education, the National Institute for Further Education and the Institute for Evaluation in Education. The Centre for Learning Outcomes (CERMAT) is a contributory organisation managed by the MEYS, commissioned in 1999 to reform the graduation exam (National Overview, 2018). The Czech School Inspectorate has never been a ministerial institution. It is an evaluation and control authority (administrative body).</p> <p>1.4.3 The multi-disciplinary teams in Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres (PPCC) and in Special Pedagogical Centres (SPC) provide counselling and guidance support. These teams consist of psychologists, special education teachers, speech therapists and social workers. They co-operate with professionals from other sectors, such as medical doctors and professionals from the area covering the family/child social care. Close co-operation with parents and class teachers is essential (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>Since September 2016, when the Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. came into force, PPCC and SPC for SEN have decided on support measures for learners with SEN in schools.</p>
<p>1.5 There is a long-term multi-level policy framework for implementing quality inclusive education at national, regional and / or organisational levels.</p>	<p>1.5.1 The Czech Government adopted the Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018 in 2015. The updated version for 2019–2020 (AP 2019–2020) stresses a multi-level policy framework.</p> <p>AP 2019–2020 has been adopted by the Czech MEYS and Government. Concrete measures aim not only at national level, but also local. It therefore works with different actors –</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>universities, non-government organisations (NGOs), state administration and its bodies. Examples of the concrete measures (two of 35) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.8 Lower the external differentiation in basic and grammar schools: Elements of external differentiation (municipalities and founders determining the catchment area of schools, which leads to the homogenisation of schools in the territories of municipalities, etc.) continue to exist. The role of systemic elements (a number of allegedly selective schools, but which have a catchment area or classes, etc.) and elements from different actors (founders and parents) play a role here. In addition to pre-schools, primary schools and secondary schools, this point also focuses on the co-operation of school entities with founders. • 2.5 Provide necessary expert health services for pupils in schools (for example, learners with intellectual disabilities). <p>1.5.2 Strategies are being prepared in each region (a total of 14 regions in the Czech Republic are relatively independent in local education policy). These strategies should embrace a region as such – involving local authorities and initiatives (i.e. NGOs), as well as different elements of regional administration.</p> <p>1.5.3 The <i>Long-term Intention of Education and Development of the Educational System in the Czech Republic for 2015–2020</i> document works with the system as such, taking into account regional school providers, the MEYS, universities, etc.</p>
<p>1.6 Policy outlines how education policy-makers need to take responsibility for all learners.</p>	<p>1.6.1 The Education Act, which regulates the whole education system in the Czech Republic, was approved in September 2004 and came into force in January 2005. It has been updated several times since. This Act presents the definition of pupils with SEN and individual target groups (until 2016) – pupils with intellectual, sensory or physical disabilities, pupils with speech and language impairments, pupils with multiple disabilities, pupils with</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>autism, pupils with specific learning and behavioural difficulties, chronically ill pupils and socially disadvantaged pupils. It also focuses on the education of gifted pupils.</p> <p>1.6.2 The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. proposes stressing an inclusive approach. It presents a new definition of the target group of pupils with special needs as:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Every child who needs support measures with reflection of their educational possibilities and/or fulfilment of their rights with regard to health, cultural and/or life conditions (Education Act, Art. 16, par. 1).</i></p> <p>The new definition does not use the terms ‘impairment’ or ‘socially disadvantaged background’. It is based on the ‘need for support provisions’, which are to be delivered to all pupils whose health and/or life conditions make their access to education difficult (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.6.3 At the same time, the Education Act offers the possibility to educate pupils with disabilities in special schools, classes or groups. The Education Act explicitly emphasises support towards developing pupils’ individual abilities, such as, for instance, pupils receiving extended education in certain subjects or enabling gifted pupils to skip a grade (National Overview, 2018). The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. makes it legally binding to provide support measures for gifted learners due to their ability (Decree No. 27/2016 Coll.).</p> <p>1.6.4 Pupils with SEN are preferably educated in mainstream classes, but special classes within mainstream schools are also available as a placement. Alternatively, they can attend special schools (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.6.5 Basic schools provide nine years of compulsory education. Compulsory education is divided into two levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First level (grades 1–5, 6–10 years of age) corresponds to the primary level



