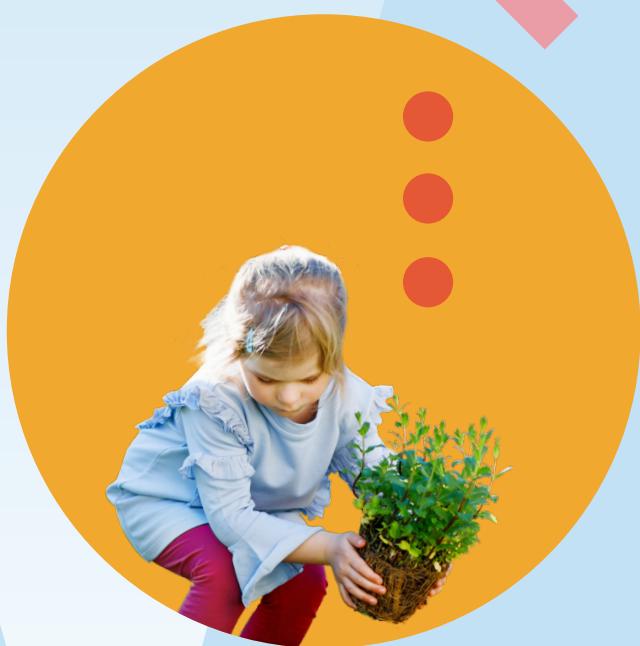




# Education and Training Monitor 2024

CZECHIA



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# **Education and Training Monitor 2024**

CZECHIA





The Education and Training Monitor's country reports present and assess the main recent and ongoing policy development at all education levels in the 27 EU Member States. They give the reader more in-depth insight into the performance of a country as regards the EU-level targets agreed within the European Education Area. They are based on the latest available evidence.

**The Key indicators section** presents a statistical overview of the main education and training indicators.

**Section 1** focuses on learning for sustainability.

**Section 2** covers early childhood education and care.

**Section 3** deals with school education policies.

**Section 4** covers vocational education.

**Section 5** discusses measures in higher education.

**Section 6** covers adult learning.



The Education and Training Monitor's country reports were prepared by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, with contributions from the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and CEDEFOP.

The document was completed on 4 October 2024.

More background data at: [op.europa.eu/etm](http://op.europa.eu/etm)

## Key indicators

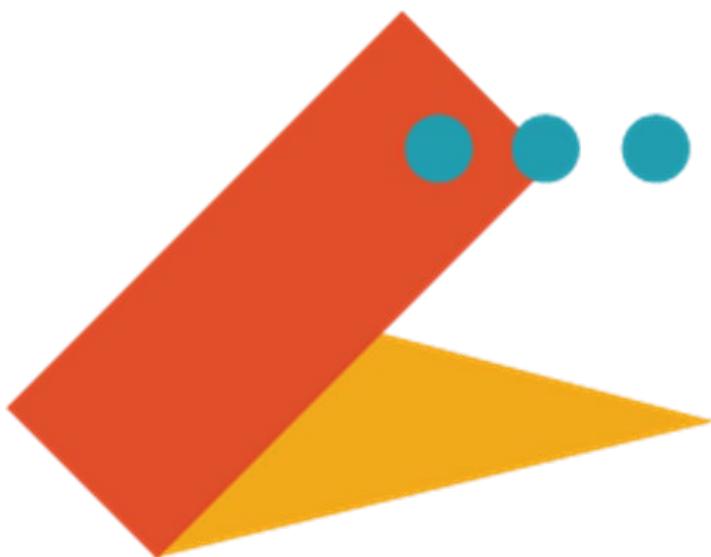
	EU-level targets	2030 target	Czechia		EU	
			2013	2023	2013	2023
Participation in early childhood education (from age 3 to starting age of compulsory primary education) <sup>1</sup>	≥ 96%	76.8% 85.3% <sup>22</sup>	91.8%	93.1% <sup>22, d</sup>		
Low achieving eighth-graders in digital skills <sup>2</sup>	< 15%	15.0% :	:	:		
Reading	< 15%	16.9% <sup>12</sup> 21.3% <sup>22</sup>	18.0% <sup>12</sup>	26.2% <sup>22</sup>		
Low-achieving 15-year-olds in <sup>3</sup> :	Maths	< 15%	21.0% <sup>12</sup> 25.5% <sup>22</sup>	22.1% <sup>12</sup>	29.5% <sup>22</sup>	
	Science	< 15%	13.8% <sup>12</sup> 19.9% <sup>22</sup>	16.8% <sup>12</sup>	24.2% <sup>22</sup>	
Early leavers from education and training (age 18-24) <sup>4</sup>	< 9%	5.4% <sup>b</sup> 6.4%	11.8%	9.5%		
Exposure of VET graduates to work-based learning <sup>5</sup>	≥ 60% (2025)	:	16.1%	:	64.5% <sup>b</sup>	
Tertiary educational attainment (age 25-34) <sup>6</sup>	≥ 45%	29.2% 33.7%	35.1%	43.1%		
Participation of adults in learning (age 25-64) <sup>7</sup>	≥ 47% (2025)	28.3% <sup>11</sup> 21.2% <sup>22</sup>	34.4% <sup>11, b</sup>	39.5% <sup>22</sup>		
<b>Other contextual indicators</b>						
Equity indicator (percentage points) <sup>8</sup>		:	23.3 <sup>22</sup>	:	24.1 <sup>22</sup>	
Early leavers from education and training (age 18-24) <sup>9</sup>	Native EU-born Non EU-born	5.4% <sup>b</sup> : <sup>bu</sup> 15.4% <sup>bu</sup>	6.0% 25.1% <sup>u</sup> 11.0% <sup>u</sup>	10.7% 25.0% 26.7%	8.2% 21.0% 21.6%	
Upper secondary level attainment (age 20-24, ISCED 3-8) <sup>10</sup>		90.9%	89.5%	80.9%	84.1%	
Tertiary educational attainment (age 25-34) <sup>13</sup>	Native EU-born Non EU-born	28.9% 38.6% 34.3%	32.6% 57.6% 36.0%	36.4% 31.1% 24.6%	44.2% 40.2% 37.1%	
Share of school teachers (ISCED 1-3) aged 55 or over <sup>14</sup>		24.3% <sup>15</sup>	30.8% <sup>22</sup>	23.4% <sup>15</sup>	24.8% <sup>22</sup>	
Education investment <sup>16</sup>	Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP  Public expenditure on education as a share of total general government expenditure	4.5%	4.9% <sup>22</sup>	4.9%	4.7% <sup>22</sup>	

