



Ministry
of Education,
Youth
and Sport

National Programme for the Development of Education

in the Czech
Republic

White
Paper

Prague 2001

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**National Programme for the Development
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White Paper**

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Introduction

The National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic was launched by *Resolution No. 277* of the Czech Government on 7 April 1999. In this resolution, the government approved the *Main Goals of Educational Policy*, following its policy statement in July 1998. These aims became the starting point of “*The Concept of Education and the Development of the Education System in the Czech Republic*” published by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport on 13 May 1999. There the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (hereafter the Ministry of Education) declared that the development of schooling and of other educational institutions and activities which share in the shaping of national culture would in future be derived from the generally accepted framework of educational policy and from a clearly defined medium and long run goals that would be publicly announced in the form of a binding government document, i.e. a White Paper, as similar texts of a strategic nature are often labelled in other countries. The Czech White Paper is conceived as **a systemic project formulating intellectual basis, general goals and development programmes of the education system in the medium term**. It is to become a binding foundation for concrete projects in the Ministry of Education sector that overlap with the broader sphere of education and learning, as envisaged in education acts and government planning of socio-economic development. At the same time, the White Paper is an open document that should be critically reviewed at regular intervals and revised and renewed in response to changes in society.

In addition to the policy documents mentioned above, the White Paper is based on analyses and assessments of Czech education carried out during the last five years by Czech and foreign experts. These include annual reports by the Ministry of Education dealing with the state and development of the education system, “*Education on the Move*” (1996), “*Education at a Crossroad*” (1999), “*On the Threshold of Change*” (2000), and on OECD documents “*Reviews of National Policies for Education: Czech Republic*” (1996) and “*Priorities of Czech Educational Policy*” (1999) in which the implementation of the recommendations of the earlier report are evaluated by OECD Education Committee. The White Paper follows on from the publication “*Czech Education and Europe: Pre-Accession Strategy for Human Resource Development* (1999). (See Bibliography for further details.)

The public discussion launched by the Ministry of Education and entitled “*The Challenge for Ten Millions*” was a fur-

ther basis for formulating the aims and recommendations in the White Paper. During the discussion, social partners, representatives of civic society and various interest groups dealing with education, officials of the education administration – and its responsible bodies – and above all schools and teachers expressed their views on problems concerning the development of all levels of the education system. *The first phase* of the discussion on the above document “*The Concept of Education and the Development of the Education System in the Czech Republic*” and on background papers about individual levels of the education system took place from June 1999 to February 2000 and was evaluated at a parliamentary seminar. *The second phase* of the discussion dealt with a comprehensive proposal of a systematically conceived text, prepared by a specially appointed independent editorial group working on the basis of a set of background studies and contributions by experts in the field. The second phase took place between August and November 2000. It began at a *Teachers’ Conference* arranged by the Czech Pedagogical Society in Brno on 30-31 August (based on a speech by the Minister of Education, Eduard Zeman, and an introductory paper by the head of the editorial group, Professor Jiří Kotásek), continuing at an *international seminar* on 14 November (based on a report by a group of foreign experts familiar with the situation in Czech education), and in *workshops on schooling and tertiary education* on 15 and 16 November. The discussion continued to deal with comments on the text of the document submitted by the staff from the Ministry of Education, the Czech School Inspectorate, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, social partners, the Council of Higher Education Institutions, the Czech Conference of Rectors, educational institutions and teachers associations, as well as by individual educationalists.

In view of the fact that preparatory work and editing took place at the *Institute for the Research and Development of Education of the Faculty of Education of Charles University* and became part of its research and development activities, the preparation of the text was influenced by the attitudes of experts working for the faculty. The individual phases of the document in progress and its first two versions were discussed in detail by the *Council for the Educational Policy of the Ministry of Education*. The mass media revealed their interest in the proposals submitted for change in education and commented to a relatively unprecedented extent. Both discussion meetings and the team of authors received sig-

nificant financial and organisational support from the *Open Society Fund* (within its project of education support). The text was also published on the Ministry of Education web sites. The general concept of the proposed strategy was discussed by representatives of a wide range of interested public and social partners at a *National Conference* on 21 November 2000. Their opinions were taken into account in the third version, which was subjected to an *inter-departmental review procedure* in December 2000. After the comments from competent governmental bodies had been incorporated, the final version of the National Programme for the Development of Education was discussed and unanimously approved by the *Czech Government* on 7 February 2001.

At the same time that the White Paper was being prepared, a new Education Bill was drawn up and discussed in parliament and the two sets of activities were co-ordinated. The new Education Bill represents a legally binding mechanism for management and administration of schools at all administrative levels. Therefore it is possible to interpret the White Paper and the Bill, despite their different forms of expression, as two complementary instruments for change in Czech education.

The time frame of the strategic document extends to 2005, in some parts even to 2010. It sets out governmental goals in the field of education as well as legal and organisational measures and development programmes resulting from them. The strategy should influence decision-making on central, regional and municipal levels and even within higher education institutions, but also integrate efforts to develop education by social partners and interested groups of civic society. At the same time it provides concrete incentives for the work of schools and educational institutions on all levels, and school heads, teachers and educators as real practitioners in education. The document aims to express the needs of the society as a whole, not only particular or political party interests.

The field the document deals with is *the integration of education system into their social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental context*. The document considers the starting points and preconditions of the development of the education system as a whole, specific internal issues of individual sectors, and the levels and types of schools and higher education institutions.

The introductory chapters lay out the general aims of education and issues of their values, together with the rationale behind educational policy principles derived from an anal-

ysis of social changes and trends of educational development in the developed countries in Europe and elsewhere. Such an introductory section is necessary, as Czech society and the various groups within it need a more detailed presentation of the anthropological-pedagogical and socio-political starting points of a democratic educational policy than is possible in Education Bills. The introductory section formulates general aims and strategic guidelines for Czech educational policy, which provide a framework for subsequent proposals. Then the generation and implementation of new legislative conditions for the management and financing of the education system as a consequence of public administration reform are discussed. An important section and the starting point of the whole strategy is a forecast of the quantitative development of education system (children, pupils and students, teachers and total financial costs) in accordance with demographic projections and expected economic indicators as well as stated government goals. Since Czech educational policy will be heavily influenced by the international context, the aims of international co-operation in the field of education are outlined, and involvement in European and Atlantic structures is stressed.

Notwithstanding the fact that the document is based on the concept of a coherent and integrated education system, it seemed useful to divide it into sections corresponding to the three main educational sectors and dealing with pre-school, primary and secondary education of children and young people from 3 to 19; the education of young people in tertiary educational institutions; and adult education. The first of these sectors can quite rightly be called regional (district and municipal) education, and will as a whole be the subject of the expected law on pre-school, primary, secondary and post-secondary technical education (the Education Act).

The fundamental common questions in the whole sector of *regional education* are considered to be as follows: 1. Problems of stating aims and contents of education (curricular policy); 2. All kinds of systematic quality assessment related both to the work of education institutions (so-called evaluation) and pupils' performance in the form of examinations and diagnostic procedures, and possibly also mass surveying of the outcomes of education (so-called monitoring); 3. Processes of change taking place within autonomous schools; 4. The status and professional activities of educational staff as the main factors of transformation in

education. The document then deals with all levels and types of schools and educational facilities, allowing their heads, teachers and other educators to find their specific problems in separate chapters. Particular emphasis was placed both on facilities which influence the leisure time of children and youths, and on special care of extraordinary gifted and talented children as well as socially or mentally/physically disadvantaged individuals.

The second sector is *tertiary education* and includes both universities and higher non-university institutions and post-secondary technical schools. At the same time the sector deals with the education of people who have passed an upper secondary school leaving examination in post-secondary studies and other types of shorter courses. In spite of the fact that higher education and post-secondary technical education are underpinned by two separate laws (the Act on Higher Education Institutions and the coming Education Act), in this document they are considered to be a newly emerging unit from the prospective point of view.

So far the least distinctive sector is that of *adult education*, which lacks any adequate legislation. It relates to the previous sector (so-called adult schooling) and at the same time it involves further vocational retraining and continuing education, personal interests development, and civic education. As in the section on regional education, distinctions are drawn between *common and cross-section issues on the one hand and specific problems* of individual levels or parts of the respective educational sectors in the parts on the two other sectors as well.

In the sections dealing with the three main education sectors the document is conceived in such a way that the set of *recommendations* is formulated alongside the explanation of individual questions and problems. These recommendations should become decisive guidelines for the work of politicians, decision-makers, teachers and other educators, as well as parents, social partners, and the general public.

The detailed survey of aims and recommendations for individual sectors and their institutions is expressed in the *conclusion* in the form of *strategic guidelines of educational*

policy that have been derived and argued in the introductory chapters and refer to the education system as a whole. The guidelines include the main necessary *measures* and along with the preceding text represent basic issues for the formation of concrete development plans at the various levels of management of the education system and individual educational institutions.

The recommendations and measures proposed in the document should not be seen as a single impending reform, but as a *programme of long-range, gradually implemented process of transformation of Czech education*. The policy framework was specified by the *Czech Government Resolution No 113 of 7 February 2001*. In the resolution, the Prime Minister was charged to submit the White Paper to the chairmen of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic for information.

The Minister of Education, Youth and Sport is charged to:

- ◆ Implement the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic through “Long-term aims for education and the development of the education system”, and other measures;
- ◆ Provide information about the state and the education system development and about the achievement of concrete aims of the National programme in annually published reports;
- ◆ Incorporate the financial requirements of the National Programme in the medium term and update them every year.

The other ministers and heads of central offices are charged to contribute to the implementation of the aims contained in the National Programme.

The resolution also requires public administration bodies which implement the state policy in education to use the national programme as a starting point in outlining their educational programmes.

The Government resolution therefore creates conditions for a step by step designing of the White Paper as a fundamental strategic document for the whole education system of the Czech Republic in the coming years.

I.
***Starting Points
and Preconditions
for the Development
of the Education System***

“... Our first wish is for full power of development into full humanity, not of one particular person or a few or even many, but of **every single individual**, young and old, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, men and women – in a word, of every human being born of Earth, with the ultimate aim of providing education to the entire human race regardless of age, class, sex and nationality.

Secondly, our wish is that every human being should be rightly developed and perfectly educated not in any limited sense but in every respect that makes for the perfection of human nature ...”

(J. A. Comenius: Pampaedia or Universal Education)

1. General Aims of Education

We live in a time of major and unpredictable social changes whose impact goes far beyond our own country. In addition to subtle but sweeping changes in every day life – technological, political, social and even human – there are European and global processes that inevitably influence both the status and the mission of education systems, education and learning as a whole, of everything that aims to educate people. This means that stating a long-term education strategy for Czech society also calls for a more profound *theoretical framework: an initial idea of the nature of a human being as an individual and of their relations to human society and the natural order*. Only this broader view will allow goals and priorities to be clearly formulated and provide the main arguments for choosing concrete paths and instruments for their realisation.

A society exists and develops in cycles of family, social and civic reproduction which have three fundamental phases:

- The phase of *adoption* or rooting, during which a child, through the care, protection and help of others, is becoming an adult person able to take their further life in their own hands.
- The phase of *placing* and assertion, when a young individual embarks on an independent life, assumes various occupational, social, and civic roles and with these also their own creative share in the life of society and the fate of our planet.
- The phase of *handing over*, when an adult starts to take care of a new generation and passes on the culture of their nation and society – either to their own children within the family or in various economic, social, and

public institutions. This way they indirectly settle their debts for everything they have acquired in the past and fulfil their responsibility for the content of the cultural heritage.

A human being is an extraordinarily malleable creature. Unlike animals that are equipped for life in a certain way and adapted to a certain environment, human beings can live in many different ways and in widely varying environments, but they first need to *learn* the particular way of life, in other words, to take it over creatively from their family and society in the form of culture. Therefore an individual is by nature a social being. In modern societies, an ever greater emphasis is put on each individual with his or her abilities and rights on the one hand, but on at the same time each human being is ever more dependent on others, on society as a whole and also on the quality of the environment. Unprecedentedly complex and sophisticated social organisation, a ramified division of labour and rich possibilities of communications provide the conditions for the prosperity of every contemporary society and every individual citizen. A citizen's freedoms and opportunities depend on the quality and reliability of the social framework of their individual life – a framework created not only by institutions but primarily by people in them.

The more complex life in a society is, the greater is the volume of knowledge and skills an individual has to command in the society. The greater the extent of individual freedom, the more important the personal maturity, responsibility and creativity of every citizen becomes. The more opportunities are offered, the more important are the moral and human qualities of an individual, so that they are able to make proper choices. This means that the time needed for preparatory education has been growing steadily longer. Nevertheless, today like thousands of years ago, every child comes into the world as an unfinished but open being that only becomes fully human when among other people.

However, adults who play autonomous, independent and responsible roles in social life, employment or family care also enter the sphere of education. Changes in civilisation and culture mean that learning, education and the improvement of qualifications and personality have become prerequisites for, additions to or part of the work and leisure of the adult population. This is why new public and private education institutions have been established alongside the expanding school system, with organised and

funded programmes for adult participants. Schools originally intended just for children and young people are widening their operations to take in adults as well and are beginning to adjust to their possibilities and conditions. Social, political, and economic organisations have begun to include educational activities aimed at their own members or employees, and even the general public, as part of their main activities and organisational structures. Concern for improving qualifications and education in companies has become an element of personnel policy and is called *human resource development*. Human capital is seen as a factor equal to physical or financial capital and modern technology. The growing life expectancy in developed countries and the need to adapt to new life situations in the post-productive age means that specially targeted education with specific content is becoming increasingly important for older people and making its impact felt on social policy. As a result, education has become a common phenomenon and a necessary part of social and economic life and has come to affect all stages of an individual's life cycle. At the same time, schools, learning and teaching are *specific instruments of social communication*, during which mass disseminated information is transformed into individual knowledge, as a basic element that will be significant for the emerging knowledge society. The formation of knowledge is therefore a pedagogical process that influences the very essence of the economy and the knowledge society. The concept of education directed towards the individual, culturally and spiritually conditioned, conceived of as a life-long process and built on the principle of a knowledge society brings us to the conclusion that *education or learning with an educational purpose is both path and an instrument in the development of human personality and its value cannot be derived only from economic or other such purposes or conceived of in a narrowly pragmatic way*.

