

## Mini-country survey: Slovak Republic

1) What are the main challenges for the Slovak Republic in terms of employability? (eg Is graduate unemployment a problem? Are there restrictions on access to certain jobs? Is there a careers and guidance service?) What would help you most as an output from this working group?

Slovak republic after the main economic reforms and changes has a transformed economic area centralized to the business interest. It means that cca. the last 8-10 years the governmental steps were very strongly concentrated to the creation of the stabile economic circumstances for a knowledge – based economy. After this period in Slovak republic is not a problem the unemployment graduates. The Higher education students have a comfortable situation in the labour – market. It happens often that they find a job not in the field of study, but still it is not a problem for them (eg. the teachers of foreign language, IT specialist and many other attractive jobs).

In the case of secondary education the unemployment rate is a little bit worse than in the case of HE students. There is a big percentage of students which is planning to continue in their study on the HEI. They finish mainly general secondary school. This group of students has not problem with a higher education study. The second group of secondary school students finished the vocational education and training. Slovak republic has a disposition to produce a graduates without a chance to find a job in the field of study. And there is a group of students (mainly in the technical fields) where in the Slovak republic is labour shortage. In this reason the Ministry of Education of the SR decided to make an initiative to educate more technical graduates. It is described in the Strategy of Ministry of Education for a Vocational Education and Training for the following years. This strategy describes two-level model of vocational education and training, which describes the divided competency of state authority and schools. The state authority has a competency to determine the curriculum, the standards on education, the methods of examinations and other administrative aspects of study. The school or pedagogical professional will be responsible to the part of education which is holder of regional particularity. In the practice this means, that in the agriculture region the vocational training will be concentrated for the education of this professionals, or in the industry region to the technical field of study.

Restrictions to the access of jobs:

Since 2004, from entry of SR to the European Union we have a lot of regulations, regarding the access to the exercise the professions. The legal basis of these regulations are in the Directives of EU, mainly in the 2005/36/EC about a recognition of professional qualification. Slovak republic has a German model of regulated professions, it means, there is a big number of regulated professions. It is based on the requirements of the level and field of study. Only this kind of regulations are applied, and it corresponds with a Law of European Union.

The guidance and careers centres:

Slovak republic has a well-developed administrative network. The career centres, for the character of they activities, are established beside the schools (secondary and higher education institutions), the bureaus of employment, social affairs and

family (they are established in the 8 county seat and other regional and district towns).

The non-governmental sector has frequent activities in this reason too.

2) Is there a dialogue in the Slovak Republic between higher education institutions and employers? If so, at what level does this take place – national, regional, institutional etc? What sort of issues does it cover?

In Slovak republic we have very active dialogue between the HEI's and the employers. It is mainly on the national and governmental body and on the level of transnational employers. Because of a big interest to increase the quality of HEI's from the side of governmental body and the business sector too, there were done some changes in the Law of HEI's, which makes easier to business sector the cooperation with HEI's.

The Act that amends the Act on Higher Education makes a possibility to higher education institutions to cooperate with a business sector and employers. The act amends specialised workplaces of science and research of public higher education institutions determined mainly for transfer of knowledge to the society and support of legal entities dealing with research and development under special conditions. The act is a legal basis for legislative amendment of supporting financial mechanism for this type of institutions in other type of regulations.

These specialised workplaces may be a part of public higher education institutions or independent legal entity set up by a public HEI or together with other legal entities.

Incubator of public HEI is a specialised workplace designed for fostering the establishment and development of small enterprises making use of achievements of research and developments, patents, etc. The incubator of a public HEI provides for support of small enterprises within three years at the latest since obtaining the certificate on enterprising. The incubator of a public HEI may use a special method of establishment and development of the company based on the detachment, when a new economic activity is developed within a public HEI.

3) Can you provide two examples of good practice in the Slovak Republic in relation to any of the themes to be covered by the report?

1. Technological incubator of Slovak technical university in Bratislava

2. Technological centre of University in Zilina.