Sources: 1= Eurostat, [educ\_uee\_enra21]; 2= IEA (ICILS 2018); 3 = OECD (PISA); 4= Eurostat, [edat\_lfse\_14]; 5 = Eurostat, [edat\_lfs\_9919]; 6 = Eurostat, [edat\_lfse\_03]; 7= Eurostat, Adult Education Survey (participation in education and training excluding guided on-the-job training); 8 = European Commission (Joint Research Centre) calculations based on OECD PISA 2022 data; 9 = Eurostat, [edat\_lfse\_02]; 10= Eurostat, [edat\_lfse\_03]; 13= Eurostat, [edat\_lfs\_9912]; 14 = Eurostat, [educ\_uee\_perp01], 16= Eurostat, [gov\_10a\_exp]. More information can be found in the [Monitor Toolbox](#). Notes: the indicator used (ECE) refers to early childhood education and care programmes which are considered by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) to be 'educational' and therefore constitute the first level of education in education and training systems – ISCED level 0; the equity indicator shows the gap in the share of underachievement in reading, mathematics and science (combined) among 15-year-olds between the lowest and highest quarters of socio-economic status; b = break in time series, d = definition differs, p = provisional, u = low reliability, : = not available, 11 = 2011, 12 = 2012, 15= 2015, 18 = 2018, 22 = 2022.

## Position in relation to strongest and weakest performers



Source: DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, based on data from Eurostat (LFS 2023, UOE 2022) and OECD (PISA 2022).



## 1. Learning for sustainability



**Learning for sustainability is a strategic priority for education policy in Czechia.** The Education Policy Strategy until 2030 (MŠMT, 2024a) refers to education for sustainable development as the interrelationship of economic, social and environmental aspects, under the umbrella of civic education. Sustainability also features prominently in the Long-Term Plan for Education for 2023-2027 (MŠMT, 2024b), and a national programme for environmental education, training and awareness<sup>1</sup> (EETA) has been in place since 2000, covering activities by government and municipal bodies, schools, environmental education centres and non-profit organisations. More recently, strategies for EETA have been developed at regional level<sup>2</sup>. In primary and secondary education, learning for sustainability is a cross-curricular theme, with an emphasis on the knowledge of complex ecosystems and their relation to human society (European Commission/Eurydice, 2024). The ongoing curricular revision integrates learning for sustainability into 5 out of the 9 educational areas as a cross-cutting

subject<sup>3</sup>. While schools enjoy a high degree of autonomy in defining and implementing curricula, they all must incorporate themes and goals of environmental education in their teaching: either as a separate subject, as part of other subjects or through projects (Šimonová & Činčera, 2016).

