

# *Continuing Professional Development of Teachers in the Slovak Republic*

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,  
SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND SPORT  
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

# *Educational reform*

Slovakia has been carrying out systematic changes in the area of education since 2008.

These reforms include the introduction of a new system in the area of teachers professional development based on credit system.

# Legislative framework

- \* Law No. 317/2009 on teaching and professional staff as amended (*in effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009*)
- \* Declaration No. 445/2009 on continuing education, credits and attestations of teaching and professional staff (*in effect from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009*)
- \* Declaration No. 437/2009, establishing qualifications and specific qualification requirements for each category of teaching and professional staff (*in effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009*)
- \* Directive No. 18-2009-R, issuing criteria for the elaboration and assessment of programs of continuing education for accreditation purposes (*in effect from 1<sup>th</sup> November 2009*)

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with Law No. 317/2009, **professional development** is a process of deepening, improving and expanding of qualification and professional competences in accordance with the latest scientific knowledge, societal needs and requirements for performance of educational activities.

Professional development in career system is ensured by:

- \* continuing education,
- \* creative activities related with performance of educational activities,
- \* self-education.

# CAREER SYSTEM

**Career system** is a set of rules for the classification of teaching and professional staff into the **career degree** or **career position**.

**Career degree** expresses the rate of development of teacher's professional competences and the difficulty of teaching activity.

Career degrees:

- \* **starting (novice) teacher**
- \* **independent teacher**
- \* **teacher with first attestation**
- \* **teacher with second attestation**

**Career position** expresses the classification of teacher into the work position for performance the specialized activities.

Career positions:

- \* **teacher specialist**
- \* **school leadership**

# Career degree

- \* **Starting (novice) teacher** is a teacher in his/her first employment relationship until he/she finishes the adaptational training (induction); indicating educational employee (mentor) of the starting (novice) teacher can be teacher who reached third or fourth degree (teacher with first or second attestation).
- \* **Independent teacher** is a teacher, who completed the adaptational training (induction) teacher and he/she can teach independently, without supervision of the mentor.
- \* **Teacher with first attestation** is a teacher, who passed the first attestation exam or reached the third stage of university level education and has teaching practice at least three years.
- \* **Teacher with second attestation** is teacher, who passed the second attestation exam or reached the third stage of university level education and has teaching practice at least six years.

# Career position

- \* **Teacher specialist** must have qualifications required for the performance of educational activities and completed the adaptational training (induction). Teacher specialist is class teacher, educational adviser, career adviser, indicating teacher (mentor), head of subject commission of educational area, coordinator of the informatization, adviser for education through information and communications technology, specialist for education pupils from social disadvantage environment, practice teaching employee, prevention coordinator.
- \* **School leadership** must have qualifications required for the performance of educational activities, completed first attestation and has three years to complete the school leadership training. School leadership is headmaster, deputy headmaster, chief teacher of vocational education, chief educator (in school dormitory, children school club...).

# CONTINUING EDUCATION

**Continuing education** as a part of lifelong learning is a systematic acquisition process of knowledge, skills and competence with the purpose of maintaining, renewing, improving, expanding and complementing of professional teachers competencies that are necessary for educational activities.



# Providers of continuing education

- \* school or school facility
- \* university or college
- \* organization established by the ministry to ensure or fulfill tasks of continuing education
- \* educational organization of another central state administration body (e.g. ministry of interior, ministry of health...)
- \* church or religious society, or another private company which has education in the business activity

# Providers of continuing education

Institutions of continuing education in connection with the needs of information society offer educational programs for teaching and professional staff for the development of their professional competences in accordance with school reforms. This educational programs has to be accredited by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter „Ministry“).

# *Methodology and Pedagogy Centre (MPC)*

**Methodology and Pedagogy Centre (MPC)** is a state budgetary organization set up for the ensuring and fulfilling of tasks within the area of continuing education and reporting directly to the Ministry.

MPC's activities:

- \* provides continuing education for teaching and professional staff in schools and school facilities and prepares school leadership
- \* provides expert methodological activities in the area of continuing education of teaching and professional staff
- \* carries out research activities in the field of continuing education of teaching and professional staff

# *Types of Continuing Education*

- \* Adaptational training (induction)
- \* Actualization training
- \* Innovative training
- \* Specialized training
- \* School leadership training

# Adaptational training (induction)

- \* provided by *the* school or school facility, that has the employment relationship with the starting (novice) teacher
- \* The goal is an **acquisition of professional competence** necessary to perform duties of independent teachers as it was not possible to achieve them during initial teacher education
- \* carried out **under the supervision** of a mentor (experienced teacher with first or second attestation)
- \* **duration:** usually one year (at least 3 month)