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second level (grades 6–9, 11–14 years of age) corresponds to the lower-secondary level (National Overview, 2018). <p>1.6.6 Upper-secondary education offers education for pupils with special needs in the following organisational forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual integration within mainstream settings • Education in a special class within a mainstream secondary school. <p>Depending on a child’s needs, they may postpone starting compulsory education until the school year in which they turn eight. Compulsory education of pupils with special needs educated in special schools can last up to 10 years. Children who need to repeat a year for some reason – for example, because of illness – may attend basic school for an extra year. Pupils with profound special needs can continue their basic education until the age of 26 (National Overview, 2018). In recent years, school attendance has increased.</p> <p>The postponement of the start of compulsory education is covered by the 2005 Education Act. It is the same as in previous Education Acts.</p> <p>1.6.7 Roma children represent a substantial group of pupils and increased attention is being paid to their education. Developmental programmes, entitled ‘The support of Roma pupils at upper-secondary schools’, ‘The support of Roma community integration’ and ‘Schools with a full-day programme’, are still in progress and a network of preparatory classes has been developed. Within these, a special training programme has been developed for pedagogical assistants from the Roma community. Through their supportive work in the classroom, these assistants serve as school-family liaisons (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.6.8 Regarding the integration of children with migrant and ethnic minority background, the Czech MEYS has developed a programme to support integration policy. Its framework</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>supports projects for the multi-cultural education of children and young people, the education of migrant foreigners and Czech as a foreign language courses (National Overview, 2018). Children with insufficient knowledge of the Czech language as an ‘official’ educational language take part in an additional language course in Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres (PPCC) and Special Pedagogical Centres (SPC) for special educational needs as a support measure for several hours per week. All types of programmes are thoroughly described and implemented by the National Institute for Further Education.</p>
<p>1.7 Policy has the goal of supporting all teachers to have positive attitudes towards all learners.</p>	<p>1.7.1 The Czech Government adopted the Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018 in 2015. The updated version for 2019–2020 (AP 2019–2020) contains:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Item 2.1.1: To support pedagogues in more broadly accepting and implementing inclusive and democratic principles in education –different forms of further education for pedagogues.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Item 2.1.2: To strengthen competencies of school management in the field of inclusive education implementation – redesign the curricula for school management qualification.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The system for further education of pedagogical staff (DVPP) aims to support school leaders in the application of legislation on inclusive education and its changes, to communicate with parents of pupils with SEN, to improve the accessibility of school environments and to work with hidden curricula.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Item 2.1.3: To raise competencies of teachers and school counsellors in the implementation of inclusive education – strengthen their capacity to accept and apply individualisation in education.</p> <p>1.7.2 Strategies are being prepared in each region (a total of 14 regions in the Czech Republic are relatively independent in local education policy).</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>The MEYS issued a methodological framework for Regional Strategies in 2017: Methodology for Equal Opportunities in Education. This incorporates, for example, an initial workshop for equal opportunities, where all stakeholders discuss pupil needs according to Local Action Plans which have already been prepared.</p> <p>1.7.3 Reducing inequalities in the education system is the second pillar of the Long-Term National Strategy on Development in Education 2015–2020. Equal opportunities bring possibilities for reaching each individual’s maximum educational potential. Pedagogues and counselling experts will be provided with methodological support and supported by legislation changes.</p>
<p>1.8 Policy requires learning material to be accessible.</p>	<p>1.8.1 Pupils with special needs have the right to be provided with support measures free of charge. Measures include adapted textbooks, specific teaching materials, compensatory and rehabilitation equipment and tools, and information and communication technology tools. Braille print is available for pupils who cannot read regular print (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.8.2 Refer to Decree No. 27/2016 Coll. (supportive measures).</p>
<p>1.9 Policy describes an effective framework of support for schools to implement inclusive education.</p> <p><i>(Support structures focus on different forms of educational resource centres that are locally organised to offer support to individual or clusters of schools.)</i></p>	<p>1.9.1 The PPCC/SPC have a duty to provide methodical and expert support to schools educating children with SEN (Decree No.72/2005 Coll.).</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>1.10 Policies outline a continuum of support for children and young people in schools, to meet the full diversity of learners' needs.</p>	<p>1.10.1 The Education Act guarantees that support measures and services required to support access to education for learners with SEN are available to learners at all levels of education, no matter where they are educated (mainstream and/or special settings) (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.10.2 There are support and counselling services, additional support staff and additional teaching in specific subjects (speech therapy, sign language, orientation and mobility, stimulating techniques, etc.) (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>1.10.3 The Education Act codifies the teaching of pupils with special needs through support measures that may be described in each pupil's individual education plan.</p> <p>1.10.4 The Amendment to the Education Act changed the system (refer to 1.1.3): learners with SEN are legally entitled to receive support measures. These are defined by the Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. (Art. 16, para. 2) as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>adjustment of requirements for admission to/termination of education;</i>2. <i>advisory assistance from schools and Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres/Special Pedagogical Centres;</i>3. <i>adjustment of organisation, content, evaluation, forms and methods of education and school services, including the provision of teaching of subjects of special pedagogical care;</i>4. <i>adjustment of the expected outcomes of education within the limits set by the Framework Educational Programmes and accredited training programmes;</i>5. <i>education according to the individual education plan;</i>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>6. <i>use of compensatory aids, special textbooks and special teaching aids (e.g. the use of deaf and/or blind communication systems, Braille and supportive or alternative communication systems);</i></p> <p>7. <i>use of communication systems for people who are deaf and/or blind, use of Braille and supportive or alternative communication systems;</i></p> <p>8. <i>provision of education or school services in structurally and technically altered premises;</i></p> <p>9. <i>use of teaching assistants and other teaching staff, Czech sign language interpreters and transcriptionists for deaf learners;</i></p> <p>10. <i>possibility of people who provide support to children during their stay in school or school facilities under other legislation;</i></p> <p>11. <i>extending the duration of secondary or higher vocational education by up to two years (secondary education is usually fulfilled at 18 years old and upper-secondary at 21 years old).</i></p> <p>This means an individual education plan (IEP) is one new support measure. When the PPCC/SPC decides a child needs an IEP because of their needs, the PPCC/SPC admit this. Schools have a duty to elaborate on the IEP and to educate the child under it. IEPs create complex education plans for learners and contains all other support measures mentioned above.</p> <p>There is a useful definition of support measures on the Eurydice website.</p>
<p>1.11 Policy outlines strategies for awareness-raising with all stakeholders in inclusive education.</p>	<p>1.11.1 Strategies are being prepared in each region (a total of 14 regions in the Czech Republic are relatively independent in local education policy).</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>Strategies must follow several criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mapping actual situation (e.g. mapping schools with higher level of supportive measures) 2. Target groups (including pedagogues, school management, pupils and parents, public sector, NGOs and other institutions) 3. Taking relevant agents/partners into account (roles, potential and involvement – schools, educational institutions, organisers – school founders, NGOs of wide spectra, leisure-time facilities, social and health departments, experts, public projects, etc.) 4. Strategy and its milestones (activities, time, indicators) 5. Financing 6. Responsibilities.
<p>1.12 Policy outlines the development of the role of special schools as a resource to increase the capability of mainstream schools and improve support for all learners.</p> <p><i>(The specialist knowledge and skills of special school / resource centre are maintained and further developed so as to enhance support for learners, such as those with low-incidence disabilities.)</i></p>	<p>1.12.1 Special Pedagogical Centres are part of the resource centres and deal with expert special needs assessment and support services for certain groups of pupils with regard to their type of impairment. Most of these centres are now developing more complex areas of support provision (National Overview, 2018).</p>



