

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The educational system and languages spoken in the country

The Slovak republic has about 5 million 379,455 thousand inhabitants (census of May 2001) out of which 85.8% speak Slovak and the rest of population uses Hungarian (9.7%), Ukrajinian (0.2%), Czech (0.8%), Ruthenian (0.4%) as their mother tongues. There is also Polish, Bulgarian, German, Serbian and Moravian minority. The numbers of native speakers of these minorities were not officially published yet. In Slovakia, there are 1.7% of Roma people using the Roma language. In fact a number of speakers among them speak two or three minority languages apart from Slovak and so the census figures reflect languages the inhabitants declared to speak.

The Slovak Republic has an ambition to become a full member of the EU and thus to add its cultural heritage to the existing culture within Europe. Joining the EU will be possible only when the country meets necessary political requirements. In the area of education the focus is not on legislative changes but on enhancement of the quality in governmental educational policy. Since the "Velvet Revolution" in 1989 there were two attempts to bring about systematic changes in the educational system but none of them has been completely implemented due to the changes of governments.

In 1999 the latest government introduced a nationwide debate on educational reform between theoretical experts as well as the common teachers, education administrators, decision makers and foreign experts. The Project Millenium- the outcome of this debate was approved by the government, unfortunately without necessary funding. The document covers only philosophy and pedagogical assumptions rather than financial allotments. The analysis of the current situation in the Slovak Republic has shown that expenses of the state given to the educational system and science represent 3.7% of GDP (the EU average is 6.3% and member states of OECD have an average of 6.0%). Financing of the schools and educational facilities from the state budget is decreasing dramatically. In tertiary level, for example, state contributions to education per student amounted to only 38% of 1990s. In spite of two successive budget increases in 2000 and 2001, the situation is perceived as unsatisfactory as financial means represent only 50% of average school budgets of OECD member states.

The average length of schooling in the EU countries is 17.4 years whereas in Slovakia it is 14.6 years. Here are some figures (statistics are from the school year 1999/2000) that might be relevant to the assessment of current situation in the country. There are 2482, out of them 307 with minority language instruction, state run 9-year-primary schools out of which 92 are run by the church and 4 are private attended by 672,042 pupils. Number of teachers is 40,950 (83.4% are women).

4-year-secondary grammar schools are attended by 76,662 students. Number of staff is represented by 3,165 full-time teachers (73.4% are women) and 1,000 free lance teachers (among them are mostly language teachers and teachers of informatics)379 4-year-secondary technical schools out of which 27 are private and 11 church run attended by 99,070 students taught by10,184 teachers (68.6%are women) and 3069 free lance teachers. There are 3-year secondary vocational schools out of which 10 are private and 5are run by the church. They are attended by 102,896 students and a few of them take 4th year to do state leaving exam. The number of teachers is 5,882 (65.1% women)5,609 vocational training instructors (40% women) and 1,034 free lance teachers. There are 112 secondary schools with the minority language of instruction.

Tertiary institutions are represented by 22 higher educational facilities all of them are university type of institutions, only one of them is private, 2 are military and one belongs to the police force, are attended by 88,192 students in full-time studies and 29,103 extra- mural studies, which represent 30% of age cohort. Number of all university teachers is 9,049 full-time teachers (38% women) and 2,085 free lance teachers. Strong points of current university studies are their scientific potential and language competence of university teachers to join international projects. Weak points are qualification structure (approximately 1.000 professors, 2.000 associate professors, 5.500 senior lecturers).

To sum up, out of 1,231 million children, pupils and students which represent 23% of population of the SR, 13.1% attend kindergartens, 54.6% basic schools, 16.8% secondary grammar schools, 37.6% secondary technical schools and 44.0% secondary vocational schools.(81.4% of secondary school leavers do school leaving examination) and 7.2% universities. The number of university students, in comparison with other EU countries, is very low. In a survey carried out among teachers of all types of schools 70.1% subjects claimed that conditions at work, educational climate and achieved results were much worse than those before 1989. The remuneration of teachers is the lowest in the national economy from10-20% lower than in other professions and in comparison with OECD the index of average salary to GDP it is by 60% lower. The teaching load compared to the EU or OECD member states is much higher, too.

Because of unsatisfactory financial situation at school, a lot of teachers leave school for different jobs and about 34.8% of lessons are taught by unqualified staff at primary and secondary levels, either by specialists without specific pedagogical training or teachers whose major or minor is similar but not exactly the required one to teach certain subjects. The situation in the area of languages is similar, but unlike other subjects, languages are often taught by undergraduate students of language. The quality of knowledge of both primary and secondary school leavers, especially in accuracy in speaking and writing, accuracy in pronunciation, listening comprehension and cohesion in writing is deteriorating. The survey of teacher status shows that 25% of teachers are burnt out, 50% suffer from high level of cholesterol and 40% have neurotic symptoms. On the other hand, 90% of teachers would like to take up courses on how to cope with stress. Recruitment of FL teachers is seldom based on competitive examination because the teaching staff needs, are in general, higher than staff supply. Along with low social and economic status of teacher`s job this method of recruitment is inappropriate. Since it is legally binding, it is organised, though it has only a formal character. By and large, applicant teacher job interviews, do not reveal much of a competitive edge because of above mentioned reasons.

Situation might be slightly improved ever since the Act on Civil and Public Service has been

enforced. Teachers in general and tertiary teachers in particular are entitled to pay rises. Principles of remuneration at HEI give incentives to obtain higher academic and scientific distinctions.

1.2 Modern languages in pre-primary, primary and secondary education

Learning languages has become inevitable and certain languages tend to be quite fashionable. At pre-primary level children visit kindergarten where the language of instruction is Slovak, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, German. As for foreign languages parents showing interest may be offered FLT which they have to pay for.

Languages at primary level of education are taught to pupils 3 lessons per week starting at the age of 10 or 11. Their teachers should have graduated from university teacher training institutions but since the social and political changes after the Fall of communism the appropriate training of a sufficient number of teachers has been a major concern. For years the first compulsory foreign language taught has been Russian so the primary education faces even today problems with lack of staff. Most in-service language teachers of Russian underwent special language training and other language teachers underwent retraining in order to adapt to the new requirements. Mostly preferred languages, especially by parents, are English and German, then comes French, there are some schools that offer Italian and Spanish as a result of qualified staff at school or as a second foreign language that becomes compulsory with the same number of lessons two years later at limited number of schools with extensive language instruction. Understaffed schools may start a language programme with a permission of the Ministry of education later. Second language programme starting at the age of 13 is available under provision of schools (usually with free lance teachers) as an optional subject in the framework of out-of-school activities.

At secondary level in general, education stream provided by “Gymnasium”(secondary grammar school) has two foreign languages as compulsory subjects, at secondary vocational school and secondary technical schools it is only one foreign language. There is an exception to this rule in the curriculum of secondary catering schools, secondary business schools or commercial schools, where two languages are also compulsory. In most EU countries the number of hours allocated to FL is less than that allocated to mathematics and the mother tongue but by the age of 16 it is the other way round. In Slovakia the allocated number of lessons in mainstream schools is without change. More FL lesson could have students of language oriented programmes and some individuals who make a choice of two optional languages in the 3rd and 4th school year. Foreign language can be, but need not be taken in the final examinations. Languages are one of the possible optional subjects for grammar school students who plan to study languages at universities and their weekly amount of lessons may reach 10 lessons in two foreign languages. State average in allocated time to FLT in school year 1998/99 was 10%. There are few schools throughout the country where other school subjects are taught in a foreign language. They belong to so called “8-year- gymnasium” and bilingual secondary grammar schools based on bilateral cooperation between Slovakia and Austria. The breakdown of bilingual “gymnasia” as for the languages and regions is as follows: English - 2 in Zilina region and Bratislava region, French - 5 in Bratislava region, Zilina region, Kosice region, Trencin region, Banska Bystrica region, Spanish - 4 Bratislava region, Nitra region, Zilina, Kosice region, Italian - 1 in Bratislava region, German - 2 in Bratislava region and Presov region.

School leavers of all three types of secondary grammar schools - standard, 8-year-gymnasium

and bilingual gymnasium represent potential students of universities. Their language orientation is as follows: English - state run schools 58,828, private schools 2,547, church schools - 8,969. French - state run schools 6,661; private schools 82, church run schools 902. German- state schools 45,991; private schools 2,281; church schools 6,5523. Russian - state schools 1,833; private schools 117; church schools 113. Spanish - state schools 1,567; private 61; church 61. Italian - state run schools 215, private schools 36, church schools 343. Other languages - state schools 801; private schools 86, church schools 753.

The main problem of teaching languages lies with language provision. As pupils change school after primary level, there is not sufficient continuity in the attained level from primary education so that it can be enhanced during secondary education. In theory, pupils may devote to one language 8 years and their knowledge and command of language may be very good. Unfortunately, pupils are often forced to take up course at a lower level or switch to a different language and start as beginners because the school cannot provide them with the appropriate course. (the latter is the case with French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian) Another problem arises with textbooks. At the moment Slovakia is an emerging market for British publishers and a wide range of textbooks with different vocabulary and grammatical system is being offered, which does not support continuous learning. Secondary and primary schools were involved in preparation of educational standards harmonised with the EU standards. State approved standards are binding for primary level foreign language programmes and should be attained at the end of primary schooling. The standards for secondary schools are under preparation. The process of learning and teaching of foreign languages will be hopefully improved when government measures (6773/88 and 991/99) introducing quality awareness as a motivational course at both primary and secondary schools, will be fully implemented.