**Czechia provides comprehensive support to schools and teachers to foster sustainability competences.** Schools can appoint one or more coordinators for environmental education (EETA). They provide coaching and mentoring for teachers and school heads and are responsible for developing and evaluating sustainability education in schools. A national committee on education for sustainable development<sup>4</sup> provides guidance regarding the implementation of sustainability-related initiatives in school. A dense network of non-governmental organisations called the Spiderweb (Pavučina) network<sup>5</sup> helps schools to implement sustainability education in practice. Close to 50 environmental education centres provide programmes for over 200 000 children and 11 000 teachers annually.

<sup>1</sup> The current national programme covers 2016-2025. In Czechia, the abbreviation EVVO (environmentální vzdělávání, výchova a osvěta – environmental education, training and awareness) is used to denote educational activities related to the environment, including learning for sustainability.

<sup>2</sup> For example in the capital city of Prague, South Moravia, Ústí nad Lábem and Zlín regions.

<sup>3</sup> Official website of the curricular revision: <https://velke-rezize-zv.rvp.cz/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cr2030.cz/rvur/vybor-pro-vzdelavani-k-udrzeltnemu-rozvoji/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pavucina-sev.cz/rubrika/77-ENGLISH/index.htm>

Sustainability is included in the competence framework for environmental educators and a recently adopted graduate profile for initial teacher education emphasises interdisciplinary teaching. The National Pedagogical Institute offers various opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers and school leaders. EETA coordinators are entitled to 250 hours of training on a wide range of issues. In 2023, 28% of basic schools (primary and lower secondary) employed coordinators who had completed the specialised training<sup>7</sup>. Participation by teachers in continuous professional development related to sustainability was 35.8% in basic schools and 44% in secondary schools (CSI, 2016). According to a 2023 study, 14% of basic schools would welcome additional support in implementing learning for sustainability (PAQ & STEM, 2023).

#### **Box 1: Financial boost for climate education and eco-centres in Czechia**

Since 2022, the Ministry of the Environment has increased financial support for environmental and climate education targeting schools and the general public. Under the 2024-2026 National Environmental Programme, the Ministry provides subsidies for EETA organisations, including environmental education centres, to ensure the stability of their operation and to increase their outreach. The total budget for this is about CZK 220 million (EUR 8.6 million) for a period of 2 years. It also allocates funding for forest kindergartens and clubs<sup>6</sup> and the development of school gardens and outdoor school facilities. In addition, the Ministry has financed the development of teaching resources, including the website "Teaching about the climate".

<https://www.narodniprogramzp.cz/>  
<https://ucimoklimatu.cz/>

**Available data on the sustainability competences of Czech students suggests the need to further anchor the topic in school activities.** The decentralisation of support and school autonomy in curriculum design make it challenging to monitor the impact of sustainability education activities on students' knowledge, skills and attitudes. In collaboration with experts, the Ministry of the Environment has developed guidelines for the assessment of environmental literacy, but data collection at national level is not yet regularised. In the 2024 special Eurobarometer survey on youth and democracy 71% of young people (15-30) agreed that they have learned to take care of their environment during their education and training (EU: 72%). According to a 2020 report by the Czech School Inspectorate, environmental education is considered a priority by teachers in less than one-fifth of basic (primary and lower secondary) schools, and only a minority of them carry out regular evaluations of students' skills (CSI, 2020). Almost all basic schools organise multi-day events related to sustainability, but with varying frequency (CSI, 2020). Students attending after school activities (such as clubs) on environmental education performed better on tests and were more likely to engage in environmental projects in their communities. This is corroborated by research findings, which show that extracurricular and outdoor activities have a positive impact on students' pro-environmental behaviour (Činčera et al., 2023, Činčera & Krajhanzl, 2013).



<sup>6</sup> Forest kindergartens and clubs provide pre-school education in an outdoor setting, according to the relevant Framework Educational Programmes. Forest kindergartens are recognised by law and receive public funding while forest clubs operate as non-profit associations.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, annual reporting from schools. The data covers fully organised basic schools from 1st class to 9th grade (for age 6 to 15).

## 2. Early childhood education and care



**Participation in early childhood education and care (ECEC) is consistently low.** In 2022, 85.3% of children between the age 3 and the start of compulsory primary education participated in ECEC, compared to 93.1% in the EU (EU-level target: 96%). Participation is particularly low (74%) among 3 year-olds, while it is higher (94.3%) for children aged 5 and older, due to compulsory enrolment in the final year. Participation by children below 3 in formal childcare was at its lowest (4.5%) since 2015; this rate is significantly below the EU average (37.5%) and the national Barcelona target (12%).