# Actualization training

- \* **Educational content:** actual information, deepening and development of competencies, changes in the concept of education and training
- \* **Goal:** maintenance of professional competence necessary for performance of standard educational activities or preparation for attestation (preparatory training for attestation)
- \* **Range:** 20 - 60 lessons
- \* **Duration:** up to 10 months

# Innovative training

- \* **Educational content:** are innovations, especially in subjects or field of study, in pedagogy and psychology
- \* **Goal:** improvement of professional competence necessary for performance of standard educational activities
- \* **Range:** 60 - 110 lessons
- \* **Duration:** up to 12 months

# Specialized training

- \* **Educational content:** knowledge of legislation, pedagogy and other fields of education
- \* **Goal:** acquisition of professional competence necessary for performance of specialized activities
- \* **Range:** 100 - 160 lessons
- \* **Duration:** up to 18 months



# School leadership training

- \* **Educational content:** knowledge of strategic school management, legislation connected to school management, human resources management, financial management and self-personal development
- \* **Goal:** acquisition of professional competence necessary for performance of their management duties
- \* **Range:** 160 - 200 lessons
- \* **Duration:** up to 24 month

# ACREDITATION

**Accreditation** is a process of state approval of programs of continuing education for teachers granted on the basis of careful consideration of their aims, content, length, assessment and lecturers.

## Activities of the Ministry :

- \* informs on accreditation
- \* publishes criteria for the elaboration and assessment of programs of continuing education for accreditation purposes
- \* controls the conditions of accreditation
- \* registers requests for accreditation
- \* decides on accreditation
- \* publishes list of providers and accredited programs of continuing education
- \* creates conditions for the activity of the accreditation council

# Application (request) for accreditation

Providers of continuing education requests Ministry for accreditation. The application must contain:

- \* applicant's **identification data**
- \* **name** of the educational program
- \* **type** of continuing education
- \* **reasoning** of the educational program
- \* draft of the **aims, content and range** of the educational program
- \* **specific goals** of the educational program
- \* **category** and **career degree** of teaching staff and **career position** or **subject** (if necessary)
- \* draft number of **credits for completion** of the program
- \* **graduate profile**
- \* name and qualification of **supervisor** of the educational program
- \* proof of **payment of the fee** for accreditation

# Accreditation council

## The Ministry

- \* establishes Accreditation council as an **advisory body** for accreditation purposes
- \* **appoints members** according to their qualifications
- \* **reimburses travel costs** associated with participation in the meeting
- \* issued the **Statute of the accreditation council** with detailed information about its activity and process of assessment of programs of continuing education

## Members

- \* **Consider programs of continuing education** depending on the field of study or subject according to their qualifications and in accordance with the Statute of the Accreditation Council
- \* **are paid by the Ministry** for assessment of educational programs

# CREDIT SYSTEM

**The credit system** is a set of rules created for allocation of credits awarded through completion of educational programs or other activities provided by Law No. 317/2009.

Teaching staff can get credits for:

- \* graduate of accredited programs of continuing education
- \* rigorous examination
- \* state examination in a foreign language
- \* education connected to educational activities graduated abroad
- \* authorship or co-authorship of state-approved or state-recommended textbooks and workbooks

The number of credits depends on range and difficulty of educational programs, completion method (final task, presentation, interview...) and on range and a rate of co-authorship of textbooks and workbooks.

# ATTESTATION

- \* verification of competence acquired by continuing education, self-education and performing educational activities
- \* consists of an attestation exam and a defense of attestation thesis
- \* valid only for category and field of study or subject, for which the teacher is qualified

# Who can carry out attestation

- \* organization established by the Ministry to ensure or fulfill tasks of continuing education
- \* organization established by another central state administration body
- \* university or college, that has accredited study programs in second degree of higher education in education and training, psychology, non-medical health sciences, security services (depends on field of study or subject of attestation)

# Who can apply for perform attestation

## First attestation

- \* 30 credits + completed preparatory training for first attestation in range of 60 lessons (or 60 credits)

## Second attestation

- \* second degree of higher education
- \* first attestation
- \* 30 credits + completed preparatory training for second attestation in range of 60 lessons (or 60 credits)



# Attestation committee

## First attestation

- \* head of the committee is appointed by the Ministry
- \* 5 members (*including head of the committee*)
- \* university or college teacher
- \* teacher with first or second attestation
- \* at least 5 years of teaching practice

## Second attestation

- \* head of the committee is appointed by the Ministry
- \* 5 members (*including head of the committee*)
- \* university or college teacher
- \* teacher with second attestation
- \* at least 10 years of teaching practice

# Thanks for your attention!

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European Network on Teacher Education Policies