1.3. The Higher Education Language Provision

Tertiary language education expects intermediate level of knowledge attained at secondary school and offers a wide variety of programmes combined with non-language orientated degree courses. In Slovakia, students can take up degree courses in which one course - major or minor is linguistic and the other one is non-linguistic. These programmes reflect the demand for specialists with very a good command of a language besides the non-linguistic expertise. Admission to HEI is based on the results of the Entrance exam, final number of the accepted students follows "numerus clausus" approved by the university senate. The Act on HEI enforced as of April 1, 2002 referring to the Constitution does not allow study fees.

Since budget restrictions for HE students are the order of the day, Slovak HEIs tend to concentrate on what they consider to be their most important priority i.e. the academic preparation. The language teachers, having an employment contract with the language departments at each faculty, pose a threat as rival claimants for a diminishing money supply. Having achieved two or three credits in the first two years of study students are left to organise their language learning as best as they can. Even though Slovakia joined the Bologna Process by signing it, HEIs still need to implement the process into their programmes. Another problem arises with the number of students in a classroom. The size of groups in mainstream faculty courses is usually much higher than that in language courses, which naturally leads to further petty squabbles among teachers.

Special institutions set up quite recently, in the time span of 5 to 10 years, the Language Centres,

established at the two biggest universities, run tailor made courses for scientists, medical students, focus on special skills and they organise also brush up courses, general language courses, language for specific purposes. All these courses are financed by participants and the course fees are not competitive in comparison with mushrooming language schools for the general public. The recent task of the Language Centres is to perform General State Final Examination. Every student is allowed to sit for this kind of examination and the exam certifies the advanced level of command of a particular language. Although, language studies carry relatively little weight in the curricula of non-linguistic disciplines and their focus is on the acquisition of terminology of the respective specialisation and the comprehension of professional texts, the language competence is of increasing urgency in all disciplines and students' awareness is quite high. After finishing the compulsory language module, usually until the fourth term, the students visit some kind of language course not to lose fluency or they take up another language preparation as beginners.

Languages are taught to students in diversified forms. They may be chosen with reference to achieved level as a compulsory subject usually with 3 lessons during the term, the average number of lessons to obtain a credit is 210 lessons for all non-linguistic disciplines. The number of languages varies from university to university, or depends on faculty or department. The highest compulsory number of language courses to be taken up is three. Optional language modules can be combined with other subjects.

The crucial aspect in the educational system is to change the mentality of teachers. They have been taught to obey rules and orders and lost the ability to make their own decisions. Now it is quite strange for them to assume responsibility for their own decisions, to change their beliefs, values and expectations. The situation with language teachers is slightly different. They represent the most flexible part of each school's staff because new social, political and economic conditions in the society and the local community required a lot of adopting, retraining, management change and further education and they either coped with the load or they left school and started working elsewhere for other companies as translators, personal assistants or senior clerks. In the analysis of positive changes in the education carried out over the period of 10 years after the fall of communism we must highlight :

- the indoctrination of the curricular contents has been removed
- new types of school based on alternative pedagogical theories have been established and diversified the existing school system
- new types of school management have been implemented, private and church schools have been set up
- school curriculum gave the teacher and the local community the right to adopt 30% of the primary and secondary school subject contents
- new textbooks have been introduced to some subjects, especially languages and there is a variety of textbooks available either written by Slovak authors or translations
- new bilingual secondary schools have been established that provide not only a different form of study, some or all subjects in the respective language, but also enabled native teachers to join the staff and contribute to the change of the educational atmosphere, regulation, concepts and new types of certificates valid throughout Europe
- a number of optional subjects among them also languages, have become a part of compulsory curriculum
- universities regained academic rights and freedoms

- new pedagogical documents taking into account cultural, environmental, ethnic and religious differences among people have been introduced to schools
- two career promotion exams for teachers have been put into effect
- success rate and employment rate of university graduates is very high

There are still some negative aspects that keep lasting through:

- the proportion of educated and skilled people at economically active age with tertiary education is only 10% as of 2000 (in the EU it is 20-30% , OECD 14.1% data from 1996)
- the number of secondary school leavers in the national economy is 69.1% data from 2000 compared to the EU 80% is inappropriate
- the proportion of secondary school leavers enrolled into universities (22% in the SR and 30-50%) in the EU is very low
- diversification in secondary school types in proportion of students is not supporting market economy goals and it is represented by 16.8% secondary grammar schools, 37.4% secondary technical schools and 44.0% secondary vocational schools
- unemployment rate of school leavers in the year 2000 was as follows: basic school leavers 16.5%, secondary vocational school without state leaving examination 35.89%, secondary vocational school leavers with state leaving examination 16.38%, secondary grammar school leavers 11.27%, secondary technical school leavers 32.48% and university graduates 3.98% and it requires to start special schemes by the government.
- there are too many specialisations at universities and they cannot be compared to UNESCO-ISCED (in technical specialisation the supposed reduction will be 45% and in humanities 30%)
- HE institutions started systematic programmes of further development and desperately need structural changes in order to get harmonised with the EU standards
- the number of students in classrooms is too high, with the exception of language subjects

New trends in the formal schooling, either already achieved or proposed to be achieved by the Ministry of Education until the year 2010

from	to
broad encyclopaedic knowledge	complex ability to acquire knowledge
passive role of a student	active, creative and autonomous role
uniformity	pluralism and diversity
authoritarian teaching style	humanistic instruction
orientation to the average student	differentiated and individualised instruction
competitiveness among students	co-operation among students
isolated subjects	integrated programme
individual assessment of knowledge orally	group assessment by standardized testing
stress on discipline and obedience	accept and respect for student`s personality
dominance of teacher`s instruction	dominance of facilitator`s instruction role
preference of left hemisphere	convergence of both hemispheres
stable administratively set up classes	goal-centred natural grouping of students

In the past there was a tradition to provide postgraduate education in specialised institutes. All of them were budgetary and they were dissolved after the revolution. New training courses were tailored by PHARE projects and within foreign subsidiaries corporate culture was harmonised with headquarters by foreign educational agencies. The most striking progress was made in languages in non-formal education. Many middle-aged specialists needed to improve or acquire new language competence and the offices organised training on the job. New language schools, mostly private, ran courses for various levels of language learners, but they offered predominantly general language and general skills. A lot of non-governmental organisations and interest associations came to Slovakia e.g. Education for Democracy, Peace Corps /finishing their mission in 2002, Peace to People, French Institute, Berlitz School, The British Council, The Caledonian School, The Canadian Institute, City University in three towns/Bratislava, Poprad and Trencin with around 2000 students/ among many others, to start new projects. One of projects concentrated on teaching languages. Most of the volunteers were not professional teachers but the opportunity to speak to natives was encouraging. New and booming opportunities brought about a lot of new demands for publishing new dictionaries, textbooks, etc.

In the years of the old regime access to authentic sources written or spoken was limited and the ones available had to be in compliance with official political doctrine. The access to cable television gave rise to new waves of language learners especially the German language. Slovak national television and one commercial station started stereo transmission with the original voice on the films, which supported language learning considerably. BBC radio programmes opened a new Slovak edition with several daily programmes among them language learning programmes. Number of foreign magazines and newspapers began to be affordable. Slovak National Publishing House enlarged and diversified number of magazines for language learners with Slovak explanations. These can be bought at news stalls.

Most of secondary school students subscribe to one of the existing periodicals and use them in classes. A lot of university student travel on exchange programmes to study, e.g. number of students' mobilities within SOCRATES was 703 in the years 2000/2001. and 67 teachers within the preparatory visits and study exchanges in Comenius and 48 teachers within the framework of Lingua B.

A large number of school leavers travel to Britain, Canada, France, Italy or the USA and Australia to do voluntary work or au-pair services. Real contacts and meeting real needs creates new challenges for language learning and teaching. Foreign realia started surrounding everyday life and their names permeated in daily language of the whole population. Foreigners staying in Slovakia have a regular weekly published in English and German. Dailies and weekly economic papers publish in English and German their editorials, news flashes or round-ups.

CERCLES multinational branch recently started functioning for both the Slovak and the Czech republics in Slovakia. This professional affiliation for university teachers could create a coordinating body to discuss all language teaching at universities. particular attention will be drawn to the Bologna process, Diploma Supplement, ELP and The Common European Framework of Reference. To enhance quality of education, Slovak educational institutions need more transparency, strategic partnership of all responsible bodies in education and dialogue of all

participants. Mechanisms to enhance quality and its control requirements will be introduced under the Act on Higher Education.

Last but not least Slovak curricula for primary schools and 4-year-gymnasia do not underscore autonomous learning and 8-year-gymnasia, do not see learning languages in view of personal development. Secondary vocational schools on the other hand have the objectives based primarily on professional development. At the moment there is a public discussion about educational and personal standards to be achieved and measured by A-Levels where The Common European Framework of Reference criteria will be the focal point. An exam in FL will be a compulsory part of A levels by 2006. Teachers can realise much more sensitively that there is an increased need for discussion, higher motivation to tailored courses, innovated methods and last but not least necessity to adapt teaching materials and change graduates' skills profiles with the view of their employability.