**Municipalities struggle to create sufficient capacities in ECEC services, despite dedicated policy strategies and funding.** Barriers include insufficient administrative, financial and staffing capabilities, and in certain regions, a lack of suitable premises. In its action plan for the Child Guarantee, Czechia has committed to creating an extra 7 500

places in children's groups by 2030. Despite the substantial increase in the number of places available in children's groups<sup>8</sup> since 2020, places are still lacking for children under 3 who were not admitted to kindergartens (Sirovátka et al., 2023). Data on children's attendance in children's groups is currently not available (most providers are non-public bodies), hindering effective local monitoring and anticipation of needs. An ongoing capacity-building project supported by the EU's Technical Support Instrument<sup>9</sup> is expected to contribute to better investment in the ECEC sector expansion, notably by mapping and matching supply and demand, and by improving coherence across public and private services and across the entire 0-6 age range, for which oversight is shared between different Ministries. A high number of deferrals of children from entering primary school<sup>10</sup> puts additional pressure on the system (cf. European Commission, 2023a). In 2024, the Ministry of

<sup>8</sup> Children's groups are legally recognised and regulated facilities which provide childcare to children from age 1 until the start of compulsory education, but which do not provide pre-school education. As of 1 September 2024, the MoLSA registered 1 815 children's groups with 24 580 places for children: <https://evidence.mpsv.cz/eEDS/index.php>

<sup>9</sup> <https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/skills-education-and-training/developing-comprehensive-framework->

[monitoring-and-evaluation-early-childhood-education-and-care\\_en](#)

<sup>10</sup> According to the Education Policy Strategy 2030 scoreboard (MŠMT, 2024c), almost a quarter (23.3%) of children aged 6 and older postpone entry to primary school (attending kindergarten or pre-primary preparatory classes).

Education put forward policy options to curb deferrals and to re-define the concept of "school maturity"<sup>11</sup>.

**Affordability of ECEC is an issue for low-income families.** Formal pre-school education is not universally free, although a legal ceiling for fees has been set, exemptions are granted for families receiving special social benefits, and all children receive free education in kindergartens from the age of 5. Kindergartens also have the possibility to reduce or waive fees, but there is no data on how this discretion is exercised. Fees for children's groups are considerably higher than kindergartens and represent a disproportionate expenditure for low-income families (Sirovátka et al., 2023). The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has been

running a project to support free lunches<sup>12</sup> since 2015, with the participation of all regions, however, there is no legal guarantee to provide free meals for low-income children. To improve access and affordability, at the end of 2023 the government adopted new measures to regulate pre-school fees and the costs of extracurricular activities<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, according to a new legislative proposal, from 2026 municipalities could be obliged to provide places in children's groups for 3-year-olds not admitted to kindergarten (children falling in the so-called "ECEC gap"<sup>14</sup>). Failing that, they must compensate the parents for the costs of childcare. Currently, kindergartens in big cities fail to meet demand by more than 50% (Baptista et al., 2023). The amendment also introduces the concept of the "neighbourhood children's group" as a new form of childcare service provided in a home setting, requiring a minimum of 4 children.



<sup>11</sup> <https://msmt.gov.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/msmt-pripravilo-reseni-pro-omezeni-odkladu-skolni-dochazky>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mpsv.cz/vyhlasene-vyzvy>

<sup>13</sup> Decree amending Decree No. 14/2005 on Preschool Education, and Decree No. 74/2005 on Extracurricular Activities Education

<sup>14</sup> The ECEC gap is the amount of time the child spends without guaranteed ECEC placement after the end of the parents' childcare leave (see European Commission/ Eurydice, 2023).

### 3. School education



**Trends in Czech students reading performance show consistency, but mathematics skills are declining.** According to the OECD's 2022 PISA study (Programme for International Student Assessment), one in four 15 year-olds do not meet the basic proficiency level in mathematics (25.5%), and the same is true for one in five in reading (21.3%) and science (18.8%). Compared to 2018, the share of underachieving students in mathematics has increased by 5.1 pps (EU: 6.6 pps), corresponding to a longer-term downward trend. At the same time, the underachievement rate in reading among the Czech 15-year-olds is at the same level as it was in 2012 and at 21.3% it is now among the lowest in the EU – although still above the EU-level target of 15%. This is mirrored by the 2021 results of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the most recent national tests (CSI, 2024a) which show that 4<sup>th</sup> graders perform consistently in reading over time. In science, the increase in the share of underachievers is negligible compared to 2018, but it is significant compared to 2012. According to a national study, students who perform below the minimum level in science are not likely to strive to improve their results and the

