

# **COUNTRY POLICY REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

**Slovakia**

**European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education**



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Please note that legislation may have changed since the analysis grid was completed. Anyone using the grid should [contact the Representative Board Member](#) for more details.

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## 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

1. Priorities of the Slovak Republic in relation to inclusive education are reflected in the Government Programme for the years 2016–2020 (GP):
  - To focus on the development of inclusive education in all schools as an effective tool for resolving social exclusion, including the development of necessary material and technical conditions in order to meet the needs of children and pupils with special educational needs;
  - To support measures including optimising the employee structure to allow an increase in the number of professional staff in schools, especially teaching assistants, social educators, school psychologists and special pedagogues;
  - To provide tools to improve the function of school facilities for educational counselling and prevention, to strengthen their personal capacities and to provide appropriate tools designed for proper diagnosis of special educational needs of children and pupils, including special educational needs of pupils arising from their development in socially disadvantaged background; (GP, pp. 34–35)
  - To formulate the necessary changes in the National programme for the development of education with a long-term concept for the content of education in pre-primary, primary, secondary, tertiary education for next 10 years (GP, p. 31).

[www.vlada.gov.sk/programove-vyhlasenie-vlady-sr-na-roky-2016-2020](http://www.vlada.gov.sk/programove-vyhlasenie-vlady-sr-na-roky-2016-2020)
2. The National Programme of Education (NPOE), entitled ‘Learning Slovakia’, has been developed. The following objectives are included within the focus on inclusive education and related issues:
  - Objective 1-02: Education of pupils with diverse potential – inclusive education (pp. 16–25). This objective includes the following measures (among others): ‘To develop a strategy for inclusive education in Slovakia and a framework implementation plan’ (no. 1-02.01) and ‘to define the characteristics of an inclusive school’ (no. 1-02.02).
  - Objective 1-03: Pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and socially excluded communities (pp. 22–25)
  - Objective 1-04: System of prevention, support and intervention (VIMS PPI) (pp. 26–34)

NPOE ‘Learning Slovakia’, after a public discussion and remarks, is ready to be finalised with a step-by-step plan for the period until 2027. NPOE is published on the website of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic:  
[www.minedu.sk/data/files/7532\\_uciace-sa-slovensko2017.pdf](http://www.minedu.sk/data/files/7532_uciace-sa-slovensko2017.pdf)
3. ‘The Concept of the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in international environment’



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### Country priorities

was adopted by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 5 of 11 January 2017.

Based on the Concept of the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the overall national strategy will be developed; it will be a combination of integrated and harmonised internal and external public policies of the state. In the field of education, the national strategy will also focus on objective no. 4: 'To ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education and to encourage lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

[www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26175](http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=26175)