2. Description and analysis of quality measures related to defining and designing courses and programmes in the area of languages

Due to the increasing autonomy of individual HE institutions throughout Slovakia the emphasis is placed on differently structured curricula based on a literary, pedagogical and linguistic bases. Many aspects of grammar are incorporated in general, related to linguistics and apart from this approach several other subjects are being introduced, namely applied linguistics, socio-linguistics and comparative linguistics. Study of the history, literature and culture of the target language country is considered an essential part of the training although future job requirements of teachers are not facts-based language but speaking based language. Specific methods of work are used in teaching of foreign languages. It is usually required that a thesis has an empirical-experimental character, but the historical method is also used, and recently the seminars, projects and theses that verify in practice influential and various development activities, programmes, have been highly appreciated. The students are required to complete all subjects and pass the prescribed exams (oral, written, combined oral/ written, practical and combined oral/ practical) and credits as a condition of advancement. Teachers may obtain their qualification exclusively through master's study at higher education institution. For the reason, the study is completed by a state exam, which also consists of the defence of a diploma thesis. For a Master Degree in English for instance, the examinations will consist of:

- Theoretical basics of pedagogy,
- English language
- English and American literature (19th and 20th century)
- American civilisation
- Computers in teaching English
- Theory of interpreting
- Didactics of English language
- Didactics of English literature
- Morphology and Syntax of English grammar

Students have to pass the practical and theoretical parts of the pedagogical training. In the 3rd and 4th year, the students complete continuous teaching practice in training schools and in the 5th year, the continuous 4-week- teaching practice. Within the framework of university cooperation and with the support of various projects, a still relatively small part of students complete the study stays abroad (consequently not compulsory).

Slovakia lags behind in the use of information and communicative technologies in foreign language teaching. Time spent in the target language country is of particular importance. It allows future language teachers to hone their linguistic skills and expose themselves to a culture other than their own. As regards the country of destination future teachers mostly seek to go to the countries of the EU for financial reasons, the lengths of the visits varies considerably. Popular concept of "language assistantships" i.e. an academic year spent in a primary or secondary school assisting local teachers in teaching the language is completely unknown here. Universities prepare exchange programmes for students in the framework of Socrates mobility, some public agencies in charge of

international relations and private bodies organise or finance periods spent abroad.

Teachers trying to dispense prescribed learning objectives by curricula must acquire new knowledge and develop new methodological skills. A foreign language teacher must not only be proficient in the target language and knowledgeable about cultural aspects of the language, s/he is also expected to be familiar with the countries where the language is spoken and be attuned to the implications of communication that consists of exchanges between the culture of students and the foreign culture. S/he has to transmit this knowledge, must be highly conversant with the psychological and pedagogical mechanisms involved in the FL acquisition. Although grammatical knowledge is often generally accepted as a means of achieving communication proficiency, Slovak curricula do not explicitly formulate objectives for grammatical learning, they set communication objectives in four basic skills that implicitly require the achievement of a certain level of grammatical proficiency. The four language skills are given equal treatment in terms of priority. The role and importance of grammar is subordinated to communicatively-related objectives.

There are a few elective language courses aimed at some or all student population irrespective of faculty, and usually they are provided with Language for specific purposes, in the first year they concentrate on general academic language and in the second year on specific subject-based knowledge language. The main emphasis is put on presentation skills and academic writing skills. Teaching of non-linguistic disciplines in a foreign language or on a bilingual basis is provided by several universities in Slovakia and students from abroad who participate in exchange programs or pay for their studies are provided with Slovak courses to adopt to new conditions of living easily. Some departments give seminars or lectures in a foreign language, which belong to rare instances with limited rules for applying into common practice for it is not in compliance with the Act on the state language. A course run in foreign language is not suitable for sophomores because their level of linguistic competence, especially in terminology, is not sufficient to meet the programme's objectives. It can be run only later and it would require interdepartmental co-operation. Most of the interviewed heads of departments at universities expressed their view against a centralised language department umbrelling the needs of other departments, claiming that faculty itself represents an enough diversified entity to cover existing terminology.

Professors and associate professors will get permanent contracts after being successful in three tenders for the position, other contracts are due to prolongation in a span of three years. All language teachers should comply with the following criteria: possess a university degree, be a language teacher and be experienced in this field. There are also native speakers teaching, but some of them do not have a teaching qualification. This relatively stable staff is vital to the harmonious development of language programmes, the maintenance of a high standard of teaching and to the creation of a good reputation for the team as a whole. On the other hand, a relatively high percentage of women teaching languages as opposed to male counterparts in non-linguistic programmes, sometimes creates a false impression that teaching languages to students is not really an academic subject. Obtaining a teaching post at university usually goes, hand in hand, with research activities and dissemination of acquired knowledge. Foreign language competences should be a prerequisite of the prolongation of employment contracts of all university staff, including administrative ones. Language teachers could organise special refreshment courses for their colleagues and thus create special links in interpersonal and needs' analyses. Constantly updated programme by teachers, at the same time integrated into research underpinned by the opportunity to follow the latest developments in the speech area, may lead to usefulness and

relevance of the programme.

Objectives to change the current situation might be as follows:

Objective 1: Incorporate linguistic and cultural trends and latest developments in the speech area into teaching-learning process.

Objective 2: Integrate language teachers participation in research into subject related research in order to disseminate subject knowledge into language courses.

Objective 3: Enlarge language provision at the universities and make it attractive for pre-graduate students in higher years of their programme using tailored content and higher credits dotation.

Regular exchange of information on situation in the teaching-learning process with other countries, strengthens the confidence in methodology used, in those teachers who were exposed to an exchange programme, or to new target students. Since teachers represent a very highly socially and professionally dynamic group, a change in one member of the group leads to a change in others. Teachers tend to imitate each other for one simple reason – each of them strives to be successful. The same principle could work in closer cooperation between subject teachers and language teachers, providing it already exists. Anyway, this kind of change represents one important objective of the quality enhancement measure. Speaking of QE, we cannot forget to mention status enhancement too. Here the status of both types of teachers is relatively low with respect to their career profiles, where the status of the language teacher is even lower, with one and the same employer.

HEIs should create a platform where interdepartmental cooperation could enable language teachers to join the projects of their subject teaching colleagues by preparation of bilingual glossaries or encyclopaedias as research project's outputs. On the other hand, language teachers, especially the non-philologists, should be encouraged to increase their qualifications by obtaining higher scientific or academic distinctions. Obviously it is inevitable to alter some criteria for submitting research projects in languages focusing more on practical outputs rather than setting criteria such as contribution to the fundamental research methodology and production and development of new theories. These criteria must be incorporated into the EU projects guidelines. The life at HE institution will result in intercultural curriculum, usefulness, accuracy and appropriacy of which will be reviewed in everyday situations. Mobility, on the other hand, will bring students who will not be at the same level as their peers and they will have to meet the same educational objectives. These real life situations will lead to wider application of European standards for the level of language knowledge of the mobility students, who might be accepted to the programme, at some stage. Coming to another country exposes a learner to immersion learning, s/he will need a specially designed language class to make faster progress. Heterogeneous students with different language competence will require meeting different needs but unified objectives, and in the long run, this will lead to introducing new methods in teaching FL. One of the main reasons will become an economical way to reach objectives, materials being brought in line with these objectives and last but not least, differentiating what kind of knowledge and skills should be trained and in which way, productively or receptively.

In teacher's job there is a lot of feedback information coming from top-down and bottom-up exchange. The age group of young adults is in their identity development stage focused on taking sharp, unambiguous attitude to evaluation of teacher's professional and human profile. Added to

this, some of university teachers are not used to this kind of constant response in the process of teaching and are apt to take it as criticism. The whole university teaching climate should strive to change this kind of educational environment. University management should support this QE measure by giving higher incentives to those, who are ready to propose innovative programmes, course designs and teach creatively introducing thus TQM principles into university life. Interdepartmental cooperation will entail necessary conditions. On the other hand, all university bodies, the Senate and the Council, ought to support the QE notion.

Former communist HE institutions including universities, desperately need benchmarking with western universities and HE institutions to look for new reference of behaviour and achievement patterns. A part of benchmarking process can be across the EU. Recognised language certificates could secure unified acknowledgement of progress made, self-evaluation and mobility. Continually updated curricula and language instruction organised in close correspondence with the curricula, represent an open, yet binding content. In Slovakia, it is vitally important to enlarge university foreign language teaching to higher terms. Present model finishes with languages for special purposes at the end of 4th term when the subject knowledge of future specialists is far too weak to have a real discussion and real professional and communicative needs. These become sharp enough in the second half of their studies, after the 6th or 7th term.

With the EU mobility, hopefully, mobility of teachers will be on the rise, too bringing more well qualified and yet native speakers to the countries where their mother tongue will be taught as a foreign language. It will create a really innovative learning environments with some portions of immersion learning for target speakers as well. Naturally, QE process will not be ensured by infrequent foreign language instruction. This process must be managed and planned in detail. Vacancies sought, will have to be advertised in advance and multilingualism might become a striking feature of the inside life of the HE institutions. In the area of languages writing seminar papers and theses in FL will become more often demanded than ever before. This kind of requirements does not expect people only talking shop. On the contrary, small talk on any kind of subject and general knowledge, would prevail. Another important problem will arise, namely, how to reach a balance between intensive phases of language instruction and/or diluted and/or intentional/random learning. In order to achieve QE continuous feedback from students and graduates, outside members of the Council, from companies, local authorities, 3rd sector organisations as well as local community will be needed.

It is unavoidable that the process of QE requires some extra budgetal strain. The process itself is represented by two vital factors- time and money- and per se requires a thoughtful and a well structured monitoring. In the post-communist countries, however, this kind of strain might seem unbearable. In order to achieve the target, a new prioritization of current management objectives must be met. All achievements of excellence must not only be noted but also rewarded. Speaking of rewards, they need not be necessarily of financial character. They could represent any kind of moral stimulation. The main criterion of the selection should be an answer whether this reward encourages enthusiasm to teach, learn, work for, manage, graduate from this particular university or HE institution.