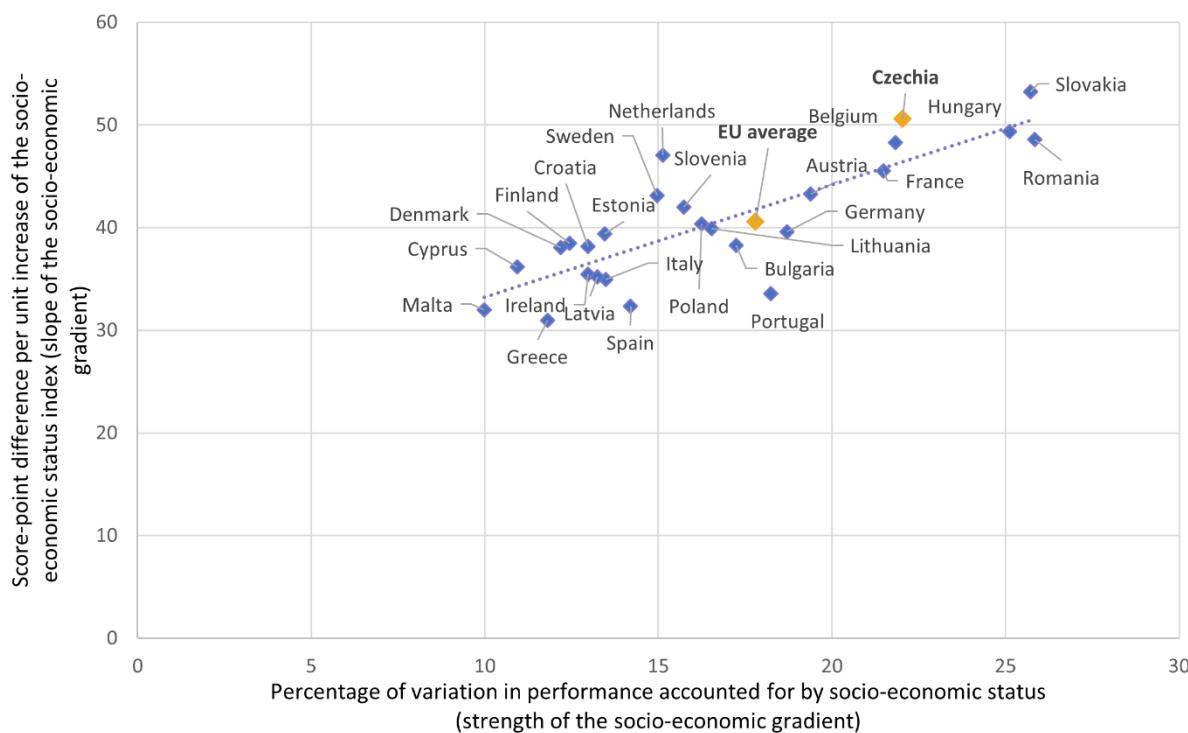
support available to them is limited (CSI, 2024b). The results show that while Czechia is getting further away from meeting the EU-level target in the long term, the impacts of the pandemic on student competence were not too severe, even though schools were closed for the longest time in the EU (171 days, according to reports by head teachers in PISA 2022).

**Between 2018 and 2022, the socio-economic gap in underachievement has widened.** The proportion of underachieving students increased among the socio-economically disadvantaged<sup>15</sup>, while it remained stable among the advantaged. The gap is now 39.5 pps, which is above the EU average (37.2 pps): close to half of disadvantaged students (48.5%) underachieve in mathematics. In addition, the top performers tend to come from more favourable backgrounds and are concentrated mainly in selective 4-year and multi-year grammar schools, where places are limited and successful preparation for admission is often contingent on parental resources. The change in mathematics performance, linked to differences social and economic status, is the second highest in the EU (51

<sup>15</sup> In the PISA study, socio-economic background is measured by the index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS), which

combines three components: parents' highest level of education; parents' highest occupational status; and home possessions.

**Figure 1: Score-point difference associated with one unit increase in the index of economic, social and cultural status (mathematics performance), PISA 2022**



Source: OECD (2023).

vs. 40.6 points EU average)<sup>16</sup>, pointing to deeply ingrained inequalities. According to the Czech School Inspectorate (2023), the performance gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students corresponds to approximately 3 years of schooling in the Czech system. There is also a wide variation of performance between school types. The worst results are recorded among students who enter vocational fields without the prospect of obtaining a high school diploma - almost 60% of them do not reach a basic level of mathematical literacy (CSI, 2023).