## 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 Article 42 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic secures the general right to education for each Slovak citizen. Article 38, Section 2, guarantees persons with disabilities special assistance in preparation for their profession.</p> <p>1.1.2 Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and on the change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provision define children/pupils with special educational needs, including those with: disabilities; cognitive impairment; hearing impairment; visual impairment; physical impairment; impaired ability in communication; autism; multiple impairment; specific learning difficulties, specific behavioural difficulties, illness and physical weakness; behavioural disorders; social disadvantages; particular gifts and talents.</p> <p>1.1.3 Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) enables the admission of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream primary and secondary schools (inclusive education). Children/pupils with special educational needs are enrolled in mainstream schools, special schools or special classes.</p> <p>1.1.4 Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) secures such a form of education for children with special educational needs, which enables them to achieve the same level of education as their peers. The main aim of education for children with special educational needs is to reach the same level of education as their peers and to support social inclusion. The levels of education of children and pupils with special educational needs at special schools are analogous to the levels of education of the mainstream population. Differences arise from the kind of disability.</p> <p>1.1.5 For people with hearing and visual impairment, it secures the right to education in their language with the use of sign language/Braille (§ 144 section 3 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	(Education Act)).
<p>1.2 Legislation and policy are consistent with the principles of the UNCRC and the UNCRPD.</p> <p><i>(Legislation and policy and upholds the right of all learners to full participation in school with their own local peer group.)</i></p>	<p>1.2.1 'National Programme for the development of living conditions of persons with disabilities for the years 2014–2020' – document approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 25 of 15 January 2014.</p> <p>It is an open document with measures for individual fields, including education. Its implementation is reviewed every two years and the taken measures are updated.</p> <p><a href="http://www.minedu.sk/13793-sk/narodny-program-rozvoja-zivotnych-podmienok-osob-so-zdravotnym-postihnutim-na-roky-2014--2020">www.minedu.sk/13793-sk/narodny-program-rozvoja-zivotnych-podmienok-osob-so-zdravotnym-postihnutim-na-roky-2014--2020</a> (Part 4.7 Education)</p> <p>The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, after its ratification, it is published in the legal framework under no. 317/2010 Coll. (Codex).</p> <p>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – no. 318/2010 Coll.</p>
<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>–</p>
<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</i></p>	<p>1.4.1 The public administration in education is guaranteed by both the State administration and territorial self-governance, which is executed by municipalities and higher territorial units (Act No. 596/2003 on state administration in education and school self-government and on change and supplements of some acts as amended by subsequent provisions).</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<i>as clearly defining roles and responsibilities.)</i>	<p>The central body of state administration in education is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, which develops educational aims, curricula and methods for education.</p> <p>Local administration is the responsibility of municipalities, which provide most pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary education in Slovakia. Public schools provide education free of charge.</p> <p>1.4.2 The proposal to admit children/pupils with special educational needs into the system of special education in special schools and special classes or education within mainstream schools (inclusive education) is commented on by experts from the sectors of health and education. In some cases, the social affairs and family sector is also involved. (§ 2 letter (j) Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and single educational programmes for health-impaired children and pupils as a part of State Educational Programme for a certain level of education and a kind of education guaranteed by the State with reference to § 94 section 2 of Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code of Education and Training)</p> <p>1.4.3 Health employees: doctors identify the medical diagnosis of a pupil (except for pupils with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia), or they recommend the limitations for education of a pupil, what they cannot perform. The medical diagnosis is followed by a psychological and special-pedagogical examination of the child/pupil in a counselling facility of the educational sector. These competencies are stated by Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act).</p> <p>1.4.4 The social sector co-operates with schools only regarding social problems – truancy of pupils and when pupils’ parents do not fulfil their parental responsibilities according to § 28 section 1 letter (a) Family Act no. 36/2005 Coll.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
1.5 There is a long-term multi-level policy framework for implementing quality inclusive education at national, regional and / or organisational levels.	–
1.6 Policy outlines how education policy-makers need to take responsibility for all learners.	1.6.1 A director of a mainstream primary school, who includes a pupil according to their place of residence, cannot refuse to enrol a pupil to school. The lack of capacity of the school could be the only reason. This situation must be resolved by the founder of the school and state; a pupil is provided with a transport allowance to another school. (§ 20 section 5, 6 and § 29 section 10 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act), § 8 section 6 and 7 of Act No. 596/2003 on state administration in education and school self-government and on change and supplements of some acts as amended by subsequent provisions).
1.7 Policy has the goal of supporting all teachers to have positive attitudes towards all learners.	–
1.8 Policy requires learning material to be accessible.	–
1.9 Policy describes an effective framework of support for schools to implement inclusive education. <i>(Support structures focus on different forms of educational resource centres that are locally organised to offer support to</i>	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
<i>individual or clusters of schools.)</i>	
<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 In order to improve the quality of education in all schools, these objectives are followed in the NPoE 'Learning Slovakia':</p> <p>Objective 1-01 Development of potential and meeting the needs – individualised learning</p> <p>In education, the unique potential of each learner (child, pupil) is to be developed and their individual learning needs is to be met through individualised teaching</p> <p>'The key objective of individualisation is to increase possibilities for talented, as well as average and below-average pupils' (Przybysz-Zaremba, M., 'Educational failures of primary school pupils in Poland – analysis of selected pedagogical determinants' in <i>Pedagogika. SK</i>, vol. 5, 2014, no. 1).</p> <p>The following main measures are defined to fulfil the above-mentioned objective:</p> <p>1-01.02 'To create complex assumptions supporting teachers and professionals to individualise and to develop an implementation plan for this support', particularly in co-operation with counselling centres</p> <p>1-01.03 'To create personal, material and financial conditions for the possibility of implementing individualised education'</p> <p>1-01.04 'For parents, to develop information sources and channels of individualisation in education and to promote the effective use of these sources and channels by teachers'</p> <p>1-01.05 'To develop methodology and structure of initial and on-going evaluation of a child's comprehensive potential'</p> <p>1-01.06 'To develop a system for monitoring and evaluation of individual progress within individualised education'.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
1.11 Policy outlines strategies for awareness-raising with all stakeholders in inclusive education.	–
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. <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>	1.12.1 The centre for special educational counselling, which is generally established as a part of special school through experienced special pedagogues who are employed in the centre and carry out special-pedagogical diagnosis, co-operate on the development of an individual education plan for a pupil with special educational needs and provide teachers in mainstream schools with professional advice on their education (Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act) in § 133 and § 94 section 1 letter (b) point 2). Each special school focuses on the education of pupils by type of disability. In many special schools, a special-pedagogical counselling centre is also set up. There are also centres of special pedagogical counselling that are not at a special school. These centres perform the same function as centres at special schools. Private centres of special pedagogical counselling are established separately.