Universities should prepare highly qualified translators and interpreters and, on the other hand, make students responsive to multilingual and multicultural working environment of the future. It is the university, which can create conditions for promotion of a specific language and it could be

beyond the continuity with the former educational levels. University can increase preservation of a specific language by reflecting on its socio/linguistic background and preparing not only teachers of that language, but also translators, interpreters and professionals in non-philological subjects needed in the particular region speaking that target language.

The area of languages should equip every student with one basic need, i.e. to take part in life-long and life-wide education and link his/her autonomous learning to institutionalised one. It can only be achieved if the pregraduate student is frequently exposed to appropriate resources, and his/her positive motivation to life-long learning is enforced. S/he has not only academic and professional requirements, but also linguistic ones.

The above mentioned measures will result in a new demand to amalgamate in certain domains to impede interdisciplinarity. Languages will become at the same time objects, instruments, resources, cultural heritage. Out of 225 existing European languages, the universities should select the appropriate ones apart from official languages in the country, unofficially admitted English as professionally preferred foreign language, and anticipate the items in an array of languages offered. Suffice is to say, that students' competences will be only partial. As an example of good practice the most frequent example is in a proposal to require compulsory English language with some kind of state exam, at University of Economics in Bratislava, Faculty of management of Comenius University in Bratislava, Agricultural University in Nitra, etc. In Slovakia one of the most important need is that of pooling the expertise with western universities as well as with former socialist ones. Society needs a lot of intentionally prepared academic and practical discussions about multilingualism of European citizens. The idea of language portfolio and a campaign to introduce it to schools of all types will be needed. Currently prepared school leavers' examination and educational standards take into account classification of language competencies and skills approved by the Council of Europe, nevertheless, individual language passport with examples of pieces of writing and registered level is unknown to educationalists and academics. One of the most important tasks in the university environment and interdisciplinary cooperation can be identified in elaborating partial competencies for less widely used languages. We can expect that with the enlargement process more and more teachers and especially intending teachers, will seek an opportunity to take their degree or refreshment course in a country where their target language is spoken in daily communication. In order to improve their language studies and deepen their knowledge of the culture of the countries whose language they are learning/teaching, it will be necessary to sign special agreements allowing and supporting this approach.

The Bologna process gives rise to the establishment of specialised language policy administrator at the level of university management. Similar post is that one of a credit system administrator recently created at faculties in the SR. New tasks related to the EU mobility and already signed documents require more systematic staff development. Changed methods and processes also suppose financial support. By and large, languages are not given appropriate psychohygienic attention. When we check the timetable at separate faculties, the result is the same everywhere. Languages are taught in large inhomogeneous groups, students are provided only with 2-4 lessons per week at the beginning of their studies, during the first two or four terms, language training is not organised in specially equipped rooms, moreover the rooms are in many instances suitable only for classical lectures where group work or communication in small groups is not required and during language training it is impossible to use them differently, which leads to ineffective methodology of teaching and learning. Low reputation of a language teaching career

also contributes to low interest in innovative methods requiring certain lay-out of the classrooms or special equipment. Especially new forms of learning- tandem learning, autonomous learning are methods that are promoted by foreign experts but since they need certain investments and constant cooperation with other universities, they have not been tried in Slovak conditions yet. Paradoxically, students coming from experimental secondary schools, private or church secondary schools with foreign investments, or an active headteacher and initiatives of Parents' Board, meet far poorer equipment at the state run universities, prevailing in the Slovak republic, than they were used to during their secondary education. Also, former communist countries used to cooperate more in the previous time than they do now. The law of competition and market economy is wrongly interpreted in the world of education.

Exchange of information and sharing positive ideas is a prerequisite of a university atmosphere. That is why, there should be a regular meeting of staff teaching languages, including native speakers employed at universities, with a structured agenda. Teachers should be exempt from their duties so that they could get involved. The real problem could be the travel expenses for some departments as they have very tight budgets. National agency of Socrates could join the meeting, along with representatives of foreign language institutes operating in the country. The organisational duties could be guaranteed by National Committee of CERCLES.

Deans of Studies and other external evaluators nominated ad hoc by the Rector's Conference should carry out teaching quality assessment once in an academic year. Benchmarking against other universities should be introduced soon, nationwide. Currently there is one private organisation carrying out first activities in compliance with the Act on HEI requiring so called complex accreditation of HEIs.

Slovak teachers are not exempt from their duties during the free period and they are entitled to 40 days of holidays so unlike most of other countries colleagues, they are used to compiling materials, taking part in courses and seminars. Even foreign language institutes schedule them for this time of the year. To set up a self-access centre and joint publishing of teaching materials would require special financial allocations and interdepartmental cooperation of librarian services, maintenance service and language advising.

3. Description and analysis of quality measures related to the process of teaching and learning.

There is no doubt that communicative approach unanimously adopted in teaching methodology of Slovak educational institutions in foreign languages, contributes to learning group dynamics. Yet we must mention other quality factors that make a difference in the learning outcomes, namely

- a. Quality of Teaching theory knowledge s/he has acquired during the pre-graduate training
- b. Connections s/he has made between the theory and classroom realities
- c. Constantly updated knowledge, skills and methodology of teaching. Particular emphasis should be placed here on teacher`s updating foreign language skills and counselling techniques. Since there is no established UNI-staff-development scheme in Slovakia the only used method of quality control are feedback questionnaires. These have rather informative than formative impact. They are not explicitly related to promotion of teachers.
- d. New learning environments, resource centres and self/access centres being slowly, but not exclusively for language classes, set-up either at some secondary schools or at private language schools, unfortunately not at the universities for the time being. They shift the emphasis from contact hours to learner –centred methods.
- e. Teachers` raised awareness of similarities and differences in physical manifestation of emotional states of students and those of their own, giving and receiving positive feedback based on giving evidence in a non-judgmental, factual way.
- f. Teachers acting as autonomous learners themselves, not only in the area of languages but also in the areas they cooperate with other departments. If they fit subject knowledge acquisition into their personal motivational structure, they will serve a good example to students to do the same in their future jobs.
- g. Teacher`s implicit concept of teaching does not only serve as a reflection continuum enhancing quality of teaching, it is at the same time the long term model of professional behaviour to all the students.
- h. Balance between predictable safety and unexpected variety in the process of teaching is more difficult to look for than in other subject classes. It requires specific linguistic skills to be equipped with. Enjoyed language subtlety focused on style, perception of appropriacy and connotation inferences with mother tongue could be an indispensable tool to enhance quality of both language production and language reception.
- i. Although the main tool for language classes is verbal communication, non-verbal communication during the class must not be neglected. It might lead to improved empathising and visualising skills. When teachers perceive mismatch between skills and production, identify gaps sharing different perspective, so they could seek for contextual explanations, uncover group`s feelings and build rapport by anticipating students` responses. This aspect of class management may result in breaking students` territoriality, and trust may be built, group cohesion may be maintained and enhanced.
- j. Quality of reflective habit in the teaching activity that has become a second nature of a FL teacher. Mirroring, thinking over and modelling carried out both, inside the classroom, with the students and forcing them to establish a reflective habit themselves and outside the classroom, with direct motivation and selected strategy to enhance quality of the next lesson.

All mentioned factors contribute to the most important factor in quality enhancement of the teaching-learning process, namely, that a teacher should care more about students` learning that

about his/her own teaching skills, strategies, communication and assessment. During language classes, unlike other theoretical subjects within a HE programme, students develop special age and status related behaviour, they become more keen on learning, there is bigger potential for losing face the older the student gets. On the other hand, they bring new experience into class, have much longer attention span and are less disruptive than younger learners. As for learning style they can assume responsibility for their own learning and are more autonomous, too.

Changed political situation in the Slovak republic, when exchange programmes could take place, created new motivation and learning objectives. Out of 5 traditional learning techniques in the SR most preferred are communicative language teaching, task-based learning and grammar-translation approaches, whereas audiolingualism and PPP – presentation, practice, production approach went out of fashion. Lexical and discovery approaches are used optionally, especially in HE classes. All these techniques have been used in different classroom realities, it is quite common in Slovak HE that language classes are provided in lecture rooms without appropriate seating fostering direct communication, where a high number of students does not allow real two-way communication. This is especially frequent at technical universities.

Another contraproductive tendency to a European "can approach in FLT" is represented by Slovak methodological tradition in FL initial training, to depend heavily on accuracy and appropriacy of production which leads to undermined self-confidence of learners. Most of the students are intermediate or upper-intermediate and their LSP classes are focussed on receptive knowledge. Each faculty has usually own language department for all students majoring in some subject areas and teachers tend to specialise in certain terminology within particular fields. The same grouping of teachers is typical for one Language centre, institute organising the language classes for the whole university. After the fall of communism more authentic materials have been used in classes then ever before and the exposure to foreign language realia is much wider than ever before. The access to the Internet is extremely fostering advantages to learn English. This atmosphere and material conditions create an important motivational element to knowledge transfer and become an external quality enhancement criterion, too.

Integration activities of the Slovak republic also expand options to internal quality enhancement criteria based on new courses. Within Socrates programme there are several JEP actions that create with foreign universities and institutions new programmes added to the existing ones e.g. The Central European Training and Research Centre in spatial planning at Faculty of Architecture, Slovak University of Technology, European studies for civil servants at Comenius University, ESPESIT- distant education activities at Kosice Technical University Language department, PROQUA at University of P.J. Safarik in Kosice, STANAG – unified skills of military officials in cooperation with NATO and Military Academy of M.R. Stefanik in Kosice. Comenius University Senate has approved establishment of a new Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences that represents a new idea of designing university programmes taking into account euro-dimension, employability and European University Area.