**A shortage of adequately qualified teaching staff and challenges to student well-being negatively influence student's performance in mathematics.** One third of students in the PISA study attend schools where head teachers reported inadequate or poorly qualified staff (29.9%) or lack

of assisting staff (30.4%), which hinders instruction. Well-being is another contributing factor: a significant proportion of students, 21.1%, reported feeling lonely at school, and close to one third of disadvantaged students declared being victims of bullying, which is the second highest figure in the EU. At the same time, the Czech education system is one of the most efficient in terms of invested study hours and student performance: they spend on average 23 hours a week in lessons and less than an hour per day on homework, while their gains in numeracy from every additional hour of study was the highest in the EU (CSI, 2023).

**Czechia reached some major milestones in reforming initial teacher education.** As part of the Education Policy Strategy until 2030, the reform process aims at a comprehensive transformation of teacher training<sup>17</sup>. In October 2023, the Ministry

<sup>16</sup> The score-point difference associated with a one unit increase in the ESCS index.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.edu.cz/pregradual/#uvod>

published a new competence framework for the teaching profession (MEYS, 2023), developed in cooperation with representatives of the university faculties educating teachers and education specialists. In April 2024, this was incorporated into the amended framework requirements for the accreditation of programmes leading to teacher qualification<sup>18</sup>, according to which the training programme must cover at least 80% of the framework to receive accreditation. The Ministry issued a call under the Jan Amos Komenský operational programme (ESF+) to support the implementation of the framework in practice,

including work on subject-specific frameworks.<sup>19</sup> The reform has also increased the share of practical teaching in preservice teacher training and has introduced a “clinical year”, consisting of school visits four times a week on top of training.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, teacher salaries struggle to remain competitive. In 2024, the growth in teacher salaries is expected to be below the growth of average wages in the economy; teachers’ salaries are at around 115% of the average wage, compared to the government commitment of 130% (Münich & Smolka, 2024).

#### **Box 1: Support for basic skills development in the Central Bohemian Region (ESF)**

The Regional Action Plan II of the Central Bohemian Region (IKAP II), co-financed by the ESF, builds on its successful predecessor (IKAP). Between 2020 and 2023, the project aimed to improve the quality of education provided in schools in the region, especially in mathematics, language and digital literacy.

The emphasis was on science, technology and environmental education, improving the quality of teaching and promoting equal opportunities in education for a diverse range of pupils.

In addition to educational events which thousands of participants attended, the project activities included workshops, conferences and active support for teaching staff, providing them with opportunities for study visits abroad and establishing international cooperation with host institutions.

Budget: EUR 13 million.

*Ikap II - Středočeského kraje ([kr-stredocesky.cz](http://kr-stredocesky.cz))*

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/msmt-schvalilo-nova-pravidla-pro-pripravu-ucitelu-vysoke>

<sup>19</sup> <https://opjak.cz/aktuality/op-jak-podpori-pul-miliardou-zvyseni-kvality-pripravy-budoucich-ucitelu/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.msmt.cz/file/62419/>

## 4. Vocational education and training



**The share of students enrolled in vocational programmes remains among the highest in the EU, but work-based learning is still limited.** The share of students enrolled in vocational programmes in medium-level education<sup>21</sup> was 66.3% in 2022 (EU: 54.2%). Recent VET graduates have an employment rate slightly above the EU average (85.2% as compared to 81.0% in 2023), despite limited exposure to work-based learning in VET: only 16.1% of recent graduates had such experience in 2023, compared to 64.5% EU-wide. The Operational Programme for Technologies and Application for Competitiveness (ERDF) published a call for proposals<sup>22</sup> on *Cooperation between schools and companies* in Czechia, with an allocation of EUR 12 million. It aims to encourage practical training and preparation in specialised small and medium-sized firms for students from secondary schools, vocational education and training, and higher education institutions.

**Recent reforms in the VET sector aim to improve quality and labour market relevance.**

The 2023 amendment to the Act on Pedagogical Staff has broadened entry pathways for secondary school teachers. Graduates of upper secondary VET programmes with a secondary school leaving certificate or VET certificate can now obtain the vocational training instructor qualification if their education aligns with the subject taught. Additionally, the amendment introduces a new requirement of at least 5 years of professional experience in the relevant field. The main objectives of the Long-term Plan for Education for 2023–2027 for VET include optimising and innovating the system to meet labour market needs, strengthening basic skills, increasing the share of general education, increasing permeability between pathways, supporting the professional development of VET teachers, and reinforcing career counselling to facilitate the entry of graduates into the labour market. The strategy also promotes the digitalisation of admissions and graduation processes: it will introduce an alternative element in the school leaving exam, such as a comprehensive graduation thesis, which was pilot tested until November 2023.