In accordance with the General Declaration of Human Rights and other international pacts, the European Charter of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Children, the Constitution of the Czech Republic, and the Paper of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, the Czech Republic aligns itself with the idea that education is one of *the basic human rights of all human beings without distinction and declares that education is an inalienable and universal human value*. The aims of education must therefore be derived from both individual and social needs. Education is related not only to knowledge and learning, i.e. the develop-

ment of intellectual abilities, but also to the acquisition of social and other skills, spiritual, moral and aesthetic values, and desirable relations with other people and society as a whole, to emotional and volitional development, and last but not least to the ability to survive in the changing conditions of employment and the labour market. These are the reasons why education is now multi-dimensional, aimed at personal development, social integration, the formation of citizens and preparation for working life. The education system consequently focuses on the following aims:

- *The development of human personality*, which presupposes concern for the preservation of an individual's physical and mental health, involves the cultivation and support of self-fulfilment for every individual, and the maximum utilisation of his or her abilities. The fundamental aim is the cognitive, psychomotor and affective development of a human being, which is necessary not only from the point of view of an individual but also from that of society, because the creative potential of the population is always the main resource of a country's development and economic prosperity.
- *Transmission of the historically evolved culture of the society*, which forms part of science, technology, art, vocational skills, spiritual and moral values, both to coming generations and into the awareness and activities of all members of the society. In this way, the educational sphere guarantees the continuity of the past, present and future, and integrates an individual into the social process of cognition. An inseparable part of this is the preservation and development of national, linguistic and cultural identity, especially through the preservation of the cultural heritage.
- *Teaching people how to protect the environment in the sense of ensuring the sustainable development of a society* should be seen as one of the important conditions for preserving the continuity of human society and its culture. This is not only a question of the transmission of knowledge, but also of developing sensitive attitudes towards nature and the acquisition of skills and motivation, towards the active formation of a healthy environment and the removal of poverty worldwide.
- *Strengthening social cohesiveness*. The education system is one of the most significant integrating forces, not only through the handing on of shared values and common traditions, but primarily through ensuring equal access to education, by levelling out of social and cultural back-

ground, as well as all disadvantages caused by health, ethnic or specific regional conditions, and through the support of tolerant and democratic attitudes towards all members of society without distinction. This is the focus of *education in human rights and multiculturalism*, which is based on providing factual information on all minorities, especially the Romany, Jewish and German ones, and their fates and cultures, and shaping the relations of understanding and solidarity. An important role in this is played by minority education, bilingual schools, and education for foreigners and their children as a part of the integration of these groups into Czech society.

- *Support for democracy and civic society.* A democracy needs sensible and critical citizens, who are capable of independent thought, aware of their own dignity, and respect other people's rights and freedoms. The school community is the first social environment a child enters after their relatively closed family environment. The community influences children directly in many ways, every day and over many years: through the nature of teacher-pupil relations, which should be based on mutual respect, through the form of the school community, which should be a democratic community of equal partners, and through the whole structure of the education system, which should be open, with balanced areas of responsibilities at individual levels and open to the involvement of all partners. Education for democratic citizenship also applies to adults and takes place in their local, interest-related and working communities. Another essential part of education for democratic citizenship is the development of a critical attitude towards the dissemination of information and views by media (so called *media education*).
- *Education for partnership, cooperation and solidarity within European as well as globalising society* adds another dimension to this. It means to strive for a life without conflicts and negative attitudes in a community not only of other people but also of other nations, languages, minorities and cultures, to be able to accept and respect even considerable differences between the people and cultures of today's interconnected world.
- *Increasing economic competitiveness and the prosperity of society.* The education system in a modern society is an important contributor to a high level of human resource development, as one of the fundamental factors of economic development. The education system influences

not only the qualifications, flexibility and adaptability of the labour force, but also its capacity for innovation and change, the development and application of new technologies and the quality of management.

- *Increasing employability*, in other words, the ability to find a job and be a full participant on the labour market, not only in one's home country but also abroad - especially in Europe. This requires both general and vocational education to be focused on the continuous increasing of individuals' flexibility and adaptability, their creativity and initiative, independence and responsibility. It means strengthening the role of general education, creating a broad basis of vocational education and applying key skills. It supposes that everybody has an opportunity to learn throughout their lives. Above all it means ensuring a sufficient quality of education in the areas favoured by the global market, which in the case of the twenty-first century means working in an information society, the ability to use modern information and communication technologies, the ability to find information, and critical thinking.

2. The Transformation of a Society and the Principles of Educational Policy

2.1. The transformation of a society and its consequences

Czech, European and world societies have undergone particularly deep and far-reaching changes during the last fifty years. These changes are not lessening, but on the contrary becoming ever broader and more rapid. They are based on the development of science and technology and on parallel economic growth, but they have an impact on all areas of social life and place ever higher demands on all members of society, their training and preparation. *The level of education, the quality and performance of the education system and above all the extent to which a society is able to utilise the creative potential of all its members have become decisive factors in the continuing development of society and economy.*

This conclusion was reached from a number of directions. The rapid development of technology has led to the emergence of entire new economic sectors increasingly based on the direct exploitation of new scientific knowledge. A high level of knowledge, i.e. the standard of research and the speed its results are applied at in the form of

a permanent innovation has become a basic precondition for success. Changes in technology, production and the market have resulted in significant changes in the nature of work, company organisation and the requirements of the labour force. The latter relate not only to its flexibility and adaptability, i.e. the ability to adjust to changes, but also - and today primarily - to its creativity and initiative, its ability to innovate. This new *knowledge society* represents a fundamental transformation equivalent to industrialisation in the past, but much faster and more widespread. It is leading to rapid integration and interdependence worldwide. Another key phenomenon - the swift and essentially unpredictable *development of information and communication technologies* - is contributing to this. The instant availability of a more or less unlimited volume of information, the creation of multiple contacts and close interconnections is changing the nature of human activity in all sectors. However, the easy accessibility of information and indeed the flood of information itself are placing great demands on our capacity for critical thinking and forming our own judgement, which must be underpinned by a solid framework of basic concepts and relations. Unlike in the past, these demands apply to all levels of education, not only to higher education.

A higher level of education and exploitation of the whole potential of a society are not only prerequisites for economic growth, improved employment opportunities and social and individual prosperity, but are also necessary for achieving a democratic society with a high degree of cohesion. On the one hand, civic freedoms have recently been broadened in an unprecedented way, on the other this requires everyone to be able to take responsibility for themselves and for joint decision-making. Democracy needs sensible, critical and independently thinking citizens who are aware of their own value and respect the rights and freedoms of others. On the other hand the structure of society has been changing, and increasing inequalities are leading to a rise in extremism. Despite increases in productivity and in the standard of living of the prevailing majority of people in developed countries, high long-term unemployment rates linked with the marginalizing of certain groups of the population remain an urgent problem. Other tensions originate from an inability to accept increasing cultural and ethnic diversity in today's Europe, which is characterised by freedom of movement and high immigration. Therefore systematic education is needed in tolerance, understanding

and respect for other nations, races and cultures, and the acceptance of plurality. Respect for whatever is above the individual level means respect not only for human society but for nature as well. In the latter case it must lead to an awareness of the place human beings occupy in nature, as well as of the extent of their responsibility for permanent impacts on the natural environment.

The transformation of society means above all much greater stress on individuals. The most obvious is a loss of stability in employment. Working structures with firmly determined roles have disappeared and people may now change not only their job, but also their profession and their field of work. This leads to changing requirements for vocational training and a greater emphasis on general education. Certain personal qualities are required: individual initiative, and the acceptance of responsibility, independence and teamwork, the ability to lead and motivate other people, to interact with others, and problem solving. Workers have to be efficient and proactive even in an unstable, uncertain environment.

The ability to cope with permanent changes, to be able to understand them and respond to them actively and so to use the space they open up, to cope with greatly increased stress and responsibility is however necessary in personal and civic life as well. External support from the static character of conditions, a relatively fixed social and cultural framework, have weakened significantly, and moral values are also at risk. In the closely interconnected contemporary world it is necessary to accept and respect considerable variations and differences between people, and to do this without any sense of superiority or threat, but with an awareness of the unique values of one's own personality. That is another reason why nobody must be disadvantaged by poor education, language barriers or one-sided education.

New possibilities of social advancement are closely connected with education. On the other hand because of the spread of education and the increase in the average level of knowledge, people with a lower level of education are in a worse position than when the majority of people had only completed compulsory education. Moreover an individual, who is not able to continuously update, broaden and upgrade their education quickly finds himself on the fringe of society, unable to participate in its life. Differences in levels of education have become one of the decisive causes of social differences. The education system can make a fundamental contribution to increasing mobility in a society,

levelling life opportunities, reducing the pressure on disadvantaged groups towards the fringes of society, and by all this can strengthen social stability. Therefore it must not further reproduce existing injustices in access to education. *The basic social, ethical and political requirement, across the whole political spectrum is to provide every member of society with an opportunity to develop all their abilities.* This means paying attention both to the disadvantaged and those that are lagging behind, and to exceptionally gifted and talented individuals.

Since the end of the Second World War access to higher levels of education has been fundamentally broadened in developed democratic countries. People have recognised that knowledge and qualifications are the only resource that is available in unlimited quantities, that human capital is the greatest wealth of a society and that investment in it is probably the most important thing for a society. The new *learning society* therefore has to aim for all its members to achieve as high a level of education as possible and to avoid failure. Education is not limited to a certain, initial period of life but continues throughout life, and knowledge and skills are not acquired only in a formal way, via the education system, but also through life experience. A new concept of *lifelong learning for all* has emerged, whose implementation has become a goal for both international government organisations (European Union, Council of Europe, OECD and UNESCO) and all developed and developing countries. Therefore we too have accepted it as a goal.

2.2. Lifelong learning for all

Realisation of this new concept means closer links between the existing education system and the further education sector, employment policy and social policy aimed at maximising the integration of citizens into society. At the same time it implies much more, a fundamental change in the conception, goals and roles of education, when *all opportunities for learning* – whether in traditional educational institutions or outside them – *are seen as a whole which allows many different paths between education and employment and which makes it possible to acquire the same skills and competences through different paths and at any point during one's life.* The formal education system creates a necessary basis but is only one part of the whole. All mechanisms – management, distribution of responsibilities, financing, evaluation

and standards, the system of teacher training and support – have to be conceived in the light of this broader point of view. The emphasis is now on learning taking place outside the framework of the education system (learning at the work place, accreditation of prior experience) and as much mutual penetration between learning and work as possible. The role of social partners is increasing and the personal choice of every individual and the links between the individual and social demand are emphasised. It also represents a new view of traditional schooling, which should provide the necessary instruments and motivation so that a pupil will then voluntarily work to achieve as high a level of knowledge and skills as possible and be able to take responsibility for their own education path.

Realisation of the concept of lifelong learning is therefore concentrated on a number of main tasks. The first is to create a necessary basis for lifelong learning through increasing participation in preschool education, by improving the quality and modernisation of primary education, where individualised and differentiated teaching should be the rule wherever possible, by broadening both secondary educational programmes and participation in them (nobody, not even the disadvantaged should be excluded) and finally by building effective support and evaluation systems. The second task is to establish *complex links between learning and work*, which enable more flexible transitions between education, training and employment and make it possible to apply various combinations of these three elements in companies and schools at different levels. The third task is *to redefine the roles and responsibilities of all partners* at the local, regional, and national levels, inside and outside the education system. Finally, the fourth task is to create *incentives for investment in human capital*, in order to gain other financial resources, namely for tertiary education and further education and for the development of active programmes of employment. Investment in education should be favoured through changes in tax policy.

2.3. Principles of the democratic educational policy

The introduction of a concept of lifelong learning for all means a profound transformation of an education system that is as radical as the introduction of compulsory schooling was at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution two hundred years ago. This transformation applies to both the

relation between an individual and the education system, and that between the education system and the society. It lies in the following main principles:

- Ensuring truly *fair access to educational opportunities* so that all the educational needs of a society can be satisfied, and all members of the society can not only find their own educational path but also change it later in their lives. It means a free choice of educational paths and institutions, access to necessary information, and, above all, creating adequate educational opportunities and forms for all according to their abilities, requirements and needs. Nevertheless the demand for fair provision of educational opportunities means much more than overcoming material obstacles, i.e. inequalities in economic status, for example through a system of grants and supports. It is necessary to overcome disadvantages caused by different social-cultural levels and to introduce adequate compensatory mechanisms in order that the education system does not further reproduce existing inequalities.
- *The maximum development of every individual's potential*, not only that of a certain, preferred part of population. This means limiting or eliminating selectivity: instead of just selecting those most capable for study and excluding those who do not meet the stated requirements, providing opportunities to develop their abilities to the maximum for everyone without distinction. The point is to change the focus fundamentally, to adjust the education system to the individual, to differentiate and personalise education, to concentrate on personal development. For that reason it is necessary to diversify the educational offer according to interests and abilities and to apply various learning styles to suit different types of aptitude. This conclusion derives from recent knowledge of the various dimensions of human intelligence that the selective systems set aside.
- *The transformation of a traditional school*, whose main task is to create a solid basis for lifelong learning, to equip pupils with the necessary tools for learning and to motivate them to do so. A school must strive to provide education that has a sense and personal significance for all pupils. This requires not only *changes in educational content, methods and forms of instruction but also a change in the school climate and environment* which reveals itself at several levels: in the nature of teacher-pupil relations, which should be based on partnership and mutual re-

spect, in an emphasis on the educational function of the school and the development of interpersonal and social relations, in broadening opportunities for dynamic and creative activities, in shaping the school community as a model for a democratic society. It leads quite logically to broadening the school's role in out-of-school and leisure time activities and in offering education to other users.