Current material problems of Slovak universities give sometimes rise to mixed messages as newest methodologies in FLT are concerned. To put it bluntly, communicative approach requires not only different seating but different quality of knowledge of the communicators. The language classes are at the beginning of a university programme when students do not know many facts from their prospective major and neither do their language teachers. Since there are no real communication needs on both sides, what they actually experience is communication per se. Here is the breeding ground for interdepartmental cooperation and programme innovation.

There are several programmes for students run by Slovak teachers in a foreign language. Although this is a viable way how to attract foreign students to take their full time study at one of Slovak universities, when visited by Slovak students the real communication needs are not saturated. HE institution official in the SR should initiate an amendment to work force measures concerning mobility allowing foreign tutors easier procedure to obtain work and residential permits. Implementing new measures requires changed autoevaluation process at the universities as well as external evaluation. The credit system and its coordinators at each Slovak Faculty should pay attention to incorporating different level language courses throughout the programmes. Learning languages must not be replaced by other subjects as if the process of retention is interrupted, it requires much energy and time to renew. Future teachers of foreign languages should have more managerial subjects in their programme. The role of a teacher in future society is changing dramatically and this should be reflected in the pre-graduate preparation too. One of the changes worth mentioning is a course that has been designed for students of the Faculty of Economics at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. The Department of Professional Language Communication (up to recently the Department of Foreign Languages) does not want to lag behind the recent trends in foreign language teaching and learning. This is why the English section of the language department has designed, piloted and is now teaching a specialised course entitled Intercultural Communication in Business Practice.

This is a comprehensive three-semester course taught in English to students of the fourth and fifth year. The underlying principles for the designing and teaching of the course was the awareness of the necessity of cultural competence as part of language proficiency and the effort of ESP teachers to help students prepare for functioning in their future international business environment.

The whole course is divided into three main parts (three-semester studies) while each semester is devoted to different aspects of culture and language, cross-cultural relations and intercultural communication. The first semester is entitled *Culture of English-speaking countries*. In this part of the course we deal with what was known up to recent time as “realia” (life and institutions of English-speaking countries). But in our course we want to avoid the “old” method of teaching and presenting facts from the life of English-speaking countries. Here we intend to raise awareness of the notion of culture and various aspects of culture, such as culture values, the differences between them and their interpretation, cultural backgrounds to language, stereotypes, multicultural societies, emigration and immigration, democracy and citizenship. Through the study of American and British cultures (in this case the target cultures) the students should also be able to reflect their own culture and culture values and be able to interpret them. So the process of raising cultural awareness is the basic aim of this course.

The second semester study is called *Intercultural Communication in Business*.

The purpose of this course is to emphasise the importance of cross-cultural competence and its significance for a successful international business communication. The course demonstrates the necessity of thorough comprehension of the ways executives and managers around the world conduct business. Consequently, the topics highlighted in the syllabus are aspects of culture with focus on high-context and low-context cultures, the roles people play in various cultures, the differences in the decision-making process and sharing the overall responsibility, different perception of time and other aspects of life which characterise a specific business environment. Another major topic of the course is communication. Students discuss essentials of non-verbal as

well as verbal communication and examine in more detail possible pitfalls of either communication. Finally, another significant part of the programme is devoted to corporate culture and its possible impact on the overall success of a company and quality of working environment. Hence, participants of the course are aware of the fact that denial of cultural specificities may cause a failure to make a favourable business deal.

The third semester, i.e. the third part of the comprehensive course is *Business Negotiations in English*. The purpose of this part is to increase the knowledge of negotiation theory and develop business and language skills necessary for negotiations with foreign business partners. The syllabus of this course consists of topics, such as basic principles of negotiation, common negotiating mistakes and how to avoid them, managing the negotiation process (relationship building, agreeing procedure, exchanging information, questioning, bidding, bargaining, settling and concluding), negotiating within groups, negotiating between groups and negotiating among cultures. Contact person`s e-mail: zelenkova@ef.umb.sk

Most of methodological concerns of Slovak teachers is focused on how can an LSP course develop student`s thinking abilities using the target language. At the same HEI in Banska Bystrica at Pedagogical faculty teachers concentrate on development of thinking skills based on Bloom`s taxonomy, they apply brainstorming using B. Aberle`s acronym SCAMMPERR, train creative and critical thinking of students using De Bono`s method. Contact person`s e-mail address: dhanes@pdf.umb.sk

Another example of good practice is a learning material that originated at Slovak Technical University, Faculty of electrical engineering and information technology in Bratislava entitled ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION, STU Publishing House, Bratislava 2001, ISBN 80-227-1624-3, 171 pp by Jana Pätoprstá, Ivan Podpera, Zuzana Robinsonová, Ľubica Rovánová.

The learning material has been chosen according to the needs of professionals in Slovakia.

As mentioned above, the textbook is a learning material for a distance course that consists of:

- a kick-off seminar where course participants establish contacts with their tutors and other course participants and, where they receive all necessary information about the course.
- individual work phase when participants work by themselves on the tasks and communicate with the tutor either directly in the form of consultations or via phone or snail-mail or-mail.
- intensive course - length and intensity as well as syllabus can be modified according to participants` needs. The aim is to practice the learnt material in real life situations and to provide space for extended oral communication.

This is a textbook for professionals who need to communicate with foreign partners in written and spoken form and for time reasons cannot attend any regular course. The book has been designed for distance learning where course participants are in contact with their tutor mostly via mail. Its aim is to provide the improvement of oral professional communication (negotiations, presentations, discussion, socializing) with respect to current social conventions, as well as of the written one (business correspondence, C.V.).

The level of participants is expected to be from upper-intermediate to advanced.

The book consists of five parts: Letter Writing, Telephoning, Curriculum Vitae and Interview, Presentations, and Socializing. At the end there is an appendix - Travelling by air. Each part

contains the necessary lead-in information and tasks of several kinds: tasks that can be checked in the key at the end of each unit, self improvement tasks for individual work that are not sent to the tutor, and tasks that are sent to the tutor for evaluation. All tasks are marked with corresponding symbols that are explained in the introductory part of the book. Each unit provides a summary of material at its end.

There are several short or additional programmes that could be mentioned as an example of good practice. In my opinion among many new ones set with the objective to improve skills and future employability of graduates should be introduced the 460 teaching periods programme for secondary school leavers who become university full time students called Teaching Academic and Professional Skills to School-Leavers. Languages delivered / English and German /

Identification: Comenius University Language Centre, 81104 Bratislava, Laurinska 14

Description: A one year day-time course for school-leavers who were not successful in being admitted to a HE institution and who want to try again the following year. During their studies they go through seven subjects in a foreign language /English or German/ These are – General Language, Academic Writing, Grammar, Listening and Reading, Extensive reading- Literature and Culture, Social skills-Speaking, Conversation which are based on the ability to learn and acquire new skills and to adapt to new life and professional situations. The subjects are delivered as areas of knowledge and competence and provide the students with capacities for relevant cultural communication and active vocational, social and academic performance. Emphasis is also put on eLearning. The curriculum and even active participation in teaching is ensured by the Socrates mobility programme, it has been created by two foreign partner institutions Leeds University Language Centre, GB and Groningen University Language Centre, Holland.

The participants have all benefits of regular full time students and the curriculum has been approved by the Ministry of Education. The programme is completed by taking state final exam in English or German. The certificate is nationally accepted for holding some qualified work positions.

Conceptual background: The programme requires secondary school skills and builds them up to a much higher level of advanced students with respect to different levels of language competence at enrollment. Therefore students are streamed according to the results of entrance exams. There is a regular follow up tracing the future professional objectives and work position of all graduates. The results of employability and success rate at future attempt of enrollment are being recorded and evaluated with the Ministry of Education. This programme successfully builds self-confidence and self-instruction.

Distinguishing features: This programme concentrates on all skills and combines ESP and General Language elements. The follow up analysis has shown that students have become self-motivated learners and are able to pursue independently their own language development.

There are similar courses more or less money driven at some private schools in Banska Bystrica and Nitra, but their curriculum is built around four basic skills and graduates are given a certificate of attendance. There is no doubt that their job opportunities increase in the particular regions, but described course achieves even broader objectives.

Wider applicability: Similar course could be run at any university where there is numerus clausus for enrollment to bridge the gap between secondary and tertiary education and to foster study skills and language skills of prospective students.

Further information: contact person H.Ducakova, email address: jcuk @ rec.uniba.sk

The tertiary education in Slovakia will have to increase number of taught foreign languages. Apart from Faculty of Trade, Economic University and Faculty of Foreign Relations Matej Bel University where two or three foreign language credits are compulsory, most of the faculties run foreign language provision in several languages but each student is supposed to take just one to enhance his secondary school knowledge. Some deans of faculties even want to close down language departments in order to cut on costs, there is also a tendency at Faculty of Management in Agriculture in Nitra to compell students to do state final exam in languages organised by Nitra University Language department. The Bologna process and Slovakian integration process objectives require foreign language teaching to become more promoted than ever before. The proposal to change secondary school leaving exam in its structure and content will result in new compulsory subject at the exam- foreign language in 2004. This will have a long term impact on foreign language learning and teaching.

4. Description and analysis of quality measures relating to the training of higher education teachers and trainers working in the area of languages

Universities and similar HE institutions usually live submerged into the reproduction of educational needs facing long-term lack of staff and money. This situation determines their patterns of behaviour. It is only the comparison with other schools or new programmes, that leads to the necessity of keeping up with the latest development of the spoken language and in the field of language teaching methodology. The more varieties of languages universities offer, the more often they come into contact with new types of students (not only the age cohort but also older ones) and the more they become aware of the necessity to teach language for specific purposes in different work and leisure environments and satisfying emerging needs.

