



# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) FOR INCLUSION

## Slovakia

### 1. Policy Frameworks

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#### ***1.1 Policies that impact on ICT for inclusion in the compulsory school sector***

In Slovakia, there is no specific policy on ICT for inclusion. The Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic), Regional Office of Education, municipality and school director are responsible for providing schools with ICT for learners with special needs. The Ministry of Education announces calls for developmental projects through public procurement with specific criteria to qualify as an eligible applicant.

The task of informatisation in regional education (kindergartens, primary and secondary schools) is mainly performed by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education ([www.uips.sk](http://www.uips.sk)), an organisation established by the Ministry. A department within this institution, called 'Developing informatisation of the regional school', provides:

- internet connections in schools;
- Wi-Fi in schools;
- antivirus software for schools;
- asset management for schools with ICT projects;
- organisation of training techniques and control services for schools with ICT projects;
- implementation of projects supporting the adoption and use of information technology.

This institution operates as a service centre for the co-ordination of ICT for schools in Slovakia.

The use of ICT for learners with special needs comprises of individual projects or activities designed for each level of education in mainstream education. Projects co-ordinated by the European Schoolnet (EUN) and funded by the European Commission are very important. A successful eTwinning project in the field of special needs education is underway. Through this project, teachers can present their work in the classroom in a creative way. Since the programme began in January 2005, more than 50,000 schools have registered and teachers have carried out about 12,000 projects. At least two schools from two different countries are involved in each project. In Slovakia 1,638 schools (about 50%) are registered and 2,540 teachers participate. The Slovak Telekom Award is a specific project for teachers of learners with special needs, where each year teachers are given the opportunity to present their teaching through ICT skills. Registered outputs are placed in a virtual library on the website ([www.cenast.sk](http://www.cenast.sk)) to provide inspiration and help to other teachers.

The Ministry of Education has announced this year's call, 'Children with Disabilities 2013', and a call entitled 'Improving Counselling for Special Needs Children', which will be used



to upgrade equipment in schools and counselling centres by providing teaching and compensatory aids.

The Ministry of Education has started to publish books on various subjects in electronic format. Learners, teachers and the public can access them via the website ([www.e-aktovka.sk](http://www.e-aktovka.sk)). It has also started to issue electronic textbooks for blind pupils and transcriptions of textbooks used in mainstream education. There is the option of using ICT for teaching in primary and secondary schools.

## **1.2 Current policy on ICT for inclusion in relation to the main project themes**

### **1.2 (i) ICT as a tool for promoting equity in educational opportunities.**

The Slovak Republic's Constitution and the Education Law (Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic) guarantee every child equal access to education.

### **1.2 (ii) Access to appropriate ICTs as an entitlement**

The State education programme sets out the requirements for schools with regard to ICT for learners with special needs. Consulting (resource) centres rent or recommend the necessary ICT for learners with special needs.

### **1.2 (iii) Training of educational staff in the use of general and specialist ICTs**

Applicants can avail of ICT training through development projects procurement.

The Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education and the Methodological Centre provide some training.

### **1.2 (iv) The promotion of ICT research and development requiring a multi-stakeholder approach**

No information is available on this issue.

### **1.2 (v) Data collection and monitoring in the use of ICT in inclusion**

The State School Inspection monitors and controls the implementation of ICT in inclusion.

## **1.3 Strategic plans for implementing policy on ICT for inclusion**

In Slovakia, there is no specific policy on ICT for inclusion. The Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic), Regional Office of Education, municipality and school director are responsible for providing schools with ICT for learners with special needs. The State education programme states that schools should be equipped with ICT for learners with special needs and schools can develop the use of ICT in the school education programme.

## **1.4 Monitoring and evaluation of policies or strategic plans relating to ICT for inclusion**

The results of monitoring by the State School Inspection are available.

## **1.5 Main policy developments in ICT for Inclusion that have taken place since 2000**

Schools educating learners with special needs are equipped with hardware, special software and an internet connection. Some teachers are trained in ICT skills. Learners are equipped with special compensatory aids. Schools also have the opportunity to upgrade equipment by applying for grants.



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### ***1.6 Current issues in relation to ICT for Inclusion***

In general, there is poor understanding of ICT, a lack of funding, a shortage of ICT professionals and insufficient training.

### ***1.7 Important short and long-term developments in ICT for Inclusion***

ICT for inclusion needs to be developed. In practice, assistance and support are implemented, albeit haphazardly.