- *A new form for the education system*, whose aim is to achieve at one and the same time the highest possible quality and effectiveness of education. This is the goal of wide-ranging decentralisation, of a gradual shifting of powers to the lowest possible level, when individual schools are receiving considerable autonomy, and at the same time of opening up the education system to society and ensuring its greatest possible involvement. Thus a sophisticated mechanism has been created that stimulates initiative within binding rules and common goals and always demands dialogue and agreement. It differentiates and balances the responsibilities of all levels of administration – the responsibility of the centre to set the rules; that of a school to use its creative initiative on the condition that the results achieved are assessed according to binding criteria; that of a region to be responsible for the effectiveness of the whole network without limiting the powers of schools. As well as the state administration, local administrative bodies, representatives of communities and regions, social partners and parents must be involved in decision-making. *Decentralisation of the administration of the education system and the participation of social partners in decision-making thus becomes a basic principle of educational policy.*
- Social changes lead to new functions and roles for educational staff as the main participants in the education system. They have to keep track of the continuing progress of scientific knowledge and transformations in the life of society and to modify curricula accordingly. Because of the extension of school education for pupils of all levels and kinds of intelligence, teachers are expected to be able to motivate, diagnose and regulate their pupils' processes of learning, in addition to their expertise in their academic field. Since the role of the family has become weaker and young people are now exposed to serious dangers, teachers' responsibility for their pupils' mentally and socially sound development has increased. Moreover, educational staff have to be able to take part in decision-making about the life of

a self-governing school, to develop teamwork and contacts with the local environment and their pupils' parents. The increasing status and professionalism of teachers and improving educational processes on the basis of scientific knowledge thus become another key principle of the development of the education system.

2.4. The main strategic guidelines of educational policy in the Czech Republic

The above principles derived from an analysis of the basic trends of the development of education systems in developed democratic countries will be projected into the main strategic guidelines of Czech educational policy. (These are laid out in detail at the end of the document.)

The cardinal prerequisite for the realisation of the main strategic guidelines is political and financial support from governmental and self-governing bodies, companies, civic society, and individuals for education as a priority of socio-economic development, a priority that has a fundamental influence on the human and social capital of society, the quality of life and the system of values.

The main strategic guidelines of education development in the Czech Republic are considered to be as follows:

- To meet and stimulate the educational needs of children, youth and adults by an adequate increase in the capacity of schools and other educational and cultural institutions in order to ensure access to all levels of education and to provide opportunities for the greatest possible development of the varying abilities of all individuals throughout their lives, in accordance with the principles of fairness and the utilisation of talents.
- To improve the quality and relevance of education by developing new educational and study programmes that will meet the requirements of an information and knowledge society, sustainable development, employment, and the need for active participation in the life of a democratic society in an integrated Europe, and that will at the same time respect individual differences and the life conditions of participants in education.
- To build a system of evaluation of educational institutions' activities at all levels of government and administration, of monitoring education results, examinations, assessment of personal development levels, and of vocational guidance for children and young people.
- To develop the autonomy, innovative potential and

equipment of schools, their openness towards society, and relations with the social environment through development programmes and the creation of cooperative school networks. In tertiary education, to support the broadening of collaboration between education institutions and other research and development organisations, and involvement in regional development.

- To promote changes in the conception and performance of teaching activity in all educational institutions, to enhance the socio-professional status of educational staff and academics, to increase the quality of their initial and continuing education, to create conditions for their career growth and higher motivation for personal improvement and teamwork.
- To introduce decentralised management of the education sphere by state and self-governing bodies with effective participation of social partners and other representatives of civic society, in a process of planning, organising and assessment based on strategic goals and implemented primarily through indirect instruments.

2.5. Open questions and risks during the implementation of changes

A procedure for the implementation of these strategic guidelines in the main education sectors, levels and types of school is proposed in the following sections of the document. There the goals are set out and discussed and the concrete recommendations leading to their achievement are outlined. Before discussing these in detail, we have to consider certain open questions and risks that the implementation of these changes may raise.

- Firstly, it is the fact that although the majority of recommendations aim to establish certain mechanisms which are expected to have instant consequences, their effects are revealed only in the long run. The proposed strategy is derived from a new conception of education and the new functioning of education system, it is based on a linking of government aims and initiatives by teachers and schools, which together will contribute to freeing the inner resources of the education system. It is therefore *an internal transformation and requires the acceptance of new values, changes in attitudes, approach and practice* at all levels and by all those involved.
- Secondly, there are several conclusions resulting from this that must be borne in mind if the implementation

is to be successful. Changes will be gradual and long-term and it is not possible to accelerate or force them. We are entering new ground that lies outside our experience to date, for both individual teachers and society as a whole. The proposed measures therefore carry certain risks. They cannot be excluded but they can be minimised. We have to be aware of the fact that *we will reach the optimum situation only gradually* and we must always be ready to change proposed solutions. We will gradually learn how to answer *open questions*: How can we balance the general orientation of the education system with the needs of an individual and those of society? How far can we comply with individual differences in order to maximise the potential of every pupil? To what extent is it possible to compensate for less favourable starting conditions? How can we ensure that every pupil is successful? How can we teach those with initiative and independence who only need space to work and less confident individuals who need to feel safe and supported, to respect and co-operate with each other? At the same time, we must not fall prey to bias, but *balance sensitively numerous opposites*. We already realise that it will be not easy to balance the emphasis placed on the development of skills with the acquisition of the basic sum of knowledge, or to teach people to manage a surfeit of information and transform it into a coherent system of knowledge. How can we develop openness towards change and at the same time succeed in passing on the riches of the past, and how can we link the European dimension and national traditions? And one fundamental question is *how to reconcile the enjoyment of freedom with the acceptance of personal and social responsibility?*

- Thirdly, we again have to ask if such risks are necessary. What happens if we do not decide to take them up, if we do not deliberately undergo a long-term programme of changes with clearly defined aims and we only respond to immediate external requirements? Nothing obvious will happen, but the education system will gradually cease to be able to resist to external impacts such as bullying, drugs, violence, further weakening of families, consumerism and a passive way of life, civic detachment, political and economic destabilisation, or to try and compensate for these. It will no longer reflect the development of society, or be responsive to its continual new demands. *Thus the only way to become an equal and fully-fledged member of a globalised world will be closed to us.*

3. Management and Financing of the Education System under New Conditions

The goals and principles of the educational policy mentioned above will be realised against a background of significant society-wide changes due to the comprehensive reform of public administration that is now under way in the Czech Republic.

The guiding principle of the reform, both in general and in the field of education, is democratisation, which will be guaranteed first of all by decentralisation and participation. Secondly there is professionalisation, which should be achieved through increasing the responsibilities of public administrators and also through introducing more effective systems, means and methods of management and execution of administrative activities. The basic trend in public administration is thus represented by an implementation of the principles of subsidiarity and participation, a shift of powers from the central level of state administration towards decentralised levels of regional and local governments, and in the education field by further strengthening of school autonomy and the powers of school councils. A similar trend has been gaining ground in the area of financial flows, the creation, allocation, and utilisation of funds from public budgets on all levels of public administration and its subordinate bodies. However, this means creating conditions for the responsibility and stimulation of public administration as a whole, as well as of other subjects, so that they can handle financial resources effectively.

In education, these reform processes are accompanied by changes in the powers and responsibilities of schools and other educational institutions. In addition to the already significant autonomy in the field of curriculum and staff policy, all schools or groups of schools and facilities have become relatively autonomous subjects even in their economic-financial and administrative roles.

It is necessary to react adequately to the great space for independent creative activities that has been opened up to educational institutions by the new quality of management and managing instruments from centre and regions. The reform of public administration and the changes and trends mentioned above create *new conditions and requirements for the management and financing of the education system.*

3.1. Management and administration of the education system

Many teachers and educationalists see the reform of public administration and the decentralisation connected with it as a process that causes upheavals in the political, legal, economic, and social environment. This is the source of their uncertainty, rejection and doubts. However, the new situation does not bring only risks, but also new opportunities. It offers an opportunity to use decentralisation as a means to activate bodies of representatives and social partners at all levels and to increase their participation in the subsequent *solution of long-term problems in the area of the management and financing of schooling as well as other forms of education outside the school system, and by this to promote the performance of the whole system and quality of education.*

The role of the centre

The reform now under way enables the Ministry of Education *to withdraw from its overall operating activities and to define and implement the key role of the centre in a modern way* in new circumstances, especially in terms of coordination, regulation and distribution. Its main functions can be formulated as follows:

- *The creation of an intermediate and long-term conception and strategy for all sectors of the education system*
(Formulation of fundamental documents on the mission, aims, and direction of development based on the main guidelines and recommendations of the White Paper, as well as EU experience, participation in outlining an educational policy in accordance with the main goals of the government's educational policy announced in April 1999, strategic planning, preparation and implementation of structural changes, establishing a National Council for Education and Human Resource Development of the Czech Republic as an interdepartmental body of the Government and promoting its activity.)
- *Curricular policy and ensuring the quality of education*
(Creation and ongoing innovation of the state education program, monitoring and information feedback, central and local assessment of evaluation and self-evaluation, annual assessment of the state and performance of the education system, certification and examinations, experimental verification, supporting mechanisms, projects of school development, pedagogical centres, the functions

and focus of activities of the Czech School Inspectorate, a research and development base, cultivation of human resources.)

- *Political impact*
(Effective communication with the expert and general public, strengthening links with bodies of state power and control, local administrations and civic society, gaining political support for education needs, the creation of mechanisms and forms enabling the participation of social partners in central decision-making, efforts in social consensus achievement and balancing interest in fundamental questions, public dialogue, international contacts, activities and commitments, systematic communication with representatives of central and regional administrations and self-governing bodies, constantly strengthening the elements and trends of integration in the education system and its management.)
- *Management, financing and legislation*
(Management and implementation of changes and innovation, selective intervention in critical areas, developing a rationale for and ensuring an adequate share of public finances for education, effective, transparent, equitable and motivating mechanisms of resource allocation in the public and private spheres of education, comprehensive and consistent supervision of public fund investment and prompt and objective information systems in this area, informed legislative activity)
- *Human resource development across the whole education system (see below)*

Thus the role of the centre will be first of all to state strategic aims and main principles, define rules, create adequate conditions, establish leading principles of indirect control, monitor processes, build a comprehensive system of evaluation at all levels in order to ensure adequate standard of education. A central body appointed by the Government – *the National Council for Education and Human Resource Development* – will be an important aid to the Ministry of Education and a corrective of its intentions.

This interdepartmental advisory board representing Czech civic society will co-operate with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and other sectors, and will be largely independent. Its institutional basis, powers and rules of functioning will be laid down by its statute and they will contribute to deepening co-ordination of the Ministry of Education activities and its co-operation with other sectors.

Another significant instrument is knowledge, the new scientific knowledge serving both steering bodies and schools, and its dissemination through networks. Domestic and international analyses have revealed that the education sphere to date has lacked a sufficiently developed institutional and organisational structure of research & development analogous with other spheres and therefore it is lagging behind in innovation. There is now a demand for a restructuring and strengthening of sectoral and university research and development centres and forming a rational system of management and financing of all research and development in the field of education.

Particular attention will be paid to human resource development. Central government administration - not excepting the Ministry of Education - is lacking in *a coherent and stabilised system of human resource management and development, including standard methods of personnel policy*. A particularly weak point is the lack of understanding of the significance of the development of personnel reserves destined for managerial posts and systematic work with these employees. *Like central government administration as a whole, the Ministry of Education is still an insufficiently stable and working institution. There are hopes of changes connected with the impact of the state service act and a complex training program for public administration officers*. First of all, a consistent restructuring of the office is needed in accordance with the new conditions and functions of the Ministry of Education, accompanied by rationalisation of the numbers and quality of staff.

The Ministry of Education will also be able to rely on framework legal conditions and formal power instruments in the future. Nevertheless, the role of the centre as a communicator, negotiator, and mediator in various interests, requirements and expectations that must be met but more often reconciled will come increasingly to the fore. In this context, the ability to offer convincing arguments, and a rationale for standpoints, measures and necessary solutions will gain in importance. The new structure of communication should also be applied in relations with social partners at all levels of management and administration.

Lower levels of management

The Ministry of Education not only considers it necessary to improve the quality of the professional standard and performance of its own employees, but also counts on partici-

partation in training public administration personnel in educational sector in regions (district, communities) in order to ensure their competence for their functions and tasks at the respective level of management. The educational programmes offered should provide the knowledge, skills and effective mastering of instruments and methodology, bearing in mind regional needs, necessary for the following responsibilities and procedures:

- Formulation, implementation, evaluation and management of educational policy on a regional level, including horizontal and vertical connections;
- Preparation of reports and documents drawn up by them (e.g. regional long-term purposes of education development, annual reports, regional budgets and concluding accounts);
- Creation and way of using needed analyses (e.g. capacities and accessibility of education supply, a school and educational facility network, success of graduates on the labour markets, the type and quality of educational staff), evaluations (e.g. the quality of schools, their own activity), projects and studies (e.g. projects for grant procedures, European structural funds and programmes, feasibility studies);
- Human resources development and personnel policy;
- Application of forms and methods of decentralised participatory and effective management which must be conceived as the systematic influence of individuals, organisations, and systems with the goal of winning them over, making them behave in a certain way and change as desired.