Most in-service primary and secondary teacher training takes place in Slovakia, and focuses on methodology rather than language skills. Some in-service training consists of courses of varying length, usually from one day to one week, or conferences organised by language teachers' associations, the Ministry of Education or its delegated bodies, sometimes in collaboration with the competent foreign cultural organisation, embassy or Institutes /Austrian, Goethe's, French, the British Council/.

There is a qualification exam with a thesis written by teachers to get a pay rise after the 5th year of teaching, and three Methodical Centres (nationwide) run 350-lesson- requalification courses for language teachers to enhance their quality of teaching. In the framework of Socrates - Comenius language teachers have an opportunity to correspond with partner schools in foreign language, they act as interpreters and are in charge of exchange programmes of pupils. Some pupils attend one year exchange programmes to the USA, Australia and Canada paid by their parents. There are also summer exchange programmes run by non-governmental organisations and church or interest groups and summer language classes are offered by travel agencies, too.

Continuing teacher education (in-service)

Sources of training:

The in-service training of educational staff is controlled by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic through organisations for the in-service training of education staff, that is, methodical centres, the ŠPÚ (the State Pedagogic Institute), higher education institutions and other central bodies that establish schools.

The above-mentioned organisations closely cooperate with local state administration in the area of education, namely, the departments of education and culture of regional boards and the departments of education and culture of district boards, which professionally lead and directly control (administer) schools and educational establishments in the Slovak Republic.

Basically, the in-service training of educational staff is provided by:

- Higher education institutions
- Educational organizations of the Ministry of Education of the SR (like the National Institute for Education and methodical centres)
- Schools and educational establishments

- Educational organisations of other central bodies of state administration, which are founders of schools and educational establishments.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Associated cultural institutions like the British Council and the Goethe Institut mainly.
- The UNESCO
- European institutions and programmes
- CEEPUS (Central European Exchange Programme for university Studies)

At the Ministry of Education of the SR the Board for In-Service Teacher Training was established to integrate and coordinate cooperation of individual institutions with higher education institutions and provide special status of higher education institutions in the system of in-service training. At the same time, it coordinates a more distinct participation of schools, institutions of the in-service training of teachers, higher education institutions and the managerial sphere of the education system in the international cooperation with the countries of the European Union and other neighbouring countries at the creation and implementation of international projects for teachers.

The admission requirements of the in-service training of teachers are laid down in dependence on what form of in-service training the teachers apply for. Teachers usually apply for individual forms of in-service training through headmasters of schools. The headmaster decides what forms of in-service training are preferential with regard to the educational and instructional practice of the school as well as individual interests and needs of teachers and conditions of the school. On the basis of the judgement of these facts the headmaster of the school submits requests for admission of teachers to appropriate forms of in-service training. The forms of the in-service training of teachers are completed with the defence of a final thesis and with a final interview before the commission. Educational organisations issue a certificate of completion of study. After passing the qualification examination an educational staff get a certificate on improvement in professional and educational competence, and at the same time fulfils the requirement for being placed in a salary grade regulated by a separate rule. The completion of some forms of in-service training of teachers enables them a pay rise (placement in a higher salary grade) and promotion.

Analysis of provision:

Objectives

The content of the in-service training of educational staff is the deepening, improving and extending of professional and pedagogical competence of educational staff in accordance with the latest progressive scientific knowledge, social needs, and requirements of pedagogical and professional practice.

Structure

The forms of the in-service training are as follows:

- Introduction of newly-recruited educational staff to practice - by being introduced to practice newly-recruited teachers gain practical experience necessary for the performance of the job and for adaptation to real conditions of pedagogical practice. The introduction to practice lasts one year and ends with the final evaluation of the educational worker by a commission appointed by the headmaster of the school or a commission of the department of education of the regional board, district board.
- Continuous education - the content is the communication of topical information applicable in teaching practice, the deepening, developing and extending of professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills and skills of educational staff, changes in the concept of

the content of education, new legal rules in the area of education, as well as new knowledge from pedagogy, psychology and branch didactics. This form of education is organised as single (1-2 days), cyclic (1-4 days), short-time courses, and counselling services.

- Specialisation innovation study - the content is the training for performance of specialised pedagogical activities and research activities. The study lasts two years.
- Specialisation qualification study - enables educational staff to acquire a competence to teach the subjects of their study combination for a temporary period. The study lasts two years, it is carried out according to a project approved by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, which is operative all over Slovakia.
- Extended study - is a special kind of study at higher education institutions to extend professional and pedagogical competence to educational activities in schools and educational establishments.

In line with recommendations for the EU enlargement the area of language learning and teaching must undergo some changes in both philosophy and organisation. The following objectives may lead to the improvement.

Objective 1: Raise levels of investment into initial teacher training activities in order to place emphasis on the most important future asset in HE.

In Slovakia, the limited financial sources will not be raised significantly from the state budget in the coming years. For the academic year 2001-02 there was an increase in the budget of all HE institutions including universities at the level 0.1% of the GDP. To put the rise in context, it represented 0.67% of GDP of the SR whereas it is 1.33% of GDP in OECD countries. Naturally, as it was stated earlier, the given budget does not entail many options how to enhance quality of teaching. The only way how to put the emphasis on achieving this objective is to enhance qualification, expertise and space sources of all staff involved in future teachers' preparation. The aim of this measure is to combine sources and to run courses with shared framework. To co-operate in the preparation of curricula, to facilitate interdepartmental expertise, to extend exchange of views and to create new course designs taking into account future needs of all teachers within the EU. When based on interdisciplinary projects for fund raising, it can lead to more appropriate and more qualified advice on the purchase, maintenance and correct use of the equipment. The Act on Higher Education, underscores staff qualifications. Most of the language teachers at universities and HE institutions must do PhD studies, they are expected to participate in scientific projects of their own or, in rare instances, in cooperation with subject teachers, participate in writing own teaching materials at the language departments, give talks at conferences. There is no Sabbatical year at Slovak universities, which makes the situation with time management more stressful. Nevertheless, those teachers who would like to continue working for universities will comply with set standards

Objective 2 : Set new goals for in-service teacher training and natural co-operation settings consisting of staff responsible for didactics of subjects at respective departments and the directors of regional Centres for Methodology to ensure lifelong and lifewide learning.

The planned set of two attestation examinations for teachers in service will dramatically change the qualification structure at the secondary schools. It will not only reduce the percentage

of unqualified teachers but also change their attitude to life long learning. In respect with changes in the EU labour market it will be vitally important to introduce at least basic terminology in at least one preferred foreign language from each secondary school subject into the requirements of the attestation examination. To create new teaching and learning materials for examination candidates a lot of co-operation will be needed. Here the president of CercleS national agency and the presidents of professional associations for languages, subject didactics trainers could provide necessary help in the provision of basic knowledge in the area of languages. Harmonisation of Slovak legislation with the EU, required to pass the Act on Civil and Public Service. Once teachers would have fringe benefits of public servants, they will also have to change their attitude to lifelong learning. We can predict that first years after introducing attestations, the requirements will be rather academic and theoretical, but this will change in favour of practical and market driven ones as they will become a regular part of professional career development.

Objective 3: To achieve the target of eLearning by 2003, the Slovak initial students and in-service teachers must be digitally literate themselves.

The Slovak Labour Code requires from the employers regular lifelong education. Among mentioned areas of education, safety at work, fire regulations, civil defence and latest changes in the development of particular field are enlisted. To ensure that the Lisbon resolution will be successfully introduced into schools and universities, the teachers themselves will have to master latest digital technologies. Because of limited resources, co-operation of humanities and technological subjects will be indispensable. Most of the language centres in Slovakia at HE have recently been given access to the Internet and can use PCs for preparation of exams and teaching materials, have an email and can be addressed easily by any individual or a person. Most HE have websites and the email address is easily found. Language teachers use PCs, but usually some of them share one PC. CercleS/CASALC professional association for tertiary language teachers recently set up, will prepare a project to meet the Lisbon deadline for e/Learning for its members.

Objective 4: Develop effective teaching and learning methodology and contents based on the necessity of fostering autonomous and lifelong learning along with personal development.

Autonomous learning and tandem learning as new methods of instruction should become a part of undergraduates personal experience during their studies. The Association of Teachers of English introduced the requirement of autonomous learning as No 1 priority to new standards of linguistic competence of a school leaver. Since the concept of autonomous learning comes from English speaking educational provenience other language associations slightly lag behind in introducing this criterion into their requirements. This necessary cooperation will also improve the attitude to other languages.

Objective 5: Significantly improve the ways of financial or at least institutional appreciation of learning outcomes of future teachers.

Students were given "good learning results scholarship" which was cancelled due to the budget cuts. It is important to highlight that though there is no school fee paid at Slovak universities, the prices of books, dormitory accommodation as well as all living costs increased

dramatically. It lead to a high percentage of students taking part-time jobs in order to foster their financial independence from their parents and ensure better living standard. Naturally splitting time between school and job environment resulted in decreased interest in learning and taking initiative in broader study programme or in-depth learning. Fewer students get involved in students` voluntary research and various competitions than ever before. The main problem is in wording of the Act on Public Service that should guarantee certain level of social status and ethos of a teacher. At the moment the profession is rapidly losing attractiveness especially among young people who do not make decisions on future occupation and consequitive vocational training in the area of teaching.

Objective 6: Create a socially imperative demand for sponsorship of big and profitable companies to help produce learning and teaching materials

Printing teaching and learning materials is limited because of high unit costs . If a teacher wants to publish a book with a publishing house, s/he is required to pay the circulation of the book . This money is reimbursed by the book-shops from the sold copies. Universities publish and sell paperback materials, at lower costs, without above mentioned financial contribution. Production time is, however, much longer. Big companies could either offer to pay the money to the publishing houses to be reimbursed later, or to fund the whole circulation. Future teachers should be involved in all stages of writing and production of these materials to get hands-on experience. Under current taxation measures companies are allowed to write off 10% of the amount of their donation. This percentage is higher in EU countries and also its social recognition is significantly higher. This should be changed in the Slovak republic.