*Measure 1 evaluative comments*

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**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.	2.1.1 Following the Declaration of Human Rights and the Education Act (2008), parents have the right to express their opinion on the proposal for integrating their child into the educational system. They give their consent or disapproval to proposed solutions and recommendations through their signature.



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>Parents must approve the child’s assessment and placement into the special school/special class/mainstream class and the special educational support.</p> <p>2.1.2 The decision on admission of the pupil to the system of special education is within the competence of the head teacher of the school or school facility.</p> <p>2.1.3 Parents of a pupil are entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• familiarise themselves with the individual education plan of their child with special educational needs;</li> <li>• participate in education with the prior approval of the director of the school or school facility;</li> <li>• comment on the educational programme of the school or school facility through school governing bodies (§ 94 section 1 letter (b) point 2 and § 144 section 6 in Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act)).</li> </ul>
<p>2.2 Policy for inclusive education places learners and their families at the centre of all actions.</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>2.3 Sharing information among professionals and families is a policy priority.</p>	<p>2.3.1 NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ defines objective no. 4-03.03, which is to ‘actively engage parents in the functioning of the school and to actively engage the school in co-operation with the family’. Schools will be required to invite parents to peer communication and to find common pathways in the interest of the child, to involve parents in the school’s functioning, in addition to traditional forms also finding other forms, for example: open classes, workshops, common activities for children and parents, as well as an opportunity within school self-evaluation. The school will provide initiatives to work with the family also to competent authorities of the sector of labour, social affairs and family, which will be co-operative with the school, and within the social and legal protection of children, too.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
2.4 Policy has the goal of supporting parental interaction and communication with professionals.	–
2.5 Schools are expected and supported to involve a wider range of partners and foster formal and informal networks that support their practice.	–

*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.	3.1.1 The State School Inspection is the body of the state administration in education performing the function of state control over the level of pedagogical management and the level of education. 3.1.2 Evaluation of the quality of education, research, development, artistic and other creative activity of higher education institutions is under the remit of the Accreditation Commission.
3.2 Monitoring procedures ensure that inequalities in access to educational resources at regional or organisational levels are addressed.	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
3.3 Accountability measures that impact upon educational professionals' work reflect the importance of wider learner achievements.	–
3.4 Policy outlines common standards for service and provision evaluation for use across health, education and social services.	<p>3.4.1 The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic is the central body of the state administration of the Slovak Republic for primary, secondary and higher education, educational facilities, lifelong learning, science and for the state's support for sports and young people.</p> <p>The Ministry manages schools and school facilities within the Slovak Republic through generally binding rules. By providing vocational guidance to all founders, it administers the network of schools and school facilities in the Slovak Republic.</p> <p>At local level, the school state administration is realised through municipalities and higher territorial units, which secure activities laid down in their founder competencies.</p> <p>Higher education institutions are legal entities and their organisation and activities are decided by the bodies of academic self-government in compliance with the Act on Higher Education Institutions.</p>
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	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
development activities.	

*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.	–
4.2 Funding policies and structures provide flexible resourcing systems that promote inclusion.	<p>4.2.1 Act No. 597/2003 of the Law Code on Financing Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Facilities has put in place normative financing per pupil, starting from 1 January 2004.</p> <p>4.2.2 The school financing is based on normative principle; the schools are financed according to the number of pupils and personnel and financial demands of the educational process. Act No. 597/2003 on financing primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities as amended by subsequent provision; Regulation of Government No. 630/2008 whereby the details of breakdown of finances from the national budget are set down for schools and school facilities as amended by subsequent provisions.</p>
4.3 There are long-term funding commitments to support collaborative initiatives between various school-based,	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
resource centre and research teams.	
4.4 Policy outlines mechanisms for systematic data collection on expenditure and implementation that informs cost-effectiveness issues.	–

#### *Measure 4 evaluative comments*

Objectives focused on changes in the field of funding education are included in the NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ – the proposed measures are defined in chapter 4.

The basis for the fundamental changes in funding is the statement: In 2013, Organisation for Economy Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries spent on primary, secondary and tertiary education an average of 5.2% of gross domestic product (GDP), and 3.8% of GDP in Slovakia. This figure includes both public and private expenditure. The difference between the OECD countries and Slovakia has not changed significantly in the past 20 years. A systematic analysis of expenses on education and funding system in Slovakia is missing; the document related to the educational institutions is available from 2007. The current level of education financing means Slovakia cannot expect to improve the quality of education, to raise interest in the teaching profession, to improve material conditions of schools or to sufficiently develop professional teams to help teachers to master the education of children with different educational needs.