However, the greater part of these responsibilities should be mastered not only by civil servants in the education field in regions (districts) and communities, but also by senior executives of schools. They have to gain a clear idea what they want to and can achieve, and how to do this in specific circumstances. They should be aware that major changes in a school are not possible without the support of teachers for responsible participation in decision-making. They should also be prepared for a lack of understanding of and opposition to desirable aims of the part of their colleagues and know how to act in such situations. That is why we consider that the implementation of necessary training of management staff of schools and educational facilities should be a priority for the Ministry of Education within a prepared system of further teacher education. It is also necessary to establish a master's degree in education

management' at faculties of education as a principle basis for the development of a new category of educational staff – school heads and inspectors.

The outlined programme of education of officers in regions suggests – in accordance with the proposed Education Bill – the idea of the Ministry of Education concerning the role of regional bodies (and to the certain extent of charges communities) in the educational sector. Unlike existing educational authorities, which are 'extended hands' of the Ministry of Education, these regional bodies will fulfil their functions and tasks on the basis of conceptions, plans and decisions of their bodies of representatives as independent units, although naturally within the framework of given legislative standards and directions. In this respect, the question of the terms that will be available for regional bodies is important in the specification of powers and responsibilities. Without underestimating the danger of some disintegration of the system, it is necessary to provide lower levels of administration with all the opportunities they need to develop their activity, initiative, diversification of approaches, and forms and methods of organisation and management. In this respect, the ability of the centre to fulfil its coordinating and integrating functions under new conditions will be very important.

Not only will the detailed designation of rights and duties in the education field (based on the Education Bill) be important for the activity of regional (municipal) councils, but so too will the establishment of their auxiliary bodies, the stipulation of their activity, priorities and rules, and relations with administrative bodies, mainly in education. It will also be necessary to create conditions for the solution of multidimensional problems, e.g. linkages between the school network and the labour market and employment, ensuring continued in-company practice for technical school students, final apprentice examinations etc. In this respect, proposals to establish councils for education within regions in order to enable the coordination of activities and close co-operation between school founders and social partners, especially from employer and employee spheres, are rational. These bodies could also help to draft regions' educational policy, to resolve schools' current financial problems, to protect the rights of parents and students, to set up and support the activities of school councils, and to involve university specialists in helping regional education, etc.

In concluding this section, we can say that the main goal and sense of management in the new circumstances is to create such prerequisites, conditions and mechanisms for influencing and helping schools from 'the outside', that they may want and be able to change from inside.

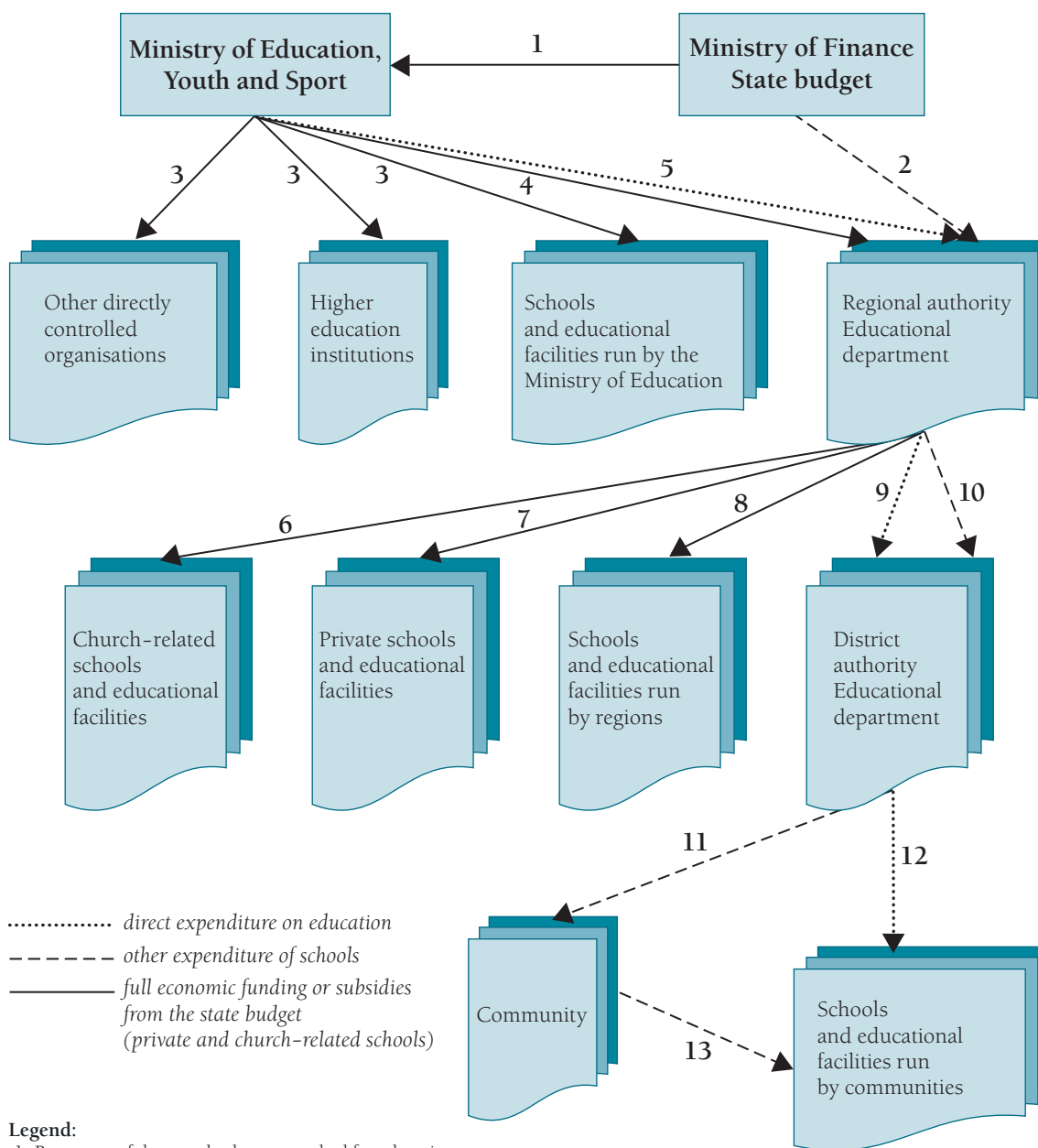
3.2. The principles of financing in the light of the transformation of public administration

The financing of schools in the new system will be based on the principle of multi-source funding, as has been the case so far for schools run by communities. Expenditure is divided into *direct expenditure on education*, paid by the state (mainly salaries, compulsory employer contributions, teaching aids, development and innovation programmes), and *other (operational and investment) expenditure of schools*, which are paid by the body running the school. This is based on the current system which incorporates the changes ensuing from the change in the functioning of the state administration and local government, which leaves the legislative role and methodological management in the hands of the central administration (Ministry of Education); direct financing is also left in the hands of the central administration (Ministry of Education and powers delegated to the regions) in the areas of:

- direct expenditure on education for schools of all types (except schools run by another body of the central administration);
- other expenditure of directly funded schools, both state and church (as to the latter, it is presupposed that their financing will be unified with that of schools run by other groups, except those run by the state or self-governing regions, following a new model of funding of churches and religious communities);
- regions will have delegated powers to provide subsidies to private schools.

In terms of the system, nothing will change in the funding of those schools and educational institutions run by communities. In the transitional stage, financing will be administered by educational departments of the district offices. The Ministry of Education will make a breakdown of direct expenditure on education, divided by districts, and the funds will be provided by transfers to the regions from the budget of the Ministry of Education to the district offices.

The Higher Education Act, as implemented in the long-term project of the Ministry of Education and expressing



Legend:

1. Resources of the state budget earmarked for education
2. Resources of the state budget earmarked for other expenditure of schools and educational facilities run by a region or a community related to their operational and investment costs
3. Full financing of schools and educational facilities run by the Ministry of Education, of higher education institutions and other directly controlled organisations
4. Subsidies paid from education budget for salaries and compulsory employer contributions as well as operational (non-investment) expenditure to private and church schools
5. Resources of the state budget earmarked for direct expenditure on education in schools and educational facilities run by regions and communities
6. Funds for individual church schools and educational facilities specified by a regional authority (salaries, compulsory employer’s contributions, operating costs)
7. Funds for individual private schools and educational facilities specified by a regional authority (salaries, compulsory employer contributions, operating costs)
8. Full financing of schools and educational facilities run by a region (direct expenditure on education and other expenditure of schools)
9. Direct expenditure on education for schools run by communities
10. Funds for other expenditure on schools and educational facilities run by communities
11. Specification of other expenditure of schools for individual communities made by district authorities
12. Specification of direct expenditure on education from the district authority level for schools and educational facilities run by communities
13. Specification of other expenditure on schools and educational facilities from the community level

the main principles in this field, will continue to be the basic norm. It is based on the current norms, which allow for supplementary funding of the higher education development program based on selection procedures. The existing instruments will be used in financing research & development at higher education institutions.

One important principle of funding is that the relatively huge volume of funds in the framework of direct education costs intended for innovation and development programmes will be administered separately. The funds will be targeted to support autonomy and stimulate the initiatives of those schools which sign up for state-run programmes, and which will themselves define the specific innovation program. In addition to funds from the national, regional and municipal budgets, and from other founders, consideration will be given to the possibility of financing selected activities from European Union structural funds. In the long term, the regional budgets' share in the financing of education is expected to increase, primarily in resolving shortfalls in expenditure on capital investment and property maintenance.

The Ministry of Education will retain its key functions of drafting legislation and setting and maintaining management standards, and its responsibilities in drafting the methodology of the distribution of budgets, setting norms for the distribution of state funds to schools and educational institutions through regional and district offices, and setting the basic criteria for the legislative role of the state administration at the lower levels. All of these functions are based on Act No. 132/2000 Coll.

Further, the Ministry of Education will draw up methodological guidelines for the record keeping required to monitor the financial flows (actual expenditure from the budget or subsidies) of direct expenditure on education for schools, and educational institutions run by all types of founders, and of data necessary for the accounting of the finances provided, together with the method for their collection. The Ministry of Education will set the criteria for the legislative role of the lower levels of state administration (that is of regions with respect to the power delegated to them, and of district offices), i.e. elaborating the regional and district norms for schools run by the regions and communities, with the Ministry of Education retaining the direct methodological administration. The financial flows can be seen in the scheme and the legend explaining each of the steps (See Appendix).

Priorities of Financial Policy

- Remuneration of employees: To secure funding so that the *average salary of educational staff* is 30% higher than the average national wage and to maintain this standard in the future. This measure would serve as the economic basis for increasing the prestige of teachers in society. To secure support for *non-educational staff* so that the average salary rises to equal to that of similar occupations in public sector.
- Establishing innovation and development programmes, which will become one of the key instruments of indirect management.
- Removing shortfalls in the maintenance of property by increasing both capital investment and expenditure.

Control as a feedback for evaluation of the quality of management and effectiveness of the financing

In addition to evaluation and self-evaluation at all levels of education management, the following checks will be conducted:

- *Routine educational inspections and the control of administrative decisions*, checks on the quality of education, on the adherence to generally binding legal rules and binding educational documents (carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate, Ministry of Education, regions, district/community).
- *Financial controls (preliminary, continuous and subsequent)*, which encompass the following set of tasks:
 - Facts crucial for the allocation of funds from the state budget, from other state funds or from the National Training Fund;
 - Entitlement, effectiveness and economy in the use of these funds;
 - Adherence (on the part of the regions and district offices/communities) to the methodology of financing, and to norms set by the Ministry of Education (carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate, the Ministry of Education, regions, districts/communities with respect to the funds in their budget).

To this end, the Ministry of Education is obliged to create a system of financial control, which will ensure the financial control of its management as well as the management of state organisational bodies and contributory organisations in its sphere of influence (schools and educational institutions which receive direct funding from the Ministry of Ed-

ucation; church and private schools will not, however, fall within the Ministry of Education's sphere of influence).

In the coming period, the most important question will be how to introduce democratic and participatory management and administration of the education system, and how, especially during the transitional reform phase, to confront tendencies to revert to administrative-bureaucratic procedures and methods. In this respect, it is necessary to transform the Ministry of Education into a modern body of the central government that is logically structured, well equipped in both personnel and technical instruments and with a professional approach.

Recommendations

- ❑ To aim at increasing public expenditure on education to 6% of the GDP, and the average salary of educational staff (depending on the complexity of their work and their performance) to 30% more than the average national salary.
- ❑ To participate actively in the transformation of public administration in regions (districts) and communities, by defining their powers more precisely, providing their educational officers with specialised training, and systematically communicating with the representatives of administrative and representative bodies. To use a new concept of management from the centre (the Ministry of Education, the Czech School Inspectorate) to continuously strengthen, by all available means, the integrative elements and tendencies in the education system, and to combat attempts to revert to the use of directive administrative and bureaucratic methods of management.
- ❑ In accordance with its new functions, to free the Ministry of Education from its current mass of operational activity and to focus its efforts on a limited number of key strategic activities and tasks.
- ❑ To establish the needed communication and co-operation with social partners at all levels of management, to direct the Ministry of Education's attention to both school institutions and forms of education outside the school system.
- ❑ To strengthen relations with other ministries and together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to create an intersectoral body, the Czech National Council for Education and Human Resource Development.
- ❑ To introduce clear and objective rules for the alloca-

tion of funds from the centre to the regions and to create conditions for the effective use of public funds in the education system as a whole.

- ❑ To fundamentally enhance forms of indirect management and priorities of financial policy to promote innovative and development programmes in the field of education. Some of these programmes will gradually be transferred to the regions. The regions may also finance them from EU structural funds.
- ❑ To restructure and strengthen the research and development institutions of the Ministry of Education, and initiate a broadening of the university research base on educational issues. To rationalise the functions and focus of research & development in the framework of the sector and continuously evaluate the results and effectiveness of this work.
- ❑ As with other ministries (the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, etc.), to establish an educational centre for the initial and continuing training of decision-makers and officers, in the field of education at the regional level and in authorised communities, and at all levels of schools, including prospective candidates for these positions. To initiate the founding of a master's degree course in education management as a principal basis for the development of a new category of educational staff - school heads and inspectors - in higher education institutions.