Measure 1 evaluative comments

Strategies are being prepared in each region (a total of 14 regions in the Czech Republic are relatively independent in local education policy), which will mainly come into force in 2019 for a two-year period. Their preparation is covered by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Measure 2: To support improved co-operation, including greater involvement of parents and local community

Agency recommendation	Findings
2.1 The full involvement of families in all educational processes is outlined in legislation and policy.	<p>2.1.1 School is not a place of ideological propaganda and its position is not endangered by family, as family is perceived as an important factor in educating children. Parents are perceived as partners and co-workers and have the opportunity to become active participants in school life (National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic, White Paper, 2001).</p> <p>2.1.2 Building parental relationships is an important part of educational policy (Education Act, 2004).</p> <p>2.1.3 The National Report on Family (2004) points to the relationship between the school and the family as a basic observation criteria of the company's educational development.</p>
2.2 Policy for inclusive education places learners and their families at the centre of all actions.	<p>2.2.1 Pupil assessment can only be done with parental approval (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>2.2.2 Parents have the right to be involved in this decision-making process and their opinion is crucial. The latest Amendment to the Education Act guarantees the right of parents/learners to request that the result of the special needs assessment and recommendation of the support provision procedures be revised (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>2.2.3 The Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. stipulates the right of parents (legal representatives), schools and/or interested institutions to appeal against a report on</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>identification of SEN and against a decision on the education of a child with SEN (the right to submit revision).</p> <p>2.2.4 According to the Education Act, parents must give their approval for their child to be educated in a special school and/or special class/unit, and/or the individual education plan followed in mainstream (inclusive) education. Parents can, however, object to the placement decision (National Overview, 2018; §§ 51–52 of Education Act). If parents do not agree with the evaluation, they can ask for a review.</p>
<p>2.3 Sharing information among professionals and families is a policy priority.</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>2.4 Policy has the goal of supporting parental interaction and communication with professionals.</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>2.5 Schools are expected and supported to involve a wider range of partners and foster formal and informal networks that support their practice.</p>	<p>2.5.1 Appeals: OPVVV (<i>Operační program, Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání</i> – Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education) projects are funded by the ESF.</p> <p>Local Action Plans and Regional Strategies are supported under Priority Axis No. 3. There is a huge emphasis on embracing all relevant actors (refer to 1.7 and 1.11).</p> <p>Local Action Plans: The calls/appeals aim to support joint planning and sharing of activities in the local area. The call supports the interventions planned in the Local Action Plan. These improve the quality of education in pre-primary and primary schools by encouraging the co-operation of founders, schools and other actors in education, including non-formal education organisations. This co-operation aims to inform, educate and plan partner activities to jointly</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	address locally-specific issues and needs and evaluate the benefits of co-operation. Part of the plan is an emphasis on equal opportunities and equal access to education.