<sup>21</sup> Eurostat: educ\_uoe\_enra16. Medium-level refers to upper-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.optak.cz/spoluprace-skol-a-firem-vyzva-i/a-156/>

## 5. Higher education



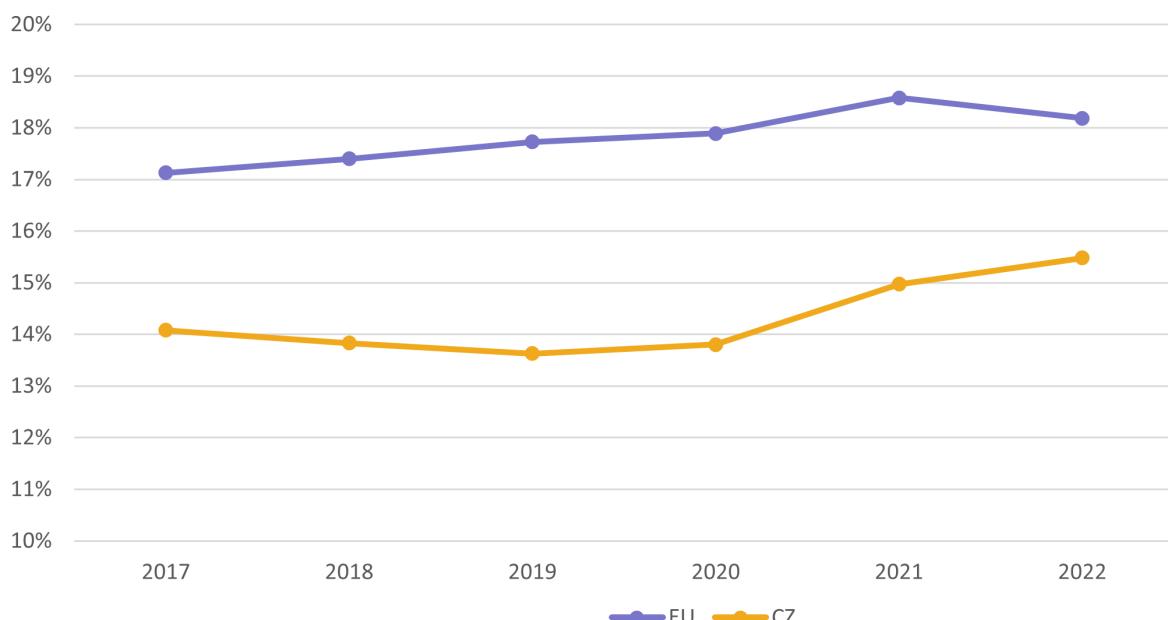
**Tertiary education attainment among young people is declining, despite improving employment prospects.** In 2023, 33.7% of people aged between 25 and 34 held a tertiary education diploma, in contrast to the EU average of 43.1%. The attainment rate has declined since 2021 (to the level of 2017) and it is consistently among the lowest in the EU. The employment rate for recent graduates was higher (88.8%) than the EU average (87.7%) in 2023 and has improved by 6.4 pps compared to the previous year. Also, the overall number of students enrolled in tertiary education increased by 2.8 pps between 2021 and 2022, after a period of decline between 2017 and 2022. However, their relative share among the population is still below the EU average (Figure 2).

**Financial conditions for students and staff at higher education institutions leave room for improvement.** The 2024 Eurostudent report reveals that 70% of students work during term time, the second highest proportion in the EU, but lower than in 2021 (Hauschildt et al., 2024). Two-thirds declare that they work to cover living costs, and one-third say that they could not afford to study without

a paying job. Students from underprivileged backgrounds have more difficulties entering and successfully completing higher education. Only 2% of student income is in the form of a government grant (Eurostudent average 12%). Overall, there has been a slight improvement in students' financial situation compared to the last data collection round, with only 26% of students now reporting serious financial difficulties. In 2024, a new amendment to the Higher Education Act set a minimum guaranteed income for full-time doctoral students at 120% of the minimum wage and limits the overall number of eligible candidates, while aiming to improve retention. The additional funding will be allocated to universities based on criteria including research quality and programme completion rates. Critics of the reform allege that applying uniform rules across all domains may risk underfunding programmes in fields where demand for graduates is high, such as ICT (Grosman et al., 2024). In May 2024, the Ministry also announced a new call to allocate additional funds to universities, to address the long-standing issue of wage inequalities among academic staff<sup>23</sup>, and it is preparing a more comprehensive reform of higher education financing.