Proposed measures (in the NPoE, p. 148):

- by the end of 2017, to develop a plan on increasing overall spending on education and training from public funds;
- to allocate all state resources on education only through the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic;
- to adjust the system of allocation of funds to schools, which will consider all specifics of the school – personnel norms, labour norms, requirements on material and technical equipment, not only the number of pupils, but also the number of classes and the number of pupils with special educational needs.



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

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>5.1 Policy clearly respects the rights and the needs of children and their families.</p>	<p>5.1.1 NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to develop a set of facilities for children aged 0–3 years, which will provide early childcare and education upon request (Measure 1-07.02);</li> <li>• to secure the legal right to pre-primary education of a child aged 3–6 years and to guarantee the availability of pre-primary education facilities for every child aged from three years (Measure 1-07.03).</li> </ul>
<p>5.2 Support is available for families to recognise and understand the needs of their child.</p> <p><i>(Support focuses upon and what is in the child’s best interests.)</i></p>	<p>5.2.1 From the point of view of time, the counselling centres provide professional support to children with disabilities and to their parents, from 0 to 3 years of age – so-called early intervention. (§ 130 part 1 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and § 2 part 1 letter (a) and part 5 of Decree No. 325/2008 on school facilities of educational counselling and prevention)</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>5.3.1 Children are enrolled in mainstream or special kindergartens usually from three to six years of age. The first stage of the educational system is pre-primary education, attended by children from three to six years and provided by kindergartens. (§ 59 part 1 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)).</p> <p>5.3.2 In the case of a child with a disability, the starting point should be the medical diagnosis carried out by a doctor, usually a paediatrician or other specialist doctor. Within the framework of a screening examination – to be undertaken before the child reaches the age of 36 months – the physician identifies a potential disability in various areas of the child’s health, and sets an indicative diagnosis with a recommendation for further professional medical examinations.</p> <p>After stating the medical diagnosis, the physician recommends further examination of the child in</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>counselling establishments within the educational sector. The medical diagnosis is supplemented by psychological and special education examination and diagnosis. Subsequently, in these establishments the psychological and special educational interventions are also defined. (§ 59 part 5 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)).</p> <p>The programme of early intervention has been developed in agreement with the intentions of special education. It is structured into several areas, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the idea of solving problems through early intervention at the level of individual sectors and inter-sector co-operation;</li><li>• uniform registration of children with disabilities at an early age;</li><li>• provision of information and interventions into the problems through early intervention for children with special educational needs with the intention of providing the family with as much information as possible and securing their active participation in the process of complex care for their child;</li><li>• networking of establishments of special educational counselling, supply of personnel in relation to priority activities and professional interventions of special educational counselling services and child integration centres;</li><li>• the further education of professional employees in issues of early intervention;</li><li>• adjustment of regulations.</li></ul> <p>It is recommended that the child with disabilities/difficulties/disadvantages with a special educational diagnosis be integrated into special educational care in the system of counselling and into the educational process as soon as possible – before starting to attend school.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
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.	–
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.	5.8.1 Special kindergartens admit children into classes according to their type of disability (§ 96 part 3 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)). In mainstream kindergartens, children with disabilities may be educated in special classes or in mainstream classes (§ 28 part 8 of Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training).
5.9 Policy outlines how cost-free services/provision are made available for families.	5.9.1 Upon attaining the age of three years, the child is recommended for one of the forms of pre-primary institutional education either in a special or mainstream kindergarten. (§ 28 part 12 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)).



Agency recommendation	Findings
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 NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ extends the area of early intervention, which is mainly focused on children with risk evolved from a health point of view, by the need to develop early childhood care and early intervention programmes for children from a socially disadvantaged background and socially excluded communities. The aim is to effectively develop their potential, support the whole family, develop parenting skills and significantly increase parents’ interest in their children’s pre-primary education. (Proposed Measure. 1-03.04)

*Measure 5 evaluative comments*

<p>Measure 1-07.03 in the NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ is supposed to secure the legal right to pre-primary education of a child aged 3–6 years and to guarantee the availability of pre-primary education facilities for every child aged from three years.</p> <p>In addition to increasing the capacity of kindergartens, it will be enabled and supported under the conditions defined by law, the expansion and improvement of education and care of children of pre-school age from three years through other forms, e.g. children groups, company nursery schools, community nursery schools, forest children clubs, nursery schools on farms, etc.</p>
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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.	–
6.2 Policy outlines that learners’ voices should be listened to in decision-making that affects them.	6.2.1 The Family Act no. 36/2005 Coll., § 43 section 1:  A minor that is capable, with respect to their age and mental development, to express their own opinion, has the right to express an opinion freely in all matters concerning them. In proceedings,