4. The Forecast of Growth of the Education System

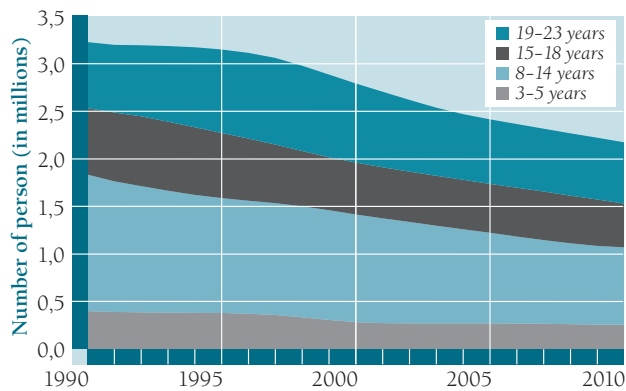
4.1. Demographic and economic assumptions

It is not possible to predict inputs into projections, external demographic and economic assumptions, with complete accuracy. Even methodologically developed demographic projections for the next ten years are uncertain considering the net migration balance (i.e. the difference between the numbers of emigrants and immigrants). This is even more true for the results of economic projections based on a number of alternative assumptions.

The demographic projection is based on the lowest alternative projection produced by the Czech Statistical Office in 1999, which is the closest to the reality. It envisages a further decrease in the fertility of women with a gradual shift to a later age (26-28 years) and a positive migration bal-

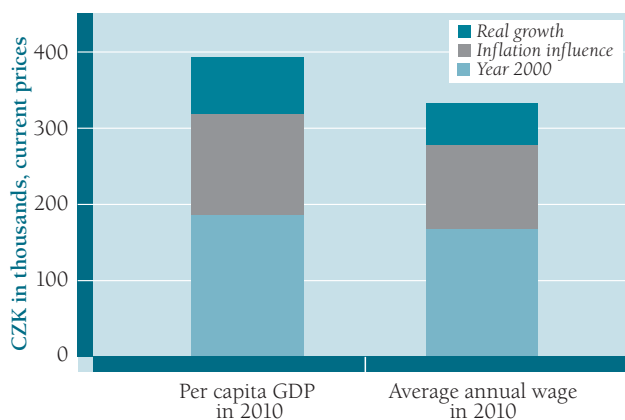
ance of 9,500 persons per year. The number of children born will continue to decrease from the current 90,000 to around 86,000 in 2010, with the total Czech population decreasing by almost 200,000.

Population development in the age groups of 3-5, 6-14, 15-18, and 19-23 years, 1990-2010



The economic projection is based on short-term projections prepared by the Ministry of Finance and some long-term projections and assumptions of the Czech Statistical Office, the EU and the OECD. Predictions for the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) in fixed prices are fairly optimistic with an average annual level of 3-4%, for the price GDP deflator at an average annual level of 4-5%. The GDP in current prices will increase by 111% during the first decade of the 21st century. The growth will also be reflected in the indicator of *per capita* GDP, due to a slight decline in the population. At the same time, it is expected that the productivity of labour will be slightly higher than the growth of the standard of wages, thus *average gross wages* compared to *per capita* GDP will decrease from the current 85% to 82% by the year 2010.

Per capita GDP and average monthly wage in 2010

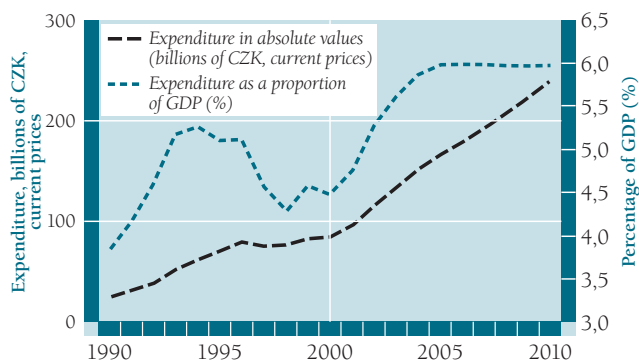


4.2 Personnel and economic provisions, number of teachers and their salaries

The main objective in the area of personnel and economic provisions is to gradually meet the government promise to increase public expenditure on education up to 6% of the GDP. The Czech Republic will then be at a reasonable level, even from the point of view of EU member countries. At this stage it will be possible to implement a dynamic long-term educational policy which will contribute to a fuller and higher quality of life, while increasing the competitiveness of the Czech Republic among the highly developed European economies. Proposed strategies which constitute the backbone of the educational policy for the period up to 2005 and 2010 largely follow the *Main Goals of Educational Policy of the Czech Government*, which were passed by the government when it discussed the conception of education in 1999.

The development of public expenditure in education was rather unbalanced in the 1990s. The low rate of funding in the early 1990s was followed by a more favourable period in the middle of the decade. There was then a significant decrease between 1997-98 reflecting overall economic and political development. In 2000, expenditure on education is likely to amount to around 4.5% of the GDP. Thus, a fast but overall *gradual development of public expenditure on education* is expected, with the above goal to be reached by 2005. We consider faster development neither feasible nor realistic for reasons of 'absorption'. To attain this goal, a number of decisive strategies must be introduced and followed up with concrete steps and measures, whose implementation understandably requires considerable capacity. The projection links proposed strategies with human and financial resource requirements.

Public expenditure on education: percentage of GDP and absolute values



Decisive *personnel and economic strategies* differ according to the area for which they are produced and according to their goals – such as changes in the pupil/teacher or pupil/employee ratios, the relation of salaries in education to average salaries in the Czech Republic, the proportions of the investment from the whole and other overall non-investment expenditure, and especially the role developmental and innovative programmes will play in the area of expenditure on education.

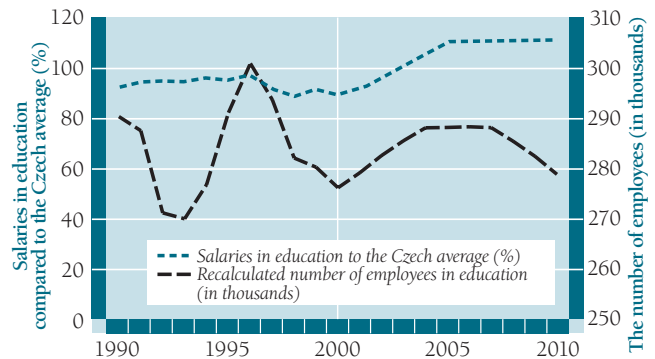
The *pupil/teacher and pupil/employee ratios* are improving slightly. A significant change in basic schools is deduced from two principal assumptions. Firstly, due to the ‘dense’ network of schools (primarily with a small number of classes), the irreversible decrease in numbers of pupils at the primary level of basic schools will be much faster than the decrease in the number of schools, teachers and school personnel in general. Any cushioning of the impact that further thinning of the basic school network has on the life of small communities and the associated implications for the accessibility of transportation calls for an extremely sensitive approach, closely connected to the development of the residential and administrative structure of the Czech Republic. Second, a *transformation of the lower second stage of basic schools providing lower secondary education* will gradually take place with a significant broadening of compulsory education, as well as the overall educational offer. In addition, optional (non-compulsory) and facultative (compulsory optional) subjects will be reinforced, as well as the overall individualisation of the educational paths for pupils between 11-15 years of age.

These trends, along with a performance change (number of pupils and students) in schools of all levels and types, will allow the total number of employees in education (annual average, full-time equivalent) to remain relatively stable in the coming years, somewhere between 270,000-290,000 (out of which approximately 60%-65% will be educational staff). However, the development will vary in different sectors of education, with the greatest increase in the number of employees in tertiary and amateur education, while the largest decrease can – despite all the above measures – be expected in the basic education.

The key strategy is a significant *increase in salaries in education*, mainly for educational staff. After 2005, the salaries of teachers will reach a level comparable with the EU member countries in terms of the total volume of wages and per capita GDP. However, the proposed strategy sup-

poses that special regulation (in the form of an amendment to the government order, a new salary scale) will be introduced. From the economic point of view, we propose an ‘emergency regime’ for the increase in salaries mainly in the case of educational staff, which is projected to have a rather slow start in 2001 and then continue in full until 2005. The emergency regime will differentiate between various categories of employees in education and between different processes of salary increase compared to overall average wages in the Czech Republic. The fastest increase in salaries is expected for teachers from basic schools, amateur education, and post-secondary technical schools, with respect to the increasing demands on these parts of the education system. Increases in the salaries of non-teaching staff can be expected to be at the same level as for comparable occupations in the state administration. Decisions on salary levels of academic teachers depend on the financial policy of a given higher education institution.

Salaries in education compared with average wages in the CR and the number of employees in the education sector



The gradual increase in teacher salaries is expected to reach 137% of the overall average salary in the Czech Republic by 2007. The relative levels of salaries for other employees in education will also show a moderate improvement. Salaries in education will thus increase relative to average wages in the Czech Republic by 22%, with a 30% increase in the salaries of educational staff. It is clear that this development will, with some delay, lead to an increase of interest in the teaching profession and to significant changes in the numbers and types of applicants for places at faculties of education and other teacher education institutions, and together with the support of additional steps and measures on the part of the Government, this should motivate young graduates to enter the teaching profession.

Total expenditure on education is largely influenced by labour costs and in some types of schools also partly by the change in the proportion of *other non-investment and investment expenditure*. Wage costs and compulsory employer contributions to social and health insurance amounted to more than 70% of all non-investment expenditure and two thirds of all expenditure on education in 1999. The salary strategy is thus crucial for the overall development of the education budget. The salary development in education largely reflects the total proportion of the GDP spent on education. Moreover, a considerable part of other non-investment expenditure must be earmarked for the operating costs of schools and educational facilities and so is connected with the performance and numbers of employees in education. Due to a lack of funding of this sphere in recent years and to shifts in the importance of different types of schools within the overall structure of the education system in favour of those more costly, other non-investment expenditure will develop roughly in the same way as wage expenditure and will continue to amount to 70% of non-investment expenditure. A moderate improvement can be expected in the development of other non-investment expenditure compared to salaries, but a significantly more visible improvement in comparison to school performance. Investment expenditure will not be a special priority for education in the coming years, but because of the introduction and use of new information and communication technologies and the broader integration of educational means and teaching aids into educational process, it will stay at approximately its current share of just under 10%.

The expected changes in education will not be due purely to improvements in the financial situation of teachers and increases in the funding of schools. The implementation of such changes usually requires the establishment of new mechanisms, the creation of special programmes and wide-ranging preparation of all participants, i.e. usually involving a single injection of funds. *Developmental and innovative programmes* represent a specific and significant component of the state education budget, which can be adjusted in accordance with the budget situation. They can help the education system to cope with the constantly changing requirements and expectations of the society. As in other developed countries, these represent important instruments through which the state influences the quality and functioning of education even in very decentralised education systems. Therefore, we consider it necessary to secure funding

as soon as possible, both through the introduction of new forms of innovative financing and through the implementation of new information and communication technologies in education beginning in 2001. However, the preparation and particularly the implementation of developmental and innovative programmes will place high demands on the capacities of the state and other school founders and education providers. When specifying the proportion of expenditure set for developmental and innovative programmes, we based this on the main strategic guidelines proposed in this text, namely on those that found at a certain stage of elaboration.

4.3 Pathways through individual levels of the education system

The proposed strategies have consequences not only for the numbers and remuneration of employees in education, or for total expenditure on education from the public budget, but above all for the numbers of pupils and students at the different levels of the education system. Thus they represent another decisive factor in addition to overall demographic changes that influences *the pathways of pupils and students through the education system*. We expect that their combined effect will be to *extend the total average duration of study* at all levels by 2 years between 1999 and 2005. The extension of basic school to 9 years will of course contribute to this (by approximately 0.9 year) and its effects will be shown in the duration of study after the re-entry to upper secondary schools in 2000. This will bring the average length of time spent in education in the Czech Republic to the current average among EU countries. The development will continue in subsequent years, with the average length of education being prolonged by 2.1 years between 1999 and 2010.

In *pre-school education*, we will strive to increase the number of five-year-olds in pre-school education from the current 92.2% to 98% in 2002, which in principle means that all educable children will be attending. The participation of three and four-year-olds will not change, although it will be possible to admit children under three years of age to kindergartens. The number of children aged six and older in preschool education as a result of postponed compulsory education will remain the same. The total number of children in kindergartens is expected to decrease from the current 270,000 to 251,000 in 2005, and to 240,000 in 2010.

A decisive change in *basic schools* will be the significant strengthening of their lower secondary level as a result of the gradual elimination of multi-year general secondary schools (*gymnázia*). Starting from 2002, no new students should be admitted to the first year of these types of general secondary schools. This means that from 2005 all children will complete nine years of basic school, whereas at present over 10% of pupils leave for multi-year general secondary schools from the 5th or 7th years of the basic school. Unfavourable demographic trends mean that the number of basic school pupils will fall from 1,064,000 in 2000 to 954,000 in 2005, and 812,000 in 2010. The strengthening of the lower secondary level will mean substantially greater diversification of teaching, broadening the scope of optional and non-compulsory subjects, and changes in the offer of various forms of personal interests development and leisure time activities.

Other changes in the structure of the education system are taking place in *upper secondary education*. There is a certain shift in the proportions of pupils from basic schools moving to different types of upper secondary schools, but the main changes are occurring within these schools. They are changing their orientation, approaching and even integrating with each other (e.g. polyvalent technical schools), moving towards a continuum without sharp divides. Technical education is becoming more general, while general upper secondary schools are begin to develop clearer profiles. General educational programmes will also be introduced into upper secondary technical schools.