Measure 2 evaluative comments

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Measure 3: To develop monitoring strategies, establishing a comprehensive accountability and evaluation framework for inclusive education

Agency recommendation	Findings
3.1 Policy describes clear mechanisms to evaluate effectiveness and quality in inclusive education.	<p>3.1.1 The Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018 (updated for 2019–2020) stresses a clear database policy. The aim is to improve, stabilise, structure and publicly communicate a system of indicators of inclusive education. A regular working group is expected to be an informal advisory body on the results of data sources, recommendations, prevention of duplications in investigations and, as a consequence, a reduction in the administrative burden on schools. The data should be quality, solid and collected in comparable time series. International data will be used to compare systems from abroad. According to the parameters of the survey, pupils’ parents should be found and classified as a target group.</p> <p>The updated Action Plan for 2019–2020 contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 1.2.1: To stabilise systems of indicators, to structure annual reports on the implementation of inclusive education, to prepare a mechanism of data interpretation for school praxis purposes. Item 1.3.1: To collect data for exact mapping of early school leaving.



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>3.1.2 There are methodologies for evaluating inclusive education. The Czech School Inspectorate regularly publishes thematic reports from partial thematic surveys at schools (Czech School Inspectorate Thematic Reports on Inclusive Education, 2017 and 2018).</p>
<p>3.2 Monitoring procedures ensure that inequalities in access to educational resources at regional or organisational levels are addressed.</p>	<p>3.2.1 University level – there is partial research from university experts dealing with inequalities in education. The results of the research are mainly used by other experts.</p>
<p>3.3 Accountability measures that impact upon educational professionals’ work reflect the importance of wider learner achievements.</p>	<p>3.3.1 The Czech School Inspectorate (CSI) produces inspection reports on school, as well as thematic reports, secondary analysis on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), etc.</p> <p>The CSI is currently working on complex quality system measurement of schools (including pedagogical work). Among the quality criteria is a strong emphasis on formative assessment, which should be a natural part of each pedagogue’s work with pupils.</p> <p>For further information, refer to the CSI Annual Reports.</p>
<p>3.4 Policy outlines common standards for service and provision evaluation for use across health, education and social services.</p>	<p>3.4.1 The CSI’s quality standards have criteria on different areas of the school/school facilities.</p> <p>The system for school quality contains areas and indicators as follows (applied since 2017 under an ESF project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept and overall vision (strategies, educational programmes, communication, interactions) • Pedagogical leadership (monitoring and corrective measures, personnel management, material conditions, professional development)



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogues (qualification, communication with pupils, parents, agents, collaborative learning, democratic values, self-development) • Learning (preparation, educational strategies, pupils' social and personal development) • Education outcomes (outcomes of pupils, compatibility with Framework Educational Programmes, motivation of pupils) • Equal opportunities – supporting pupils during education (equal opportunities and possibilities, supportive measures, space for self-development of pupils, respect).
3.5 Policy outlines how to involve families in the process of evaluating quality of services.	–
3.6 Policy describes mechanisms to evaluate demand for services.	–
3.7 Policy supports opportunities for school teams to evaluate their practice through involvement in research and development activities.	<p>3.7.1 The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) cover the Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education (OPVVV) and call for action research.</p> <p>The OPVVV focuses on improving the quality of education, ensuring conditions for quality research, linking education and research with the labour market and strengthening the principle of equal access to education.</p> <p>Educational projects at national or local level are funded by the OPVVV, together with the Czech state budget.</p> <p>CSI criteria and further materials, such as questionnaires or forms, can be used for self-evaluation of schools and teachers. For example, one call was designated for action research on innovative methods of education. Within these projects, it was necessary to use and</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	evaluate methods with a target group of Roma children and foreigners and other people from socially or culturally disadvantaged groups.

Measure 3 evaluative comments

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Measure 4: To improve the cost-effectiveness of the education system, combining efficiency, effectiveness, equity and inclusion

Agency recommendation	Findings
4.1 National level inclusive education strategies are linked to long-term financial support.	<p>4.1.1 Both compulsory and upper-secondary education (also tertiary) are free of charge in schools regulated by the conditions described in the Education Act. The national budget covers education expenditure, as well as additional expenditure to meet pupils' special needs (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>4.1.2 The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) distributes financial resources to the regions according to the actual number of pupils – 'financial units' (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>4.1.3 Regions are obliged to re-distribute the resources, including additional budget resources to support the education of pupils with special needs, to individual schools (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>4.1.4 The principle of the flow (from the centre to the regions) applies for both special needs and mainstream education. Capitation grants are stipulated for individual schools and their activities, also with regard to the school's size. The MEYS specifies capitation grants as recommended for calculating subsidies. The regions receive the recommended amount of funding and are permitted to distribute these grants to the schools. The relevant</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	organising bodies are responsible for determining financial flows (National Overview, 2018).
4.2 Funding policies and structures provide flexible resourcing systems that promote inclusion.	<p>4.2.1 Schools receive additional resources through developmental projects (MEYS) covering areas such as funding of additional staff, building access, extended teaching materials and adapted textbooks, compensatory tools and information and communication technology (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>4.2.2 The OPVVV (governed by the MEYS) provides a system of unit costs for schools and leisure-time centres (support of inclusive education in two main ways: staff support, i.e. school assistant, special needs expert, school psychologist, continuous professional development for pedagogues). The Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP) – governed by the Ministry of Regional Development – provides a system for investments and infrastructure (extra calls for schools in regions with high risk of social exclusion; capacity-building within pre-schools and leisure-time centres; calls for schools to support mainstream education and social inclusion).</p>
4.3 There are long-term funding commitments to support collaborative initiatives between various school-based, resource centre and research teams.	–
4.4 Policy outlines mechanisms for systematic data collection on expenditure and implementation that informs cost-effectiveness issues.	4.4.1 In 2017, the CSI collected complete data for costs on compensatory tools and other resources in schools where complex inspection was implemented. The CSI produced a Thematic Report .