<sup>23</sup> <https://msmt.gov.cz/ministerstvo/novinar/msmt-vyhlasilo-vyzvu-na-snizeni-mzdovych-nerovnosti-na-vs?lang=1>

**Figure 2: The evolution of the number of students (aged 18-34) enrolled in higher education (ISCED 5-8) as a % of the total population aged 18-34**



Source: Based on Eurostat data (demo\_pjan; educ\_uee\_enrt\_02).

**Czechia is investing in sustainability education and green skills at universities.** As part of its revised national recovery and resilience plan, Czechia aims to create 20 new academic and professionally oriented study programmes, 50 new courses under existing programmes and 20 lifelong learning courses (designed in accordance with the Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials) in fields related to the green transition. The Ministry launched the funding call for universities in November 2023<sup>24</sup>. Simultaneously, all public universities will be required to adopt (or update) their strategy encompassing their vision, priorities and objectives in the medium and long term for the green transition, including green skills education. Moreover, between 2022 and 2024, 24 universities participated in the national UNILEAD project, coordinated by the Masaryk University in Brno<sup>25</sup>. It aimed to strengthen universities role as effective, accountable and inclusive public organisations by sharing good practice related to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Czechia is stepping up efforts to promote internationalisation and learning mobility.** In 2022, 10.2% of higher education graduates had a learning mobility experience abroad and half of these graduated abroad, while the other half simply spent a short period abroad studying. This is slightly below the EU average of 11%, and far from the EU-level target of 23%. A recent survey<sup>26</sup> shows that participants in the Erasmus+ programme or its predecessors exhibit more positive attitudes concerning their labour market situation, including believing that it is easy to find a new job, including abroad, and not worrying much about losing their job, compared to non-participants. Another survey indicates that 60% of young Czechs aged 15-30 (and 77% of the 15-19 age group) are interested in participating in international work or study experience abroad (DZS, 2021). To attract more foreign candidates to pursue a doctoral programme at Czech public universities, the new amendment to the law lifted mandatory study fees for foreign language programmes.

<sup>24</sup> <https://msmt.gov.cz/vzdelavani/vysoke-skolstvi/vyzva-k-predkladani-zadosti-o-podporu-projektu-v-ramci>

<sup>25</sup> <https://sustain.muni.cz/en/about-us/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/unilead-project>

<sup>26</sup> Závěrečná zpráva z kvantitativního výzkumu (dzs.cz)

## 6. Adult learning



**Adult participation in lifelong learning continues to lag behind the EU average.** In 2022, only 21.2% of adults aged 25–64 participated in formal or non-formal learning<sup>27</sup> in the last 12 months, compared to an average of 39.5% in the EU. This is 23.8 pps below the 2030 national target of 45% of adults participating in learning every year. According to the analysis of the 2022 Adult Education Survey carried out by the Czech Statistical Office, formal education is the least frequent type of adult learning compared to non-formal and informal learning. With 8%, Czechia is well below the EU average (12%) and among eight Member States with a share of less than 8.5 %. At least one non-formal learning activity was completed by 40% of adults aged 18–69, slightly below the EU average of 42%. Most non-formal learning activities are completed for work-related reasons. The most common motivation is the requirement of an employer or a legal obligation (57% of the total number of non-formal learning activities for work-related reasons). However, efforts to better perform their work (51%) or to acquire knowledge or skills (18%) for their own interest are also mentioned.

**The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has launched a new tool to support training in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.** In 2023, an online platform called the 'Database of Re-training and Further Training Courses'<sup>28</sup>, was launched with the support of the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The project offers subsidised training, covering up to 82% of fees per course and up to EUR 2 000 over 3 years for all. The platform serves as a communication hub for training providers (including vocational and higher education institutions), the Labour Office, and clients – enabling seamless online administration. It integrates traditional accredited courses mediated by the Labour Office, retraining courses from a list of options, and new courses focusing on digital and industry 4.0 skills. A major advantage of the tool is that it sets minimal administrative and certification requirements, benefiting both training providers and individuals seeking to improve their skills, regardless of their employment status.



<sup>27</sup> Eurostat: [Adult Education Survey](#) - participation in education and training excluding guided on-the-job training.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.mpsv.cz/databaze-rekvalifikace>

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## Annex: Structure of the education system

### The structure of European education systems (europa.eu)

Source: European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 'The structure of European education systems', Eurydice data and visuals, November 2024.



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