Further development will be also influenced by the public administration reform and the emergence of a new partner at the regional level. In this study, we suppose that the proportion of students on general educational programmes will increase to 30% (these programmes will be implemented at both general upper secondary schools and upper secondary technical schools), and the proportion of students in educational programmes leading to the upper secondary school final examination “*maturitní zkouška*”¹ (i.e. both general and technical educational programmes) will increase to 75%. Thus the proportion of pupils in educational programmes which do not lead to the final examination, will gradually fall to around 25%. Staff and room capacity used for the lower years in multi-year general secondary schools can be transferred to 4-year educational pro-

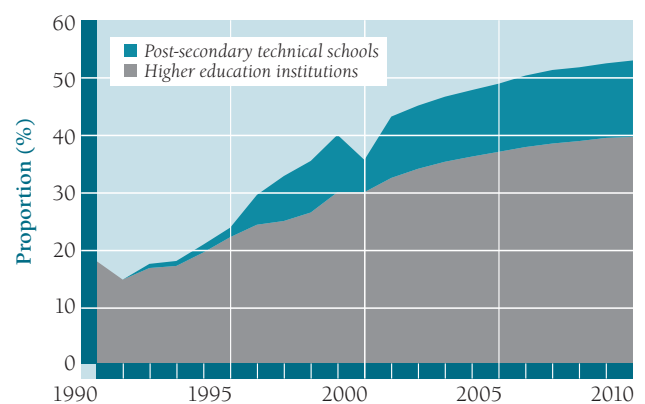
¹ This examination entitles students to continue to higher education.

grammes. It can be assumed that approximately 25% of the population will attend general upper secondary schools.

In addition to the growth of recreational education directly in basic and upper secondary schools, significant growth is also anticipated in basic schools of art, leisure time centres for children and young people, language schools, etc. At the present time, there is one amateur education place for about 3 pupils aged 10 to 18, while in 2010 there will be one place for 2 pupils.

The development of tertiary education corresponds with the concept approved in 1999, according to which 50% of students of a respective age group will be admitted to some form of tertiary education in 2005, rising to 53% of students in 2010. In absolute figures, the total number of students in tertiary institutions will increase from 223,000 in 2000 to 250,000 in 2005. It is necessary to bear in mind that the principal increase in the tertiary sector will not occur in full-time study but in combined, part-time and distance study. Nevertheless, efficient regulation of tertiary education requires first of all a clear-cut specification of the role of individual tertiary education forms, their compatibility, and especially their acceptance and recognition by society as a whole and by students and employers. It is also necessary to project the consequences of developments in the tertiary sphere onto the nature of secondary education.

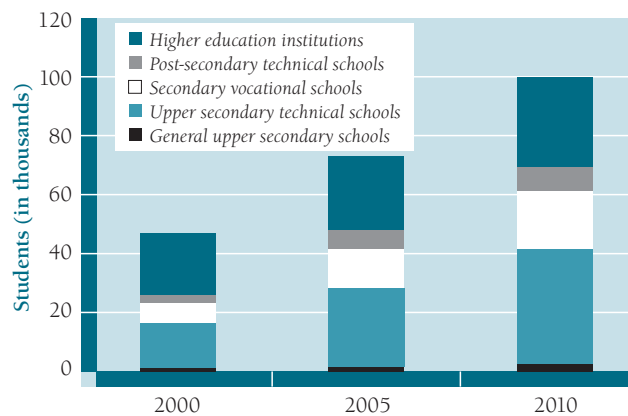
Admission to tertiary education in the respective age cohort, between 1990-2010



The growth in forms of part-time study will be typical in all sectors of the education system. These will include not just part-time study and distance study as a second chance education, but also various courses and training programmes organised by schools as retraining and personal development education, i.e. *different forms of continuing education*,

which will contribute to a real fulfilment of the concept of life-long learning. They will also take place in basic schools or other educational facilities, but will play a decisive role in the secondary and tertiary educational sectors. The number of participants in these forms of secondary and tertiary education will almost double, i.e. from the current 7% to almost 14% in 2010. In absolute numbers this means an increase from 47,000 in 2000 to 100,000 in 2010.

Students in part-time study forms of education in 2000, 2005, and 2010



Recommendations

- ❑ To increase the salaries of educational staff including academic teachers.
- ❑ To substantially increase the proportion of developmental and innovative educational programmes financed by the state, to introduce new forms of innovative funding.
- ❑ To increase the number of upper secondary education students who pass the final examination, the “maturitní zkouška”, to 75%.
- ❑ To provide access to tertiary education for 50% of a population age group.

5. European and international cooperation in education

National education systems represent a significant part of national cultural traditions. In this sense there is an intrinsic logic in the fact that the responsibility for the structure, content or language diversity of education systems remains with individual member states, despite the

advanced stage of European integration. On the other hand, however, economic and social processes which are inherently trans-national and global require an increased degree of cooperation, division of labour, information and experience exchange, and a search for mutual consensus with the aim of finding effective, economically and politically satisfactory solutions to future education problems.

The Czech Republic’s foreign policy has identified itself with the vision of a united, democratic, socially just, prosperous and peaceful Europe without tensions, a Europe of free citizens and cooperating regions. In this context, the international cooperation of the Czech Republic in all aspects of education will be conceived and implemented so that it contributes to the deepening of the country’s integration into Euro-Atlantic and European structures, to the enhancement of regional cooperation and to a systematic application of foreign experience to domestic conditions. It will be implemented both through multilateral cooperation within the framework of international organisations (namely the European Union, the OECD, the Council of Europe and the UN/UNESCO) and through bilateral cooperation. In addition to intergovernmental ties, there will be an increased reliance on direct cooperation at the level of non-governmental organisations, and between institutions and individuals.

5.1. The European Union

The international activities of the Czech Republic in the field of education will be implemented within the framework of its efforts to achieve full membership of the European Union and will fall into four basic areas:

Fulfilment of tasks and commitments resulting from the Czech Republic’s working toward full membership

The main task in the field of education is to ensure that on accession to the European Union Czechs will be able to make full use of their right to study or complete their education in any member state of the European Union in the same way as other EU citizens. On the other hand, the citizens of EU member states will gain the same right to study in the Czech Republic, which means that schools have to be prepared to admit them. This requires compatibility in curricular and examination demands between the Czech Republic and EU member states.

Another task is the recognition of qualifications necessary for pursuing so-called regulated professions in the European Union. The system of recognition of professional qualifications in force in the European Union guarantees that an applicant from one member country can pursue a regulated profession in another country providing that they show they have gained a given qualification in their home state that entitled them to pursue the profession in question. If there are substantial differences between the qualification achieved in the home country and that which is required in a host member country, the applicant must follow an adaptation study course or pass a qualifying examination. The Czech Republic will be obliged to adopt this system and designate a coordinator for it.

Cooperation with Member states of the European Union and associated countries

Despite the fact that article 149 of the Treaty of Amsterdam dealing with cooperation in education proclaims the full responsibility of member states for the content of education and the organisation of education systems as well as their cultural and language diversity and explicitly excludes any harmonisation of acts and other legislation of member states in the field of education with European Union legislation, it enables activities aimed at such principles as follows:

- Applying the European dimension in education content, especially through teaching and promoting the languages of member states;
- Encouraging the mobility of students and teachers, among other things by the recognition of academic diplomas and the duration of study;
- Supporting cooperation between educational institutions;
- Promoting the exchange of information and experience regarding issues of the development of the national education systems of the member states;
- Supporting the development of exchanges of students, youth, teachers and educators;
- Supporting the development of distance education.

The European Union actively promotes cooperation between member states and stimulates it through fundamental political documents. These documents should become - with respect to our future membership - a part of the Czech education-political context and foster convergent development in the direction of its general trends. Among

these trends, particular stress is placed on implementation of the principle of *lifelong learning*, which is realised through deliberately organised *formal* (school) and *non-formal* (out of school) education and also as spontaneous learning in different life situations (*informal education*).

Programmes of European cooperation in education and mobility

The educational programmes of the European Union represent a specific, highly effective instrument by means of which the European Union supports cooperation between individual participating countries, including candidate countries. At the same time the EU aims to promote cooperation between the education sector and industry, research & development, or the economic sphere in general.

The Czech Republic will take part in three educational programmes of the European Union between 2000-2006: Socrates II, Leonardo da Vinci II, and Youth. The Ministry of Education, relevant agencies, educational institutions and individuals are to guarantee organisational and financial conditions for this participation.

Preparation for using European Union structural funds

After accession to the European Union, the Czech Republic will have the possibility of obtaining funding from structural funds of the European Union, including in the fields of employment support and vocational education and training through the European Social Fund, which is the main EU instrument for human resource development. The Ministry of Education will attempt to gain adequate representation during the implementation of pilot regional operating programmes in the area of human resource development, and to gradually create conditions for the effective use of these means for education, in a close link with solutions to the problems of employment and the labour market.

5.2. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Membership in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) makes it possible for the Czech Republic to collaborate multilaterally with a group of economically developed countries. Education is an important part of this collaboration, in addition to economic, financial, social, environmental, and scientific and technical matters. It is carried out through Czech participation in the activities of the Education Committee of the Directo-

rate for Education, Employment, Labour & Social Affairs, in the Governing Board of the Centre for Education Research and Innovation (CERI), in the Institutional Management in Higher Education Program (IMHE), and in the Program of Educational Building (PEB).

The Czech Republic's participation in OECD activities in the field of education will be focused especially on projects dealing with school education in the future, human and social capital, the role of education in sustainable economic growth and development, and the development of information and communication technology in education. The Czech Republic will continue its participation in the INES project (Indicators of Education Systems), within which states and results of education systems are analysed on the basis of the systematic collection of data from all member countries. The comparative data published annually and an analysis of fundamental trends of educational policy in developed countries of the world will be one of the principal instruments for assessing the level of the Czech education system. Participation in the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) project makes it possible to assess the results achieved by 15-year old pupils in Reading, Mathematical and Scientific Literacy in a comparative perspective. The project will become one of the main instruments for monitoring the outcomes of education in the Czech Republic, and for comparing them with those from other countries.

In the coming years, the Ministry of Education will ensure that there is adequate personnel and financial capacity for the Czech Republic's participation in further important OECD programmes and projects resulting from the Education Committee meeting on the level of ministers of OECD member countries in April 2001. The session will define the new mandate for OECD activities in the field of education for the next five years. The mandate will be called "*Investing in Competencies for All*" and will continue to support the development of the education system as a national and international priority resulting from the move towards a knowledge society and the search for sustainable development and strengthening of social cohesion. The main focus will be on the following three fundamental tasks:

- to make lifelong learning rewarding for all, to ensure an equitable provision of education opportunities, and to create social cohesion;
- to develop the human skills needed in a knowledge society and economy;

- to stimulate innovation in teaching and learning at schools through educational research & development, to improve the status of teachers and to increase their professional standard.

It is obvious today that the conclusions of the Education Committee meeting will create a basic thought framework for refining educational strategies in all member countries and thus in the Czech Republic as well.

Collaboration with the OECD will continue to be a significant part of the Czech Republic's international activities in the field of education. Its results will be incorporated into major documents dealing with the conception of Czech educational policy and submitted systematically to policy makers, media, managerial staff, researchers, and institutions for initial and further education of educational staff. It will be important to create favourable organisational and personnel conditions for these efforts.

5.3. The Council of Europe

In the field of education at the present time, the Council of Europe is committed to issues concerning education for democratic citizenship, social cohesion, applying the European dimension in education, language teaching and European language policy, and the history of Europe in the 20th century (including knowledge of the Holocaust). These issues may be considered part of the Czech Republic's educational policy.

The Council of Europe instigated a common agreement between the Council of Europe and UNESCO, which is entitled "*The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region*" (The European Treaty Series, n°165, Council of Europe - UNESCO joint Convention, the so-called *Lisbon Convention*). In this respect, the Council of Europe has a common policy with the European Union, the aim of which is to facilitate the mobility of students. The Czech Republic will continue in developing instruments for implementing the Lisbon Convention, which will simplify the situation of Czech students studying in higher education institutions abroad.

In coming years, the Czech Republic will take part in activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages, which is based in Graz (Austria), and through its membership of steering committees will strive to harmonise the orientation and activities of the Centre with both the activities and initiatives of the Council of Europe connected with Eu-

ropean language policy and the activities necessary for elaborating the new framework conception of language policy in the Czech Republic.

5.4. United Nations/UNESCO

The Ministry of Education is one of the key sectors responsible for meeting the requirements placed on the Czech Republic by both international treaties and pacts of the United Nations and the conclusions of its most important conferences and summits. In the next few years, the Ministry of Education will participate in the preparation of regular reports on adherence to the “*Convention on the Rights of the Child*”, and the “*International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*“. Within the framework of the “*UN Decade for Human Rights Education*“ (1995-2004), the Ministry of Education will take steps to improve further teacher education in this area.

In UNESCO, education is considered a fundamental key to solving worldwide problems resulting from globalisation. In contrast with its other intergovernmental contacts, the Czech Republic here participates together with countries that have not achieved the standard of economically developed countries. Analyses and prognoses of education development elaborated from a worldwide point of view have become a significant resource of ideas for formulating the long-term aims for the development of the Czech education system. For that reason, the long-time strategy of UNESCO in the field of education, drawn up by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century and issued under the title “*Learning: The Treasure within*” is seen as one of the starting points of the Czech educational policy. It is desirable to strengthen the Czech Republic’s participation in the realisation of an action plan to ensure basic education for all people in the world designed for the beginning of the 21st century. The Czech experience will be usable in international analyses of education reforms implemented through UNESCO. National and international cooperation of networks of so-called UNESCO Associated Schools focusing on education for peaceful coexistence, human rights, and sustainable development should be developed more systematically.