Measure 4 evaluative comments

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Measure 5: To increase participation in good quality inclusive early childhood education and care and enrolment rates in pre-school education

Agency recommendation	Findings
5.1 Policy clearly respects the rights and the needs of children and their families.	–
5.2 Support is available for families to recognise and understand the needs of their child. <i>(Support focuses upon and what is in the child's best interests.)</i>	5.2.1 NGOs provide support for families from lower socio-economic backgrounds. There are also projects financed by the OPVVV (Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries, General Part, Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education).
5.3 Policy outlines how ECI services should be provided for children and families as early as possible and as quickly as possible, following identification of need.	5.3.1 It is important to provide necessary support and special pedagogical assistance as early as possible to prevent academic failure and other negative developmental consequences for children (National Overview, 2018). The principles and rules contained in the Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll. and described above are binding for all of pre-primary education.
5.4 Policy states that in risk situations, the child's rights should come first.	–
5.5 Policy measures and guidelines clearly define quality standards for early childhood services and provision.	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
5.6 Early childhood guidance is developed jointly by departments of health, education and social services.	–
5.7 Policy for early childhood services supports cross sectoral, multi-disciplinary working at regional and local levels.	–
5.8 Policy ensures there are pre-school places offered to children coming from ECI services/provision.	–
5.9 Policy outlines how cost-free services/provision are made available for families.	<p>5.9.1 The Education Act sets out the legal provisions governing the pre-primary education of children with special needs. Among other issues, the Act guarantees that pre-primary education is free of charge in the year prior to compulsory education. For children with special needs, there is no time limit for free pre-primary education (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>5.9.2 Pre-primary education is compulsory from the age of five (i.e. the final year of pre-primary education). This applies from the 2017/2018 school year (Amendment to the Education Act No. 178/2016 Coll.).</p>
5.10 Policy ensures the same quality of service irrespective of differences in geographical location (<i>Such as isolated or rural areas</i>).	5.10.1 Based on the Long-Term National Strategy on Development in Education, each of the Czech Republic's 14 regions are obliged to formulate their own Long-Term Regional Strategy on Development in Education for the particular region (National Overview, 2018).



Agency recommendation	Findings
	5.10.2 Due to the compulsory final year of pre-primary education, it was necessary to establish a school gradient circumference of pre-schools (Amendment to the Education Act No 178/2016 Coll.).

Measure 5 evaluative comments

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Measure 6: To improve student-focused measures such as mentoring, personalised learning approaches and improved guidance

Agency recommendation	Findings
6.1 High expectations for all learners' achievements underpin policy for inclusive education.	6.1.1 The Czech Government adopted the Action Plan for Inclusive Education 2016–2018 in 2015. The 2019–2020 update stresses an approach based on all learners' achievements, as well as legislature and supportive measures.
6.2 Policy outlines that learners' voices should be listened to in decision-making that affects them.	–
6.3 Teaching, support and guidance has the goal of empowering all learners.	6.3.1 The ESIF call system for schools (KLIMA) mission is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educational success for every pupil;• 'K' – culture of learning;• 'L' – leadership;• 'I' – inclusion;



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘M’ – mentoring, methodological support;• ‘A’ – active forms of learning. <p>The priorities in the Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries, General Part, Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education (programming period 2014–2020) Priority Axis 3: Equal access to high-quality pre-primary, primary and secondary education are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Socio-economic integration of marginalised groups, such as Roma people</i>• <i>Combating all forms of discrimination and promoting equal opportunities:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>Quality conditions for the inclusive education</i>• <i>Reducing and preventing early school-leaving and promoting equal access to good quality early-childhood, primary and secondary education including formal, non-formal and informal learning pathways for reintegrating into education and training:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>Increasing the quality of early childhood education, including facilitating the transition of children to primary school</i>○ <i>Improving the quality of education and results of pupils in key competencies</i>○ <i>Development of strategic management system and quality assessment in education</i>○ <i>Improving the training of future and starting teachers</i>○ <i>Increase in the quality of education and training, including enhancing their relevance for the labour market (Rules for Applicants and Beneficiaries, General Part, Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education, p. 18).</i>