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>where decisions on matters concerning a minor are made, the minor has a right to be heard. Attention must be given to the view of a minor, with respect to their age and mental maturity. (A minor is a person under 18 years of age. A person up the age of 18 years does not need a legal guardian/parent for any legal actions.)</p> <p><a href="http://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/36/20151001.html">www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/36/20151001.html</a></p>
<p>6.3 Teaching, support and guidance has the goal of empowering all learners.</p>	<p>6.3.1 The following rights are guaranteed to a child/pupil by Law no. 245/2008 Coll. (the Education Act):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal access to education</li> <li>• Individual approach respecting child's/pupil's capabilities and possibilities, talents and health status in accordance with this Act</li> <li>• The organisation of education adequate to the age, abilities, interests, health and in accordance with the principles of mental health (§ 144)</li> <li>• The rights established by this Act apply equally to every child/pupil in accordance with the principle of equal treatment in education</li> <li>• The child/pupil who considers that their rights or legally protected interests have been affected as a result of violation of the principle of equal treatment, can claim legal protection in a court under a special regulation (§ 145).</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2008/245/20150901.html">www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2008/245/20150901.html</a></p>
<p>6.4 Appropriate educational support is available as necessary and is fit for purpose in meeting personal learning needs.</p>	<p>6.4.1 Individual approach respecting their capabilities and possibilities, talents and health status in accordance with this Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation of education adequate to the age, abilities, interests, health and in accordance with the principles of mental health (§ 144 section 1 letters (E) and (j), Act</li> </ul>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>no. 245/2008 Coll.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children with special educational needs or pupils with special educational needs have the right to education using specific forms and methods that meet their needs and to develop the necessary conditions allowing such education (§144 section 2)</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2008/245/20150901.html">www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2008/245/20150901.html</a></p>
<p>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>	<p>6.5.1 The National Educational Programme is the basic document for education in kindergartens, basic schools and secondary schools in general. It is an obligatory document and defines the aims, the key competencies, the number of individual subjects, and the frame of the curriculum at the particular level of education. The curriculum of education for the appropriate type of school is determined by the school educational programme. The National Educational Programme is approved by the Ministry of Education, and the school educational programme by the head teacher of the school. The school curriculum of the particular school is part of the school educational programme. It is derived from the curriculum framework and the framework educational standards determined by the National Educational Programme. There are no educational standards for pupils with cognitive impairment.</p> <p>6.5.2 The education of children and pupils with special educational needs is based on the State Educational Programme approved for education of all children and pupils at each level of education. The adjustments to the organisation of education, methods and other specifics of teaching (e.g. complement a subject focused on special-pedagogical support) are stated in the supplementary programmes for education of children and pupils with disabilities/disorders, specified by kinds of disabilities/disorders. These programmes are a part of the State Educational Programmes. (§ 6 section 1 and section 4 letter (p) Act. No. 245/2008)</p> <p>6.5.3 The content of education (the curriculum) for all pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with disabilities/disorders, is the same as for pupils without special educational needs, except pupils with intellectual developmental disability – these pupils have adjusted content in individual subjects, depending on the degree of their disability (§ 108 section 3 Act No. 245/2008). According to</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>the National Educational Programme, subjects (in mainstream schools and special schools) are divided into compulsory and optional. Compulsory subjects include: Slovak language and literature, foreign language, Science, History, Geography, Civic Education, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Work Education, Art and Crafts, Music, Physical Education, and Religious Education (which is taught in alternation with Ethics). In special schools for pupils with cognitive impairment (namely for pupils with intellectual disability), there is no foreign language, Religious Education is an optional subject and Ethics is part of Civic Education. According to the type of disability and special educational needs of pupils, optional special subjects can be included, e.g. individual speech therapy intervention, development of communication skills, mobility and orientation training, Braille, etc.</p> <p>In special schools, according to the individual grades there are 20–30 lessons weekly, which means 4–6 lessons per day, each lesson lasting 45 minutes. The practical class and a practical training lesson takes 60 minutes (50 minutes for pupils with visual impairment). For hospitalised pupils who are ill and physically weak, individual teaching is organised for a duration defined by the head teacher with a physician. The order of individual subjects is set by a timetable, which is approved by the head teacher. The school can exercise the different ways of organising teaching by taking into account the special educational needs of pupils, mainly by dividing teaching hours into shorter time segments, by introducing breaks, block teaching and other organisational forms (§ 2, section 14 of Decree No. 322/2008 on Special Schools).</p> <p>In the case of pupils in special schools, for whom, for different reasons, following the curriculum of a particular school or particular educational programme is not possible (e.g. pupils with diverse abilities, multiple disabilities, combination of disability and social disadvantage, etc.), it is appropriate to follow an individual education plan.</p> <p>In special schools, therapeutic-preventive care is also provided by the appropriate physician within the framework of the school health service.</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	<p>6.5.4 The pupil can be completely or partially exempt from schooling in particular subjects for the whole school year or part of it. The pupil is exempted by the head teacher on the basis of a recommendation from the special teacher, psychologist and doctor.</p> <p>6.5.5 For pupils who are exempt from compulsory school attendance and are in home care, the school provides individual schooling for at least two lessons a week.</p>