It is expected that the future orientation and priorities of UNESCO activities will be stated at the 46th session of

the International Conference on Education in September 2001. The theme of the conference will be “*Learning to live together*“. Individual member states including the Czech Republic will submit their national reports on education at the conference. Analysis of these reports will provide new stimulus for Czech educational policy.

UNESCO institutes provide new opportunities for international cooperation in research. They are: the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris, the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg, the International Bureau of Education (IBE) in Geneva, the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education in Moscow, the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) in Bucharest.

The Czech Republic will continue to seek to participate in UNESCO activities through so-called participatory programmes in the field of education. The Czech UNESCO Commission is expected to be more active in the field of education and the Ministry of Education is to promote its activities.

5.5. Examples of regional cooperation

CEEPUS (Central European Exchange Program for University Studies)

The Czech Republic will continue to support the participation of Czech higher education institutions in this exchange program for students and teachers in the future. The participation will be aimed at comprehensive programmes and networking of universities, and the Czech Republic will ensure the necessary infrastructure. In view of the fact that the program is oriented prevalingly towards matters that are specific to the Central European region and it thus contributes to the process of European integration, the Czech Republic should not fall behind but rather show greater openness.

The Visegrád Group (or Visegrád Four) – the International Visegrád Fund

Within the Visegrád Group (The Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia), the International Visegrád Fund was established to support common activities. Because mainly activities in the field of education and sport are to be promoted in the next years, the Ministry of Education will strive to use resources from the Visegrád fund for education sector needs as effectively as possible. This will

permit a desirable coordination of educational policy in countries with common traditions in education and similar historic development.

Cooperation in the field of the “Bologna Declaration”

Twenty-nine European countries including the Czech Republic signed a common declaration of ministers of education from the European states entitled “The European Higher Education Area”, called the “Bologna declaration”, on the 19th of June 1999. In this important document these European countries committed themselves to gradually bringing their higher education systems closer together so that they will better meet academic needs and consequently those of professional mobility. Other incentives are expected from the meeting of ministers of education, which is to be held in Prague in 2001. (The consequences of this declaration admission and its fulfilment are discussed in detail in Part III, section 7.3.)

5.6. Bilateral Cooperation

The legal framework of bilateral cooperation in education is formed by international agreements, which may be either *governmental* or *sectoral*. These agreements provide a standard form of regulation of the exchange of information on the current state of educational policies of the countries concerned, namely on educational documentation, the exchange of experts, support for teaching respective foreign languages, and create the conditions for bilateral mobility of academic students and teachers.

Special attention should be paid to the Czech Republic’s activities in teaching Czech as a foreign language at higher (and secondary) education institutions abroad, as well as to broadening and improving the offer of research fellowships and study visits and deepening bilateral cooperation through projects.

International aid projects are a very important part of bilateral cooperation. Within this framework, two hundred foreign students enter courses of study leading to bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s degrees at higher education institutions in the Czech Republic each year, students complete research fellowships at Czech universities, Czech

teachers travel to compatriot communities abroad, experts work as visiting professors at foreign universities, short-term visits are arranged, etc.

The Ministry of Education, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will strive for the optimum use of financial means allocated for these activities.

Recommendations

- ❑ To consistently implement the commitments resulting from the Czech Republic’s preparation for accession to the European Union in the field of education, and to create organisational and personnel conditions for the future use of EU structural funds.
- ❑ To stimulate the activities of educational institutions and individuals in relation to participation in EU educational programmes, to encourage activities of agencies that ensure their implementation, and to increase financial support earmarked for final users in order to further deepen cooperation and mobility.
- ❑ To use the conception approaches of the OECD as far as possible, while determining the direction of education development to stimulate the creative and innovative activities of managerial and educational staff and to take part in selected comparative analyses.
- ❑ To encourage the development of cooperation with the Council of Europe in the field of education for democratic citizenship and social cohesion, multicultural education, minority education (especially the Roma minority), and foreign language teaching.
- ❑ To promote implementation of the “World Declaration on Education For All” adopted in Jomtien in cooperation with the UN and the UNESCO and to strive towards adequate forms of promoting education in developing countries.
- ❑ To ensure that significant international documents, the conclusions of meetings of important intergovernmental committees, comparative surveys and studies are freely accessible and to apply them consistently in the education of managerial and educational staff and in research & development activities connected with education.

II. ***Pre-school, Basic and Secondary Education***

A. COMMON ISSUES

During the last decade, the highly centralised and controlled system of basic and secondary (so-called regional) education has been gradually reformed, powers have been shifted to lower levels of administration, and the roles of individual stakeholders have begun to be differentiated. From the very start of this process, both the powers and the responsibilities of school heads have been increasing greatly with the introduction of the concept of a legal entity. The current reform of public administration has created the necessary regional level that had previously been lacking and broadened the role of self-government. The Education Bill sets out the rights and responsibilities of individual partners in the new decentralised and participative system and defines their roles.

The role of the state is primarily to define the rules of the game (to decide on the strategic aims and general direction of development, to specify the competences of participants), to create adequate conditions (primarily in the economic sphere and in support systems), to establish the main mechanisms of indirect management (curricular policy, evaluation, financing, support for school and teacher activities), and to exert steady pressure for the achievement of common goals (using indirect instruments such as innovative financing or career and salary systems). The role of the intermediate regional or municipal level is to defend authentic local interests and to be responsible for the establishment, efficiency and functioning of the school network. The role of schools - i.e. the lowest level of the system - is to exercise their professional responsibility to put into practice those education aims that they set for themselves within the framework of rules prescribed by the state (and to a lesser extent modified by a region or community). Co-operation between public administration and self-governing bodies as well as the participation of society, social partners and parents is needed at all levels.

Instead of a simple system of setting and meeting directives, the complex mechanisms that have been created differentiate, connect and counterbalance individual levels and forms of management with the aim of stimulating the initiative and creativity of all partners as much as possible while pursuing common goals. The relations between the partners are decisive for the proper functioning of the system. From the vertical point of view, this means specifying the roles and responsibilities of all three levels, which

complement rather than restrict each other, and require mutual dialogue and close co-operation. From the horizontal point of view, at the level of the school it means balancing sensitive relations between a school head and a school council, and between a school head and the educational staff and individual teachers. These relations are crucial to an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

Close co-operation of all levels is important mainly to ensure the cross-section functions of the education system, which largely remain in the hands of the centre (primarily the Ministry of Education and the Czech School Inspectorate) and serves as an effective instrument of indirect management. These functions are as follows: *care for the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of education* (Chapter 1 and 2), *ensuring the support and motivation for schools' and teachers' work*, which is more demanding nowadays (Chapter 3), and *looking after human resource development in the sector* (Chapter 4). Individual functions and adequate mechanisms are discussed in separate chapters, but they are very closely interconnected and lead to the building of a common supportive infrastructure. The suggested recommendations and the individual measures have a bearing on each other, so it is essential to implement them as a whole.

1. Changes in the Aims and Content of Education

A number of fundamental changes are under way in both the conception and projection of education, and in its implementation. *Primarily*, the new Education Bill will introduce a *system of multi-level educational programmes*. On one hand, the system makes it possible to decide on a concrete form of education at the same place where the education is provided, so that the education can respond to the needs of pupils and students and create an education culture that is closely connected with the local community life. On the other hand it sets a necessary common core that expresses a consensual view of the society and ensures mutual understanding.

The highest level of the system is represented by *the state educational programme* (the term "the national curriculum" is also used frequently). The Ministry of Education is responsible for drawing up the programme, but other participants in education also take part in this (mainly social partners through the Council for Education and Human Resource Development) and the programme should be ac-

cepted as a governmental decree. It sets out the main principles of state curricular policy, and generally binding requirements, on the basis of which all the aims of education defined in Part I.1. of this document and in the Education Bill are projected. It specifies the human and democratic values education is based on and which should not just be handed on to pupils, but should become a basis of school life and relations between all participants in education. It defines the general aims of education and the general key competences, particularly with respect to personality development, citizen education and preparation for further education or entering the labour market. It specifies those subject areas and content of education that are necessary for achieving education aims and for achieving the competences required of graduates. Knowledge related to both scientific branches and areas of art, physical culture and technology will be proportionally represented in education content along with a special stress on ethical values and principles.

Curricular documents at a lower level are also prepared centrally. These are *framework educational programmes* that specify generally binding requirements for individual levels and branches of education, define a framework for the design of learning plans and formulate rules for the development of school educational programmes.

School educational programmes (“*school curricula*”) are the lowest level of the system. Teaching in concrete schools will be realised according to them. Individual schools will implement them in accordance with their own conditions, aims and plans. Space is also opening up for further development of schools’ autonomy, for full use of their potential, for greater development of teachers’ creative abilities, for greater flexibility of the education system, and for greater effectiveness of education. *Model educational programmes*, along with the methodology for developing these, will serve to facilitate the development of school educational programmes, especially at the outset.

Second, a new conception of curriculum, which is not based simply on acquiring as much factual knowledge as possible, will be used in developing both the framework and school educational programmes. The role of schools lies in providing a systematic and balanced structure of basic concepts and relations that makes it possible to put information into a meaningful context of knowledge and life experience. A proper *balance between the knowledge basis of the curriculum, the development of skills, and the acquisition*

of attitudes and values will be very important. *Interlinking of goals, education content and competences* will be enhanced, and a stress will be put on the *acquisition of key competences*. Education will have a new orientation: *to learn how to know* – managing methods of learning, using information and communication technologies, avoiding a flood of trivial information but learning how process information, turn it into knowledge and apply it, being able to think and assess critically; *to learn how to act and live together* – to be able to work both independently and in teams, to communicate openly with others, to manage conflicts, to respect different views, to understand mutual interdependence; *to learn to be* – to be able to orientate oneself in various situations and to know how to respond, how to solve problems, and to live a fully life, to act more independently, on the basis of one’s own judgement but in accordance with moral standards, and to become conscious of one’s responsibility and to accept it. At the same time, the important things are a quality *system of values*, the development of adequate socio-personal characteristics, an understanding of one’s own personality, respect for others, the ability to understand the spiritual dimension of life and the need to assert sustainable development.

Third, there is considerable emphasis on some areas of education and some forms of teaching will be more frequently used. *Foreign language teaching*, in particular, is significantly strengthened with the goal of being able to communicate in one and later two foreign languages. Education for citizenship and democracy and career orientation will be taught not only in appropriate subjects, but also through extracurricular activities and through the creation of an adequate school environment. There should be a substantial increase in practical activities. There should be enough room in teaching to apply experience acquired from common life and from the world of work, namely through the newly conceived technical education. A *number of new topics* are emerging, such as European integration, multicultural education, environmental education (i.e. education focused on the creation and protection of environment and on sustainable development) and education in a healthy life style. The introduction of these topics supposes teamwork by teachers and the use of various forms of extracurricular activities. *Links between subjects, integrated teaching and new forms of teaching* will be applied, facilitating inner differentiation and even individualisation of education. Project teaching based on active and independent

work by pupils is one example. This provides pupils with an opportunity to delve more deeply into a given topic. The broader application and use of information technology will have a considerable impact on education.

The new concept of curriculum – first of all the emphasis put on the key competences and on acquiring attitudes and values, the strengthening of integration of instruction and relations between different subjects, a greater degree of differentiation, the introduction of new topics and the elaboration of schools’ own educational programme, will be very demanding in terms of schools and teachers and will require systematic training for the latter, as well as steady support. That is one of the main goals of the proposal for a common supporting infrastructure.

Recommendations:

- *To implement the proposed system of educational programmes at all levels*
 - To create a National Programme of Education as a new fundamental curricular document, to discuss it in the National Council for Education and Human Resources and to ensure its legal passing in the form of a government order.
 - To create a system that ensures continuity of framework educational programmes and to prepare methodological instructions for the development of school educational programmes.
 - To use the existing infrastructure – sector institutes, pedagogical centres, higher education institutions – to provide teacher education and methodological assistance to schools including the preparation of model school educational programmes.
- *To introduce new features in the curriculum*
 - To promote the development of key competences as an instrument for transforming the encyclopaedic conception of education.
 - To apply new methods of active teaching, namely project learning, various forms of cross-curricular integration, such as cross-curricular topics and projects, and other forms of extracurricular activities. To utilise these forms to introduce new topics into curricula.
 - To prepare teachers systematically for the new concept of the curriculum and the implementation of new methods and forms of teaching.

- To incorporate the forms and topics mentioned above into the Ministry of Education’s innovative and development programmes.
- *To gradually introduce language teaching in two foreign languages into all types of schools*
 - To introduce teaching of the first foreign language from the third grade of the basic school and to enable all pupils to choose a second foreign language at the second stage of basic school.
 - To gradually ensure continuity of foreign language teaching at upper secondary schools so that graduates with the upper secondary school final examination, “maturitní zkouška”, will have various levels of proficiency in two foreign languages, and those completing upper secondary school without passing the “maturitní zkouška” in at least one foreign language.
 - To implement a number of supporting measures such as broadening initial and in-service teacher education and changing the status of foreign language teachers including lecturers from abroad.
- *To create a set of textbooks and other supporting materials*
 - To create a collection of textbooks, computer and multimedia programmes, and other teaching aids corresponding to the new curriculum, and also a body whose aim would be to promote, initiate and co-ordinate their preparation and to guarantee their quality.
 - To establish an adequate mechanism for quality assurance of these new teaching materials.

2. Improving the Quality of Education

Evaluation is a key area for the proper functioning of a decentralised and participative education system. We use this umbrella term because it does not mean just the traditional assessment of pupil performance, but also the assessment of schools, their individual kinds and types, regions and the education system as a whole. Evaluation encompasses partial dimensions of monitoring, systematic observation of the state of the education system and the collection of information on this, and of the administering of examinations. A higher degree of school autonomy which means that a school is held responsible for its teaching needs to be balanced by a *systematic evaluation of achievements to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its work*. The comparison of outcomes achieved in individual sectors and areas of the education system and of those in other countries provides

objective information necessary for effective management and decision making by all stakeholders including pupils and parents. Thus a coherent system is created that incorporates all levels, and links and balances a number of differentiated forms of evaluation. In broader terms, we are speaking about the creation of *an evaluation environment or evaluation culture, which is based on critical self-reflection* by every link of the education system in every phase of its activities. *Assessment from outside is complemented by assessment from within*, which is linked with efforts to change and is decisive for achieving high quality.