Agency recommendation	Findings
6.4 Appropriate educational support is available as necessary and is fit for purpose in meeting personal learning needs.	–
6.5 The learning process is based on flexible curricula based on learner centred approaches and the development and implementation of individual learning plans as necessary.	<p>6.5.1 The education process of pupils with special needs is differentiated, individualised and adapted so that it is tailored to meet pupils’ needs and their diversity (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.2 The 2008 Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education is a national document covering both mainstream and special education. It serves as the basis for compiling the school curricula. Each school is responsible for developing this school-level document, which must also include a description of the provision for pupils with special needs. The school educational programme also emphasises the school’s learning environment and operational culture, the concept of learning, cross-curricular themes in teaching, individual support and guidance, and pupils’ welfare (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.3 The Education Act implemented a curricular reform in January 2005. Since September 2007, all schools in the Czech Republic have been implementing their own school educational programmes, which have to reflect the organisation of education in light of the diversity of pupils and their needs in the class. The process started with first grade classes. The MEYS supports schools in this implementation process by training teachers and head teachers and providing guidance, counselling and the required resources. The co-ordinators of the implementation process at the school level receive training and schools are given guidance and support (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.4 The convergence of mainstream and special education is also supported through the Framework Educational Programmes. The national programme for compulsory education</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>covers the conditions for successful and efficient education of pupils with special needs which the school has to offer and develop (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.5 All pupils with special needs, except those with severe cognitive disabilities, follow the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.6 Pupils with severe and profound cognitive disabilities have the opportunity to follow the Framework Educational Programme for Special Basic Schools. It is tailored to meet their needs and is based on the principles of the national programme for compulsory education (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.7 The school educational programme reflects pupils' special needs and, in addition to the regular compulsory areas and subjects, it includes subjects such as speech therapy, orientation and mobility, sign language, rehabilitation, etc. Inter-sector co-operation in supporting the education of pupils with special needs is stressed in the concept of comprehensive rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, which is discussed at ministerial level (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.8 The aim of special education, which can be delivered in different organisational forms – inclusive/mainstream settings, special classes/units/special schools – is to provide education that is tailored to meet the pupils' needs and supports their social inclusion. All pupils follow national school curricula, while those with intellectual disabilities follow the reduced school curricula under the Framework Educational Programme for Primary Schools or under the Framework Educational Programme for Special Schools (please refer to the 'Legislation and policy' section) (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>6.5.9 At the upper-secondary level, a broad range of educational programmes is available to pupils with special needs, reflecting their abilities and needs. The curricular model is the same as with compulsory education. Each branch of study has its Framework Educational Programme (National Overview, 2018).</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>6.5.10 Gifted children’s needs are met through a broad range of additional educational provisions both at school and counselling level. Provisions for these pupils are usually described in the individual education plan. A specialist from the counselling centre co-operates closely with the class teacher. The organisation and structure of the pupil’s education is designed with regard to their educational needs (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>Under the Amendment to the Education Act No. 82/2015 Coll., gifted children obtain support measures if necessary, in the same way as children with SEN.</p>

Measure 6 evaluative comments

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Measure 7: To improve the school ethos (such as the creation of supportive learning environments, adapting learning environments to specific learning needs)

Agency recommendation	Findings
7.1 Policy supports school leaders to value diversity among staff as well as learners, encourage collegiality and support innovation.	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
7.2 Policy outlines the responsibility of school leaders to effectively communicate their vision for inclusive education to the school teaching team and wider school community.	–
7.3 Policy aims to ensure the recruitment of teaching staff from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities.	–
7.4 Policy supports schools to ensure teaching staff are able to meet diverse learning needs. <i>(Teaching staff have competence and expertise to develop individual plans, implement learner-centred approaches and support learners in personalised learning.)</i>	–
7.5 The school ethos and culture is guided by school strategic plans that have high expectations for the academic and social achievements of all learners.	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
7.6 School strategic plans describe how universal design for learning approaches are used to provide individualised learning tools and opportunities.	–
7.7 School strategic plans stipulate that all learners are entitled to be active participants in the life of the school and community.	–
7.8 School strategic plans have clear statements on the value of diversity.	–
7.9 School strategic plans describe mechanisms for shared leadership, teamwork and collaborative problem solving.	–

Measure 7 evaluative comments

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Measure 8: To reduce the negative effects of early tracking (the early streaming of pupils by ability into different types of provision or schools) and to reduce the extensive use of grade retention¹

Agency recommendation	Findings
8.1 Legislation across relevant public sectors has the goal of ensuring educational services enhance developments and processes working towards equity in inclusive education.	–
8.2 Policy outlines how support structures that impact upon inclusive education are diverse and easily available. <i>(Support structures prevent early tracking and streaming of pupils at an early age).</i>	–
8.3 Assessment mechanisms are in place to identify the support needs of learners at an early stage.	8.3.1 The decision as to whether a child’s development requires special consideration or support depends on specific assessment of the individual child. The principle of the assessment is pedagogical (National Overview, 2018). 8.3.2 Experts from the Special Pedagogical Centre and/or Educational and Psychological Counselling Centre consider the nature of a child’s needs and make proposals for special support and provisions. According to the latest Amendment to the Education Act, the

¹ Early tracking means the early streaming of pupils by abilities into different types of provision or school; this includes placing children into separate schools. The extensive use of grade retention means holding students back to repeat school years, instead of providing flexible individual support.