*Measure 6 evaluative comments*

NPoE 'Learning Slovakia' states:

In the legislation and methodological guidelines of the educational sector, formally the individual approach of a teacher towards a child/pupil is expected, but in reality teachers meet this with difficulties. The organisation, content and form of education in schools is not customised to allow teachers to uncover the unique potential of each child, and explore and reflect on their learning needs. The traditional arrangement of school teams, space of classes and schools, as well as the teaching itself, create barriers for pupils in their initiative, discovering, exploring phenomena, finding information and context. They are 'ready-made' and expect the same pace and require the same form and content from all pupils. Even motivated teachers have difficulty coping with these physical and content barriers.

**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.	–
<p>7.4 Policy supports schools to ensure teaching staff are able to meet diverse learning needs.</p> <p><i>(Teaching staff have competence and expertise to develop individual plans, implement learner-centred approaches and support learners in personalised learning.)</i></p>	<p>7.4.1 Most pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools have an individual education plan (§ 94 part 1 letter (b) point 2 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) and single educational programmes for health-impaired children and pupils as a part of State Educational Programme for a certain level of education and a kind of education guaranteed by the State with reference to § 94 section 2 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)).</p> <p>In special schools for pupils with intellectual impairment, teaching is carried out according to the internal differentiation of the school in three variants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A (pupils with mild cognitive impairment = pupils with intellectual disabilities – easy level)</li> <li>• B (pupils with moderate cognitive impairment = pupils with intellectual disabilities – medium)</li> <li>• C (pupils with serious cognitive impairment = pupils with intellectual disabilities – difficult level).</li> </ul>
7.5 The school ethos and culture is guided by school strategic plans that have high	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
expectations for the academic and social achievements of all learners.	
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 retention<sup>1</sup>**

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.	8.1.1 Considering that many children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are, at the beginning of compulsory schooling, put into special schools and special classes for pupils with intellectual disabilities, based on their diagnosis of cognitive ability and degree of development, a new provision (section 2 of § 107) has been put into Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act). This provision prohibits enrolling a child whose development is lagging behind due to an insufficiently stimulating family and community environment, in a special school or special class for pupils with intellectual disabilities. Under this provision to eliminate this practice, the guidelines on the procedure of centres in assessing the conditions for education of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds were issued.
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 § 19 – 24 of <a href="#">Act No. 317/2009 on Professional and Pedagogical Employees and Professional Employees and on the change and supplement to some acts</a> ; § 5 of Decree No. 325/2008 on school facilities of educational counselling and prevention. There is a network of educational counselling and prevention centres (centre of special-pedagogical counselling and centre of pedagogical-psychological

<sup>1</sup> 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
	counselling and prevention), where the team of experts comprises psychologists, special pedagogues, rehabilitation workers, social workers and technicians, and other specialists. These professionals carry out a complex evaluation of the child/pupil with disabilities, learning difficulties (specific learning difficulties, specific behavioural difficulties) or disadvantages. Finally, under § 2 letter (j) of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act), a centre determines the final special educational diagnosis, after an assessment of all examinations and special educational interventions. At the same time, special educational needs are defined by stating the educational prognosis. The complex evaluation given like this is a part of the 'Proposal for admission of the child/pupil with special educational needs to the special school, special kindergarten, primary school and to secondary school' (§ 11 section 9 letter (a) of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act)).
8.4 Data is available relating to learners' rights to age appropriate education.	–

#### Measure 8 evaluative comments

[www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo](http://www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo):

Procedure of centres of pedagogical and psychological counselling and prevention in assessing school readiness of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds – [guidelines](#) [*Postup centier pedagogicko-psychologického poradenstva a prevencie pri posudzovaní školskej pripravenosti detí zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia – usmernenie*]

Procedure of centres of pedagogical and psychological counselling and prevention in assessing school readiness of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds – guidelines (Annex: [Methodological information for professional staff of counselling centres](#)) [*Postup centier pedagogicko-psychologického poradenstva a prevencie pri posudzovaní školskej pripravenosti detí zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia – usmernenie (príloha: Metodická informácia pre odborných zamestnancov poradenských zariadení)*]