Objective 7: Establish an all university multi- purpose learning centres open not only for students and teachers but also for the public to foster the idea of lifelong and lifewide learning and interdepartmental co-operation in the area of language and specific subjects learning.

Existing budget allotments from the state, unless the school fees are introduced, will not be increased, thus university management should prioritise what investments should be approved. It would be worthwhile to submit a project on how to make use of existing resources better with a view to creating an all university multimedia self access centre run by students and a limited number of professional staff. This would lead to better allocation and use of existing resources and interdepartmental co-operation and enlarged field of getting involved in counselling for the students and their autonomous learning. If such a centre is open to the public, the universities will contribute to lifelong learning of specialists of all age groups. Very few universities and HE institutions provide students with freely accessible computer and self access centres, where students can write their term papers or browse the Internet. Such a centre would encourage autonomous learning especially if assignments will require its visiting.

Objective 8: Prepare a bill to introduce paid in-service training compulsory for all language teachers in HE to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills to keep abreast with all the new developments ranging from syllabus design through multimedia in learning, to course evaluation. The Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should negotiate with their foreign counterparts post-to-post exchange programmes for 2nd and 3rd level teachers.

Laws on paid in-service teacher training do exist in some member states of the EU and could be

adopted to the conditions of the Slovak republic. The majority of in-service teachers in the SR dates back to more than 20 years ago. Many teachers were initially trained in more traditional teaching methods, which they must now leave behind. The successful application of new approaches therefore depends, to a high degree, on the quality and accessibility of in-service training. If such training is not mandatory, it is necessary to reflect on strategies how to encourage as many teachers as possible to participate in those taking place. A new problem with budget cuts of schools arose. A lot of teachers would like to attend such courses, but unfortunately either their school can not afford to pay the necessary costs, or the number of participants, who could have arranged payment of costs is low, and that is why, the course does not show efficiency in costs, and must be cancelled. It may sound strange that HE teachers should participate in organised in-service training but since there is no Sabbatical in the Slovak HE institutions there is also no guaranteed pre-condition of further lifelong learning.

5. Description and analysis of quality measures relating to the organisation and management of the process of teaching and learning

Phenomenon of quality is currently being addressed by all international and European documents on future development of institutions, regions and the whole areas of knowledge. Slovakia in its integration activities has harmonised many legal documents with those of the EU member countries and has undergone radical changes in many areas of education, just to mention a few of them, cut on number of classes in 8-year gymnasiums, reduction of educational programmes in HEI in accordance with the recommendations of UNESCO and OECD reports on the educational system. The general model of quality assurance that constitutes elements such as a national coordinating body, institutional self-evaluation, external evaluation by academic peers and published reports, will be fully adopted in HEI in Slovakia after the Higher Education Bill will be approved by the Slovakian Parliament in 2002. An emphasis should be placed on educational process rather than inputs and outputs and it involves a strong element of academic self-regulation.

New administrative division of the country and real political powers since the Reform of the Public Administration Act and the first elections to the local authorities and regional parliaments in December 2001, will change dramatically, the division of finances, power and powers of particular state institutes. The question how power is exercised, depends on accountability, market and trust. Since relatively long-term links of previous management, now regional units will change the whole situation in the management of education as well as in plenty of other areas of everyday tasks. It is difficult to foresee what kind of and levels of transparency will new distribution of powers bring. The reform tends to solve how to ensure accountability for the use of public funds, to improve the quality of education provision on all levels of the educational system, to stimulate competitiveness between similar institutions in various regions, to build up complex and compact regional links among institutions on the basis of common projects, to stimulate international comparisons, to delegate the authority of the state on regional and local authorities. Much of the quality terminology being adopted in general, has been taken from the theory of management which might be rather inappropriate for educational analyses, especially in the case of academic environment, it is, in fact, undermining their special status. When we refer to quality, we must distinguish between quality assurance and quality control, between quality improvement and quality enhancement, between assessment and audit, between evaluation and appraisal.

HEI have traditionally been using notions of standards, coherence and progression leading to creation and transmission of new knowledge rather than servicing the economy. A universal emphasis on autonomy HEI had been struggling for, underwent serious changes in the past decade. The power of state, the power of interest groups, the power struggle within the HEIs themselves in shifting power away from the basic unit or department towards the institutional centre, have had an impact on assessment method. When the method focuses on the institutional level, it is likely to reinforce the power of the institutional management and when it is focused on subject values and academic work, it always enhances the power of the subject group.

The changes of the past decades and the vision of the United Europe brought about changes that in the SR pursued generalisation and internationalisation of HE, lead to expansion and

diversification on the one hand, and a decline in the social status, remuneration and conditions of work associated with academic life, on the other hand. After the revolution HEIs have been compelled to respond to new market demands. Developments such as the introduction of a credit system, modularity, greater interdisciplinarity, higher workload of both university teachers and students. Since there is no stable and generally approved and well established western-model of quality assurance that could be transferred straightforwardly, we witnessed many qualitative breakthroughs in the framework of TEMPUS, Phare, SOCRATES, UNESCO-CEPES, OECD and the Association of European Universities, the EU directorates, etc. There were 13 projects focused on quality issues across the SR, dealing with enhancement of quality within the years 1997-1999. Teachers, administrators and students mobilities aimed at studies and practical placements abroad had all the attributes to bring significant changes to the HE system. Exchange of experience have enabled the adoption of tried and tested approaches, avoiding the problems which partner institutions had faced. In the years 1990-1997 the number of projects totalled 119 of which 23 were mobilities including 2,721 pedagogical and management staff of HE. Half of it was aimed at giving lectures, courses, seminars and laboratory exercises. Although investment in IT technology was a significant one, since computer technology becomes outdated within 4-5 years, these investments were overshadowed by real investment in staff development. The number and complexity of projects grew, in 1999-2000, it was 323 JEPs where one or more Slovak HEIs were involved. Participation of the Slovak Universities was dominated by Slovak University of technology 56 JEPs and Comenius University 54 JEPs. In 1999 Slovak HEIs run 2 projects solving problems of curricula in Education and teacher training, 16 concentrated on university management including quality assurance and strategic management and 12 projects focused on pre-accession strategy, environmental issues, agriculture, EU-policy matters and public administration.

Under Slovak legislation, new freedom to establish new universities must be highlighted. To grant a state endorsed recognition of HEI, they must be accredited. New Slovak accreditation committee was set up in 1995, then reshuffled in 1999. Although it is an advisory body of the government, more or less, it is virtually an instrument of the state power. In fact, accreditation and evaluation are not strictly divided. In spite of having approved criteria of evaluation by the Rectors` Conference, allotted financial means are based on evaluation of the previous year and its results influence the next year`s budget. This time span does not motivate the HEI intrinsically.

Average workload of a UNI teacher is 42.5 hours a week, as of April the 1, when the new Labour Code will be adopted, week workload will be reduced by 4.5 hours for teachers for any kind of work, research, teaching, administrative tasks. Students` workload is in on average 5 hours lower than that of teachers, depending on their majors. Generally language studies, civil engineering, architecture, medicine require higher unofficial workload due to time consuming home assignments. The negotiation on workload between departments is fully absent. It is always the room schedule, teachers` load that are taken more into account than students` week schedule and his/her workload. Teachers at HEI are not given full-time employment contract, their tenure is based on agreed career developmental tasks. With the ne more harmonized with the EU regulations Labour Code defines status of state service official. This will bring changes in human resource policy at HEIs. Primary and secondary novice teachers have a special mentor to supervise their first school year, tertiary level does not usually create a similar position.

Over 40 years of a political top-down system providing methodological guidelines has made it difficult to move to an open system in which genuine self-evaluation is accepted as something giving rise to improvement and enhancement. On the contrary, it has often become a report with

vast numerical data and very generally articulated recommendations. Only in rare instances an appropriate financial balance was established between the demands imposed on quality assurance and results expected. Constantly changing financial, administrative and legislative rules and measures within the educational system also negatively influence long-term setting of goals. New bill on HE, hotly debated for many months, also produces two opposing views of HEI as a whole with different concepts of autonomy within the institutional management levels. The new Public Administration Act with envisaged powers concerning the local schools and linked labour force, might change the situation in management in unprecedented links.

The national government education programme for the years 2000-2010 gives basic guidelines and prospects of future developments. It makes strategic decision on quality assurance. These general trends and given measures must be converted into everyday and single educational body conditions. Former communist countries have always had relatively good results in FL acquisition in spite of lack of real contacts with FL speakers, textbooks and realia. Teaching methods and materials adopted to everyday socialist conditions with teacher`s dominance in the classroom, teacher`s role as a major source of knowledge are literally outdated now. Paradoxically most HEI have maintained the same or similar organisational and programme structure and even the staff. Only a few of them use a credit system. It is either under preparation or it will be introduced in the years to come. It is so particular with small HEI. Here a special opportunity for quality enhancement can be found. The internal organisation of HEI, respecting more departmental and faculty autonomies but given full administrative and financially centralised service would help. They should participate in financial analyses and decisions but they need not act as profit centres. As for quality enhancement, departments and other institutional units might be nominated as "centres of excellence in teaching", which should bring them an institutional bonus funding. Future language teachers must receive a long-term knowledge but also short term experience during students` work placements scheme, where they can experience in real work life what sort of terminology is used and what language structures accompany the corporate culture. Prospective teachers should be equipped with the language skills for unpredictable communication situation. All achievements of excellence must not only be noted but also rewarded. Speaking of rewards, they need not be necessarily of financial character. They could represent any kind of moral stimulation. The main criterion of the selection should be an answer whether this reward encourages enthusiasm to teach, learn, work for, manage, graduate from this particular university or HE institution.