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>assessment bodies are responsible for indicating the degree/level of special educational support needed (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>8.3.3. Health sector professionals are responsible for medical diagnoses and medical recommendations to support education and avoid health risks (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>8.3.4 Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres, Special Pedagogical Centres, educational care centres and diagnostic institutes within the educational sector carry out educational needs assessment and are entitled to describe the required support provisions (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>8.3.5 Educational care centres are responsible for assessing and dealing with support for children with severe behavioural problems and/or children endangered by drug abuse or criminal delinquency. These centres also provide counselling to parents and teachers (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>8.3.6 Pupils' special educational needs (SEN) assessments are based on a multi-disciplinary, holistic approach. Professionals – special pedagogues and/or psychologists – carry out the procedure in schools, Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres and/or Special Education Centres. Pupils themselves, class teachers, parents, physicians or other people who come into contact with the pupil are the ones to recommend that assessment be carried out (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>8.3.7 Schools and their staff should always be primarily responsible for independent work with pupils with SEN which requires low levels of teaching and material demands. The new law therefore stipulates that schools may apply level one support measures without a recommendation from a school counselling facility. This reflects the subsidiarity principle, in that the school itself should work with the pupil first. Only if this proves insufficient should assistance be provided by specialised facilities, such as a school counselling</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>facility. However, in certain cases, strict adherence to this principle may be ineffectual. Therefore, the law does not rule out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) A school counselling facility may recommend level one support measures to the parents or school;b) A statutory representative or school may request assistance from a school counselling facility straightaway, without the school providing prior independent care (National Overview, 2018).
8.4 Data is available relating to learners' rights to age appropriate education.	–

Measure 8 evaluative comments

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Measure 9: To support improvement in schools with lower educational outcomes

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>9.1 Clear mechanisms exist to identify schools with lower educational outcomes.²</p>	<p>9.1.1 The Czech School Inspectorate (CSI) further broadens the quality, extent and usability of international large-scale surveys through secondary analyses which show causal linkages in more detail. In May 2018, the CSI published two secondary analyses of TIMSS 2015 and PISA 2015, aimed at selected aspects of school education that may influence pupils' results (such as classroom composition, teacher's methods, use of technologies).</p> <p>9.1.2 Since 2016, the CSI has been implementing tests on various school subjects, on literacy, numeracy and other areas. Therefore, every school has information about pupils' educational outcomes. The CSI considers these outcomes during inspections. The CSI also prepares methodologies for the description of schools in terms of pupils' social backgrounds. There are not yet any rigorous outcomes. However, the analysis of possible systems is available as a partial outcome.</p>
<p>9.2 Policy outlines how methods of assessment, inspections and other accountability measures contribute to school improvement processes.</p> <p><i>(Accountability measures support inclusive practice and inform further improvement of provision for all learners.)</i></p>	<p>9.2.1 At the beginning of December every year, the CSI publishes its Annual Report.</p> <p>9.2.2 CSI criteria provide lots of data for preparing recommendations. The Annual Report analyses and interprets data from the previous school year. This Report is therefore always the first rigorous information about the Czech educational system. Each chapter contains the most important findings and recommendations in the breakdown for each school, for its founders and for the system level.</p>

² This recommendation does not directly come from the Agency work covered in the CPRA activities. A number of project recommendations have implicitly, but not explicitly referred to this issue. However, the piloting work and detailed discussions with PG countries showed it is necessary to have this explicit recommendation linked to this measure.



Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>9.3 Policy aims to increase the capacity of all schools to meet a greater diversity of needs and support learners within their local communities.</p> <p><i>(Schools are supported to use innovative teaching methods, practical learning approaches and individual plans, focusing on learners' capabilities.)</i></p>	–
<p>9.4 Policy outlines clear incentives for schools to take all learners from their local community.</p>	–
<p>9.5 Policy requires school strategic plans to outline preventive educational action against dropouts.</p> <p><i>(Including necessary measures so that learners who become disengaged find new educational alternatives.)</i></p>	–

Measure 9 evaluative comments

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Measure 10: To improve the quality of school staff, focusing on the quality of teachers, quality in continuing professional development, developing teacher competences and reinforcing school leadership