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

Agency recommendation	Findings
9.1 Clear mechanisms exist to identify schools with lower educational outcomes. <sup>2</sup>	–
9.2 Policy outlines how methods of assessment, inspections and other accountability measures contribute to school improvement processes. <i>(Accountability measures support inclusive practice and inform further improvement of provision for all learners.)</i>	–
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. <i>(Schools are supported to use innovative teaching methods, practical learning approaches and individual plans, focusing on learners' capabilities.)</i>	9.3.1 § 144 section 2 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act) guarantees that children/pupils with special educational needs are provided with an education reflecting their individual abilities, with special forms and methods. 9.3.2 Children with special educational needs in mainstream and special kindergartens are provided with speech care via speech therapists (school speech and language therapy) and teachers, who help with correct pronunciation. All children are instructed by teachers in the development of communication skills in the course of the whole day, even during individual activities with children. Special education and other professional care for children with diagnosed special educational needs and their parents is provided by the centre of special-pedagogical counselling. In the process of developing some personality areas, individual support programmes are used, e.g. programmes for

<sup>2</sup> 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>speech development, grapho-motor skills, etc.</p> <p>Special educational methods used in special education may be summed up as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Method of re-education – special educational procedures which are aimed at the affected function</li> <li>• Method of compensation – special educational procedures aimed at development of compensatory unaffected functions</li> <li>• Method of rehabilitation – special educational procedures aimed at socialisation/integration of the person with disability in the community.</li> </ul> <p>Within the framework of the above methods, methods and forms of special education are used which are suitable for individuals.</p> <p>9.3.3 Furthermore, various compensatory aids, such as computers, hearing aids, ICT, various optic aids, etc., are also used. These compensatory aids are used individually or collectively – within special classrooms such as video studios, speech therapist’s room, etc.</p> <p>9.3.4 The right to education in sign language is also secured for children/pupils with hearing impairments.</p> <p>9.3.5 The entire special education system is conceived in such a way that each pupil with special educational needs can acquire a certain level of education according to their abilities and possibilities.</p>
9.4 Policy outlines clear incentives for schools to take all learners from their local community.	–
9.5 Policy requires school strategic plans to outline preventive educational action	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
against dropouts. <i>(Including necessary measures so that learners who become disengaged find new educational alternatives.)</i>	

*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
10.1 Policy outlines how all school staff develops the skills to meet the diverse needs of all learners. <i>(Appropriate training and professional development is provided to all school staff including teachers, support and administrative staff, counsellors, etc.).</i>	–
10.2 Policy supports the development of high quality and appropriately trained teacher educators. <i>(With improvements in recruitment,</i>	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
<i>induction and continuing professional development.)</i>	
10.3 Policy supports flexible training opportunities in initial and continuing professional development, for all teachers. <i>(Schools and teacher education institutions will work together to ensure good models in practice schools and 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	–



Agency recommendation	Findings
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*

Objective 2-04: New concept of the teaching profession and function of school

A teacher is to become a guide for pupils in their learning process, not a mediator of knowledge. A school is a place for the individual development of pupils, teamwork and communication of all actors in education and the wider public.

It is necessary to provide systematic support for teachers and professionals as members of a school team, members of multi-disciplinary teams of an advisory system (refer to objective 1-04) and community members (Measure 2-04.06).

To develop procedures and methodological materials on building relationships with all actors in education and public in the school area. (Measure 2-04.08)