Perceived problems in quality seen by students and all the staff should, of course, be pinpointed. Therefore a regular staff liaison committee in a subject or course should meet students` representatives and solve problems of both sides. In future close cooperation between businesses could help the teaching-learning process and work employability of future graduates. This kind of co-operation will set new goal as for improvement of writing skills. Especially students who start communications with R and D departments or even every communication with enterprises, they realise lack of capabilities to use foreign language. A subject or a special handbook on writing projects may be put either within the degree course or put on the web in future. Tenured native speakers could proofread the handbook or teach the subject simultaneously with Slovak teachers. Special concern about individual`s language progress must be addressed by establishing a new staff or job position, depending on size of the institutional unit and number of students, namely a language advisor. S/he will help the students to plan their language instruction at school or at self-access centre.

Close cooperation between businesses and HEI contributes to an effective way to gather information in the particular field, in the same industries, regions or lines. It gives rise to the international cooperation, on the job training, where HEI teachers may be involved. It constitutes a real need and conditions for distant learning, setting programmes involving staff of companies in teaching process, which has a benefit for their interpersonal and presentation skills.

Revealing internationally relevant potential and emerging market needs through this kind of cooperation, it has a positive feedback on innovation in teaching, innovation of programmes, reshuffling the staff. Internal HEI organisation can also be changed during the negotiation process with business management, during the search for the most relevant people, experience and methods of delivery and provision. This level of organisation can enable the creation of the job of a language advisor which would also create easier conditions for Bologna Process. New regional division of the SR will be more prompted than ever before to find new links in the analysis of educational needs and relevant job opportunities. New skills profile acquired during the pregraduate studies will get new qualifications and in the long-run can minimize the lack of qualified staff in the region. When the cooperation expands and enriches in social benefits – e.g. special corporate loans for students, or scholarships for talented ones, this measure will invite graduates to work for local companies rather than to move to the capital. Companies cultural, urban, regional and social policies can incorporate strategic planning relevant to fostering HEI long-term quality assurance.

There are also standard and easily transferable methods to achieve these goals. The most important drive to achieve them is prosperity of the region, demand and supply in staff law. This is a new philosophy in the SR and it will take some time to be generally considered viable by all decision making bodies.

GOOD PRACTICE

One striking feature in the Slovak Republic is the strong and extremely lively presence of international cooperation, especially in a European dimension. It is mainly expressed in two different ways: bilateral and multilateral. Within their framework, various educational programmes have been implemented.

A- Bilateral Programmes

- The preparation of agreements on mutual recognition of diplomas on education is one of them. In the last year the agreement with **Hungary** was signed and expert negotiations took place with representatives of the Federal **Republic of Germany**, which resulted in a draft agreement in a proposal of agreement on mutual recognition of equivalence of diplomas on education in the field of higher education.
- Cooperation with **Swiss Confederation** in the field of education is carried out on the basis of framework protocol Aide-memoire signed at the UNESCO level in 1986. For university graduates, two scholarship stays were offered.
- Within the framework of Programme of Cooperation in the field of Education, Science and Culture between the SR and the **Republic of Finland** for 1999-2001 that was signed on May 5, 1999 the study stay for one PhD candidate was organized (Faculty of Arts at

Comenius University) in the length of 12 months and two holders of scholarships took part in summer language course of Finnish language in Tampere. Three holders of scholarship were admitted for summer language course of Slovak language.

- The cooperation with **the Norwegian Kingdom** was realized on the basis of the Programme of Cultural, Educational and Research Cooperation between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Norwegian Kingdom, which was signed on February 12, 1999 in Oslo. In 2000, one applicant was accepted to a summer course of Slovak language, two candidates were sent out to semestrial study stays and one candidate to a language course of Norwegian language in Oslo.
- On November 30, 1999 a new Programme of Cooperation in the field of Education and Science between the Ministry of Education of the SR and **Swedish Institute** for the years 1999-2001. In the school year 1999/2000 two persons were sent out for a study stay (9 months in total), and one person for a language course of Swedish language. At the Department of German Studies and Scandinavian Studies at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University there is one lecturer of Swedish language.

B- Multilateral Programmes

- Based on results of competition in April 2000, three students were sent for two-year study at the schools of UWC (United World College) network to Italy, USA and India, and two students to Summer Schools (Latvia, Lithuania).
- In 2000, Ministry of Education continued in implementation of **CEEPUS** programme; multilateral exchange programme of higher education institution in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in which Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Austria participate.
- In the last phase of the **TEMPUS** programme implementation, with regard to new PHARE orientation a part of which TEMPUS is, the higher education institutions are focused on new activities. The curriculum forms of co-operation have been reduced to hitherto insufficiently developed fields (teacher training, social work). The focus is on the university management, the further development of which should facilitate the transition of the higher education institutions into the EU programme structures. With a Council decision of 29 April 1999 the TEMPUS III has been adopted for the period 2000-2006. The beneficiary countries in TEMPUS III are those countries, which have not yet signed an Association Agreement with the European Union (from PHARE countries it is Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Croatia and countries of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia). It may be stated that the TEMPUS programme created suitable conditions in Slovakia for integration into other EU educational programmes - SOCRATES, LEONARDO da VINCI but also YOUTH for EUROPE and 5th Framework Programme. The TEMPUS programme contributed to the development of partner cooperation between higher education institutions of the Slovak Republic and institutions in EU countries by improvement of higher education management, introduction of European credit transfer system, curriculum development, establishment of new fields of study and faculties, institutes of distance and lifelong education.
- In the academic year 2000/2001, 703 students were expected to travel abroad, thanks to the SOCRATES programme.

- LINGUA C is designed for students of foreign languages that are provided practical stays in EU countries for foreign language teaching, based on scholarships granted. Within the framework of the allotted sum for this activity 13 students from faculties of education and arts were sent out for 3-8-months' stays abroad.
- ARION: Higher education institutions continue in cooperation established through TEMPUS program by extending the bilateral contacts to EU higher education institutions aimed at student exchange with an emphasis on mutual recognition of study. They organize joint intensive courses and summer schools and collaborate at ECTS introduction. Improvement of foreign language teaching, development of language abilities of pupils at the level of primary and secondary schools is provided within the framework of improvement of qualification of foreign language teachers and by deepening the study and practical stays of students of foreign languages.

This report tried to highlight the process of changes that have begun and are under way as well as those that would be desirable. Quality enhancement indicators will be seen in the following practices and numerical data given in the number of:

- newly approved or remodelled courses;
- subjects in which target language is used as a medium of study;
- students developing several partial competences in more than 2FL;
- programmes in regionally, nationally or internationally conceived university area offered in plurilingualism;
- students admitted to mobility programmes in home/foreign university;
- language teachers in non-philological area obtaining academic or scientific distinctions;
- projects in which cooperation of language teachers and subject teachers has been carried out
- students involved in students' scientific competition;
- students involved in autonomous learning ;
- teachers who changed their roles into facilitators
- new Self-Access centres and the number of regular visitors;
- new PC centres and number of their regular visitors;
- new publications written in cooperation with students in the area of languages;
- organised courses, summer schools and exchanges and their impact on quality enhancement in teaching languages;
- increased numbers in Bachelor's programmes
- the shift from contact hours to learner-centred methods used in the teaching –learning process

The proposed measures will have either a long term or short term impact. It is necessary to estimate their implementation on a regular basis. Most of the courses must be remodelled taking into account the Bologna process along with it updating teachers' proficiency. All goals of study programme should be changed in accordance with the recommendations of this report and should be monitored by the Committee for External Evaluation.

Responsible for the implementation might be: bursaries of universities, vice-deans responsible for the programmes of studies in pedagogical faculties or faculties of art, and all university

departments carrying out pedagogical pre-graduate preparation of specialists in other degree subjects, president of CercleS, presidents of particular professional associations of language teachers. Another recommended activity is to propose a bill on more beneficial tax deductions of companies sponsoring educational activities that could be coordinated by the Union of Entrepreneurs. All proposed measures must be implemented under the auspices of Legislative council of the Ministry of Education Section of HE at the Ministry of Education submitted by Director of the Centre for Methodology, the presidents of particular professional associations of language teachers, President of the Union of Entrepreneurs. New concept of science and research, special attention paid to curriculum and founded councils in the framework of the Ministry of education will give rise to new measures in enhancing quality in education.

The act on HEIs considers building of information management system as obligatory. This will add new forms of work to keeping track of both the academic and career achievement of participants in the particular programmes. Legally binding “complex accreditation” will foster external and internal evaluation of universities, programmes, staff, learning outcomes and development of student numbers in specific programmes and calculation of their workload.

Future development of higher education in the Slovak republic requires to put ethics in first place. Credibility, good manners, sticking to rules a fairness represent principles to be introduced in everyday running of HEIs. Second important development factor lies in new internal rules to harmonize with the Act on HEIs and EU legislation. Third factor of prospective development requires European dimension to be rooted in all activities, programme designs, quality enhancement of the teaching and learning process. Next task is to update ICT technologies, increase the number of PCs per student along with elearning, distant learning a life long learning programmes. The pivotal role is the student centred implementation of all novelties. Last but not least it is delegation of powers for decision making bodies and inviting opinion makers in the fields of science and industry to become HEI stakeholders.

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