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>10.1 Policy outlines how all school staff develops the skills to meet the diverse needs of all learners.</p> <p><i>(Appropriate training and professional development is provided to all school staff including teachers, support and administrative staff, counsellors, etc.).</i></p>	<p>10.1.1 Mainstream teachers are supported by guidance and counselling services provided by the counselling and resource centres (special schools) (National Overview, 2018).</p>
<p>10.2 Policy supports the development of high quality and appropriately trained teacher educators.</p> <p><i>(With improvements in recruitment, induction and continuing professional development.)</i></p>	<p>–</p>
<p>10.3 Policy supports flexible training opportunities in initial and continuing professional development, for all teachers.</p> <p><i>(Schools and teacher education institutions will work together to ensure good models in practice schools and</i></p>	<p>–</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<i>appropriate placements for teaching practice.)</i>	
10.4 All teaching staff are supported and develop a clear understanding of effective learning strategies. <i>(Such as learning to learn and active learning approaches.)</i>	–
10.5 Policy supports schools to develop strategic plans of staff training in inclusive education.	–
10.6 Policy outlines the specialised training pathways for specialists who support school communities to implement inclusive education.	–
10.7 Policy supports research into the effectiveness of different routes into teaching. <i>(Including course organisation, content and pedagogy to best develop the competence of teachers to meet the diverse needs of all learners.)</i>	–



Measure 10 evaluative comments

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Measure 11: To improve transition from education to work by increasing the coherence between employment incentives, education and VET; improving the quality and accessibility of apprenticeships; promoting cross-sector co-operation; simplifying the systems of qualifications

Agency recommendation	Findings
11.1 Policy ensures that VET programmes should address labour market skill requirements.	–
11.2 Policy aims at matching labour market skill requirements and learners' skills, wishes and expectations.	–
11.3 Policy outlines the development of partnerships and networking structures. <i>(Partnerships with a pool of local employers to ensure close co-operation with regard to learners' supervised practical training and finding employment after graduation.)</i>	–
11.4 Policy outlines how transition from education to employment is supported by adequate provision.	11.4.1 Pupils generally receive support in making choices about further education and professional careers through special guidance and counselling. The head teacher at each school (mainstream as well as special schools) appoints a school consultant, who must meet the professional profile through specific in-service training. The consultant is



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>responsible (in addition to their teaching duties) for this counselling. This consultant helps pupils to solve problems related to education, helps them with educational, vocational and labour market orientation and is also in contact with pupils' parents and relevant social partners. Pupils with special needs receive particular attention. Pupils can also use the special counselling services outside the school. These services (which are outlined in more detail in the ‘Systems of support and specialist provision’ section) enable pupils to draw up their action plans by focusing on their ideas and strengths (National Overview, 2018).</p>
<p>11.5 Policy supports the availability of meaningful VET options for learners to choose from.</p>	<p>11.5.1 Practical schools offer upper-secondary education to pupils with intellectual disabilities in two programmes: a one-year programme and a two-year programme (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>11.5.2 The programmes cover both academic and practical areas of knowledge. Besides general knowledge, the school provides pupils with a wide range of practical daily life knowledge and skills, including social skills, the basics of working knowledge and other skills to help pupils enter the labour market. The standard length of each educational programme at upper-secondary level can be extended by two years according to the pupils' needs (as per the Education Act 561/2004) (National Overview, 2018).</p> <p>11.5.3 Pupils who have not acquired the basic education level have the possibility of attending courses to help them attain the basic level and/or bases of education. Besides schools, other educational bodies offer a broad range of courses and follow-up education reflecting pupils' needs in order to support independent living and access to employment (National Overview, 2018).</p>
<p>11.6 Policy supports the availability of supervised practical training.</p>	<p>–</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
11.7 Policy outlines how sustainable employment opportunities are supported through the availability of appropriate, on-going support.	–
11.8 Policy outlines how VET programmes are reviewed periodically. <i>(Both internally and/or externally in order to adapt to current and future skill needs.)</i>	–

Measure 11 evaluative comments

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Measure 12: To improve educational and career guidance across all phases of inclusive education

Agency recommendation	Findings
12.1 Policy outlines the mechanisms for ensuring effective transition across educational sectors and phases. <i>(There are well-organised transition processes among services to ensure continuity in the support required when learners move from one form of provision to another.)</i>	12.1.1 Special Pedagogical Centres (SPC) and Educational and Psychological Counselling Centres (PPCC) contribute to the smooth transition of pupils from the pre-primary system into compulsory education. Pupils of compulsory school age (six to eight years old) with complex needs may attend specific pre-primary institutions offering a one- to three-year programme of systematic preparation for compulsory education. Preparatory classes are available for pupils who need educational support, especially due to socially and culturally disadvantaged family backgrounds. This provision supports the school readiness of ‘at-risk’ children and their smoother transition into formal compulsory



Agency recommendation	Findings
	education. The preparatory classes are mainly offered in mainstream basic schools (National Overview, 2018). The PPCC and SPC agendas are regulated by the Education Act and Decree No. 72/2005 Coll. as amended.
12.2 Policy outlines how career counsellors/officers support learners and employers regarding employment possibilities. <i>(Support is provided with job applications, inform and support employers and facilitate contact between both parties.)</i>	–

Measure 12 evaluative comments

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