**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.	<p>11.1.1 The aim of the new law on vocational education (no. 61/2015 Coll.) is to allow an easy transition of secondary vocational school graduates from education to the labour market and to reduce the risk of unemployment of young graduates. Alongside other matters, enabling the preparation of pupils in dual education includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• preparation for the job according to the requirements of the employer;</li><li>• performance of practical training directly at the employer's;</li><li>• an agreement on dual training between the employer and the secondary school;</li><li>• a teaching contract between the employer and the pupil.</li></ul> <p>Pupils can learn in the dual system of education in the school year 2015/2016.</p>
11.2 Policy aims at matching labour market skill requirements and learners' skills, wishes and expectations.	<p>11.2.1 The Ministry developed the document 'Proposal of conceptual solution of educational and career guidance'. Its aim is to increase the weight of work with pupils regarding their career choices and preparation for employment in the context of current social challenges in the educational and career guidance at local and national level. The material is published on: <a href="http://www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo">www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo</a>, part <i>Návrh koncepcného riešenia výchovného a kariérového poradenstva</i>.</p>
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</i>	<p>11.3.1 The development of partnerships is enabled by the new Act. No. 61/2015 Coll. on vocational education and training and amendments to certain acts, focusing on the development of dual education</p> <p><a href="http://www.minedu.sk/12272-sk/zakony">www.minedu.sk/12272-sk/zakony</a></p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
<i>practical training and finding employment after graduation.)</i>	
11.4 Policy outlines how transition from education to employment is supported by adequate provision.	–
11.5 Policy supports the availability of meaningful VET options for learners to choose from.	<p>11.5.1 School leavers from basic schools for pupils with cognitive impairment (intellectual disability) who have to gain prerequisites to master education are offered a secondary vocational school. Education in secondary vocational school for pupils with cognitive impairment lasts from one to three years; prior to that a preparatory grade can be provided. Vocational education is completed by issuing a document which is presented by a final certificate and certificate on apprenticeship. The maximum number of pupils per class is 14, with 5–7 in vocational training groups. The school leavers are ready for work in simple professions and crafts. (§ 100 in the Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act))</p> <p>11.5.2 Pupils with cognitive impairment who, after completing compulsory school attendance are not able to complete secondary vocational school, have the possibility to be educated in a practical school for one, two or three years. The maximum number in practical school classes is 10. The school leavers are ready for simple professions.</p>
11.6 Policy supports the availability of supervised practical training.	–
11.7 Policy outlines how sustainable employment opportunities are supported through the availability of appropriate, on-going support.	<p>11.7.1 NPoE ‘Learning Slovakia’ states within the proposed measures:</p> <p>3-09.01 It is necessary to analyse the causes of low participation of adults in education to increase their qualifications or to change their qualifications. The analysis should identify the path to successful recruitment for some occupations or change of qualifications, possibly identifying a financial support</p>



Agency recommendation	Findings
	scheme to achieve these goals.
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>	11.8.1 NPoE 'Learning Slovakia' states within the proposed measures: 3-07.01 To establish a working group to assess the possibility of secondary schools with an option of the variability of general educational and vocational programmes. 3-07.02 To establish a working group to assess the potential of the newly-developed basic programmes of upper-secondary education

#### Measure 11 evaluative comments

Information on work of educational advisors and career counsellors who work on professional guidance of pupils is available:  
List of fields of study and training with an insufficient number of graduates for the labour market needs and the list of fields of study and training which are beyond the needs of the labour market (15 February 2017): [www.minedu.sk/vychova-a-vzdelavanie-v-strednych-skolach](http://www.minedu.sk/vychova-a-vzdelavanie-v-strednych-skolach)  
The map of regional education: [mapaskol.iedu.sk](http://mapaskol.iedu.sk)  
The application enabling the comparison of unemployment indicators for individual fields of study: [web.uips.sk/webaplikacie/Amn](http://web.uips.sk/webaplikacie/Amn)  
Specialised publications are available: [www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo](http://www.minedu.sk/vychovne-psychologicke-a-specialnopedagogicke-poradenstvo)  
[Facts and figures for higher education applicants](#) [Fakty a údaje pre uchádzačov o vysokoškolské štúdium]  
[Methodological material – Communicative procedures appropriate for decision support for employment in the field of vocational training](#)  
[Metodický materiál – Komunikačné postupy vhodné pre podporu rozhodovania o povolání v oblasti odborného vzdelávania]



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

Agency recommendation	Findings
<p>12.1 Policy outlines the mechanisms for ensuring effective transition across educational sectors and phases.</p> <p><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></p>	–
<p>12.2 Policy outlines how career counsellors/officers support learners and employers regarding employment possibilities.</p> <p><i>(Support is provided with job applications, inform and support employers and facilitate contact between both parties.)</i></p>	–

### Measure 12 evaluative comments

The Concept of Education of Children with Disabilities, approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic intensified many activities, which are aimed at new trends in the educational process of children and pupils with special educational needs. The specific modification of educational conditions enables a large part of the population of these pupils to complete primary and secondary education within the mainstream educational system. It not only contributes to better quality educational results, but also positively supports the process of continual social participation and overall personal development so that more persons with disabilities are ready to move into higher education and



then apply their skills in social and working life.

After pupils with special educational needs successfully complete their compulsory school attendance at basic mainstream school, special class or special school, they can apply to study at mainstream or special secondary schools – secondary grammar schools, secondary specialised schools, secondary vocational schools and practical schools. The possibility of admission of school leavers with special educational needs depends on their level of achievements at basic school.

The head teacher appoints an admission commission comprising educational staff, psychologists and physicians which, on the basis of conditions fulfilled for preparation at the secondary school, decides on admission of the pupil to the secondary school or practical school.

After successfully completing secondary school, the pupil with special educational needs may further apply for higher education study at a higher education institution (university). At present, there is the Supportive Centre at the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of Comenius University that provides professional counselling services to visually impaired students in higher education institutions. All higher education institutions have coordinators for students with special educational needs.