During the last ten years, many things have changed in this area. Probably the most important is our participation in the system of international surveys and comparative research. Further changes – primarily the *implementation of internal school evaluation and its linking with external evaluation performed by the Czech School Inspectorate* – are required by the new Education Bill. The highest priority is to ensure that these changes are put in place and to build a coherent evaluation system that links up the education system as a whole. The system has to be founded on a clear concept of educational policy and on the definition of education objectives, the implications for evaluation and also for preparing the necessary evaluation instruments derived from this. Adequate evaluation standards are to be created for framework educational programmes (e.g. in a form of catalogues of target requirements). However, the development of evaluation instruments and their verification will be a long-term, time consuming matter, very demanding in terms of resources and experts. As yet, there are no mechanisms for drawing conclusions from a completed evaluation regarding improvements in quality of education at the level of the education system, a school or a class.

For this reason it is necessary to support the development of a more generous and differentiated evaluation environment, in which various forms of internal or external evaluation will take place. In order to increase the comparability of results, to balance the subjectivity of assessment and to get sufficient feedback, the existing instruments for external evaluation as well as monitoring of school performance and individual pupil achievement will be utilised to a greater extent and their scope will gradually be broadened. Participation in international surveys will be accompanied by monitoring education outcomes for our own purposes. Internal evaluation, in which assessments by all a school's partners are taken into consideration, will become

one of the main instruments for achieving school autonomy. Internal evaluation will also serve as one of the inputs for evaluation by the Czech School Inspectorate.

The Czech School Inspectorate, as the body responsible for external evaluation of schools, is expected to take a significant part in the preparation, development and verification of evaluation procedures and instruments, including setting standards, criteria and methodology for internal evaluation. Its present prevalingly controlling activities will be supplemented by *guidance and consulting work* aimed to help schools with their internal evaluation and to introduce a new evaluation culture (an adequate new categorisation of the staff is in preparation, which recognises two types of officials, focused on evaluation or on control). The Czech School Inspectorate is expected not only to ascertain the state of education activity in schools and the conditions in which education is taking place, and to identify shortcomings but also to motivate school heads and teachers to work towards improvements. This means not only indicating areas in which schools are not making full use of their opportunities, but also informing them about positive examples and models.

The prerequisite for facilitating the transition between stages of the education system and for the adequate choice of education path is the *establishment of an integral system of pupil assessment* at the end of every lower level of education. This system should gradually lead to a significant reduction in entrance examinations, to an increase in vertical mobility, and to the end of the currently high level of selectivity. This selectivity results from the fact that the criteria used are those formulated by the higher level of education. The assessment which takes place at the end of the lower level, however, is *based on a general diagnosis* of the pupil's development to date, on an assessment of their education achievement (in comparison with the situation at the start), and on assessing their abilities for various forms of education. The assessment is completed by recommendations for further progress. At present, the final assessment is always linked with some form of examination (the "maturitní zkouška" or school leaving examination) at the end of upper secondary schooling, but we recommend the introduction of final assessment at the end of compulsory education, too, in a form that is appropriate to the increasing differentiation of education.

The creation of an integral system of pupil assessment with an emphasis on the diagnostic function will require far-reaching support by experts. *To broaden the existing spe-*

cialised guidance system and to complement this by the *introduction of school psychologists* will, however, be necessary for other reasons as well. The numbers of children at risk, disadvantaged by their environment, pupils with learning difficulties, problems in personality development or social adaptation, pupils using drugs, bullying, and pupils with pre-criminal and criminal behaviour are increasing. New demands are emerging in connection with the changing role of schools. Besides the traditional provision of professional assistance to promote education, career guidance, and counselling about the choice of education paths, important tasks also include increased prevention of social pathology, support for pupils' personal development and harmonisation of relations between family and school, the encouragement of the integration of children with disabilities into normal types of schools and the creation of an inclusive environment. Guidance and counselling services should be focused more on personality development, support of talented and gifted children, and interaction between pupils and teachers, and their preventive role should be emphasised. The services provided by specialised facilities have to be linked with counselling activities taking place in schools and co-ordinated with services provided by other institutions dealing with children, young people, and family care. School psychologists have other important tasks – to help teachers, whose work is very demanding and responsible, and to promote the transformation of schools as such.

Internal evaluation, like the creation of a new evaluation culture, represents a new element in the work of teachers and schools, the elements of which will significantly influence their approaches and character of their work. Systematic training of teachers and all educational staff and an efficient supporting infrastructure will therefore be essential.

Recommendations:

- *To complete the system of evaluation and monitoring*
 - To develop a coherent system of evaluation and monitoring that will involve schools, regions and the education system, and enable the assessment of individual stages and types of schools.
 - To link the national system with the comparison of education outcomes within the framework of international surveys; to ensure the continuing permanent participation of the Czech Republic in these surveys.

- To complete the system of providing information necessary for decision-making by all participants in education (pupils and parents, employers, schools and public administration).
- To create a system of standards, criteria and indicators. To apply internal and external forms of evaluation, to broaden the utilisation of existing instruments for external assessment and to develop other instruments for this purpose.
- To connect internal evaluation of schools (undertaken with the participation of users and partners) with the preparation of an annual report and a long-term project of school development, and to use these together as a background for assessment by the Czech School Inspectorate.
- To establish a special research and development institution – the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring of Education Outcomes.
- *To create a system of final assessment of pupils, to broaden and newly outline guidance and counselling services*
 - To create a coherent system of pupil assessment at the end of every stage of education, based on the diagnosis of abilities and achievements, to improve teachers' diagnostic skills.
 - To gradually introduce the functions of school psychologists and teachers of special education.
 - To broaden the existing system of education and psychological guidance, to co-ordinate its services with guidance and counselling services provided in schools and other institutions.
 - To increase the number of students in higher education institutions in the fields of psychology, special pedagogy, and social work.
 - To introduce an integral system of professional development of guidance and counselling staff linked with a system of in-service education for them and a system of technical and methodological support (supervision).

3. Internal Transformation of Schools

Schools have been facing a number of changes and will have even more to face in coming years. These include *changes in external status, the place of a school* in the education system, its relations with other levels of the system and with society, which derive from their gaining a certain

degree of autonomy. There is also an internal transformation of schools, mainly the transformation of their *functions, environment and climate*. The education and socialising role of a school is becoming more important and a school is seen as an equal community of partners learning from each other, teachers, pupils and their parents.

All these changes – the change in external status and the internal transformation of a school – concern the whole spectrum of activities: the traditional tasks of a school are changing (education goals and content, teaching styles, the relationship between teachers and pupils, pupil assessment), many new tasks are being introduced as a result of new ways of management (such as project management), and new mechanisms are being established. These are putting new requirements on school and teachers, not only in terms of new professional and personal qualities, such as creativity, initiative, personal responsibility and professionalism, but also of the strengthening of the teamwork throughout the school, the development and implementation of a long-term vision, a common vision of their development, a capacity for joint self-reflection, a realistic assessment of their own strengths and the stating of their own goals. The participation of parents, pupils and students is necessary here. The current prevailing orientation towards external motivation of pupils must gradually be transformed into the use of internal motivation based on self-knowledge and the acceptance of personal responsibility. All participants have to change traditional attitudes, to take on new roles and behaviour patterns and to gain new skills.

Such a far-reaching change in normal relationships carries certain risks, namely the risk of rejection. It cannot be ordered, but must be implemented through a well thought out system of incentives, opportunities, and the transfer of experience. *Voluntary initiative on the part of schools is fundamental to this, but this will require systematic and purposeful support and clear guidance from the centre. Close contacts between schools* are another important element. They result in a broadening of the network as still more schools join, according to their interests and their degree of readiness.

The implementation will be long-term and gradual. It will require systematic, complex and lasting support, which will have three objectives: *to provide instruments* for the implementation of changes; *to help schools* to fulfil the new tasks that, with some exceptions, they are not prepared for; and finally, *to open inner resources of transformation*, to use the creative potential of schools, which should slowly

become focuses of further development of the education system. It is possible to utilise experience from the implementation of several tried and tested programmes and alternative conceptions that set themselves similar or even identical aims.

The proposed recommendations make up an entire functional whole. They connect support from above with initiative and creativity of schools, in order to make the best possible use of the creative work of the best teachers and schools, but, above all, in order to motivate and mobilise other schools to work towards their own transformation.

First, we recommend establishing of a system of instruments necessary for implementing school autonomy. Some of these have already been put into practice, others are contained in the Education Bill, and the task of the recommendation is to bring them together. *The long-term programme of school development* is a basic document for the management of school transformation, for developing school educational programmes, for assessment by the Czech School Inspectorate as well as for an internal evaluation, for further education of educational staff, and for participation in the programme of innovative financing. The head of a school is responsible for drawing up the school programme, but this is a collective task. Educational staff and school partners take part in drawing this up and this in itself acts as education for change in which self-reflection by the school has a central part to play. Participation in the preparation and implementation of a school development project is a suitable criterion for teacher assessment and their career progress. The preparation, implementation and verification of the school development plan are thus linked with other instruments: *a school educational programme, internal evaluation of a school* as a background for preparing a development plan, and the conclusion of its implementation, *the annual report* informing all school partners of the results achieved. The creation of all these instruments places considerable demands on schools, the most demanding of which are the role and personality of school heads, who should act in a non-authoritarian way, but with the authority of democratic leader. There is a new possibility to differentiate the approach of individual schools according to their efforts to manage their own development in compliance with a professionally prepared project and through this to reveal new inner resources for the transformation.

Second, we propose to establish the Programme of School Development as a form of innovative financing. It should

systematically encourage voluntary initiatives by schools in raising the quality of education, broadening the education offer and introducing innovation, and at the same time orientate the initiative towards long-term strategic aims. Schools will be entitled to ask for financial support from the Ministry of Education, connected with guaranteed further conditions for their creative activity, providing they submit a project and meet certain entry criteria. The work of schools will be systematically monitored and assessed and the dissemination of results will be promoted. Participation in the programme is supposed to be at various levels or in various categories, according to how demanding the goals that the school sets in the project are – quality improvement, dissemination of innovation and methodological guidance, an offer of further education, involvement in initial teacher education (in case of a clinical or laboratory school). The programme is sufficiently flexible to enable the provision of various additional services, verification and implementation of goal-directed programmes of state educational policy, various forms of co-operation between schools and between schools and faculties of education, the availability of methodological guidance and participation in continuing education. This programme also makes it possible to differentiate between approaches to individual schools. It could become a basis for a new relationship between the Ministry of Education and schools. The long-term aim of the programme is to create a network of high quality schools which should motivate the other schools to reach the same level.

Third, we propose that the newly created network of pedagogical centres should serve as a *common infrastructure* that will co-ordinate and organise various forms of support for the work of both educational staff or school teams and individual teachers. Its sphere of activity will not be narrowly defined, but will encompass in-service training as well as consulting, methodological and information activities, it will promote the fulfilment of all new tasks introduced by the new conception of curriculum and evaluation, preparation and implementation of school projects and other instruments for introducing school autonomy. The network will function not only from above to disseminate the development and innovative programmes of the Ministry of Education, but also from the bottom up to encourage initiative and co-operation among schools and disseminate the experience of different schools. It will make a substantial contribution to linking all three levels – the centre (i.e. the

Ministry of Education and the Czech School Inspectorate), regions and schools, but in particular it should link the activities of pedagogical centres with those of the Inspectorate and regional self-governments and other subordinate organisations. It will form a basis for regional co-operation, in which higher education institutions, especially their faculties of education, will also participate.

The changes schools are expected to undergo are largely the result of updating and applying scientific knowledge about education to the activities of teachers and schools. However, the prevailing part of this knowledge is still outside the present school gates. That is the reason why, *fourth*, we suggest *establishing a Council of Experts* – scientists, who are systematically engaged in the transfer or transformation of knowledge of relevant sciences (namely pedagogy, psychology and sociology) into the practical sphere of education. It is the only way to ensure that the necessary school development will not be suppressed by administrative and routine tendencies.

Recommendations:

- ❑ *To create a coherent set of instruments for school autonomy*
 - To work out a methodology for preparing and drawing up long-term programme of school development; for preparing and implementing school educational programmes; for writing annual reports.
 - To provide relevant educational programmes for school heads, teachers and other educational staff.
- ❑ *To establish a Programme of School Development*
 - To work out principles of innovative financing and set up a mechanism for this.
 - To ensure the dissemination of the experience of the best schools and to pass on this experience to other schools as they become ready for it.
 - To support networking of co-operative schools.
- ❑ *To build a common supporting infrastructure*
 - To use the newly established network of pedagogical centres to co-ordinate and organise in-service training of the educational staff, consulting, methodological and formation activities, dissemination of development and innovative programmes of the Ministry of Education, dissemination of schools' experience, and mutual co-operation.
 - To use pedagogical centres to prepare educational staff for new tasks which are introduced by the recom-

mentations for curriculum, evaluation, project elaboration and other applications of school autonomy.

- To link the activities of pedagogical centres with those of the Czech School Inspectorate and regional governments and thus establish a basis for regional co-operation.
- To co-operate closely with higher education institutions and their faculties of education in the region and ensure utilisation of their scientific and pedagogical capacities.
- To establish a group of experts for the transfer of scientific knowledge into education practice and to affiliate it to the Council for Education and Human Resource Development.

4. Educational Staff as Supporters of Changes

The implementation of changes in education is unthinkable without the active co-operation and direct participation of teachers and other educational staff. The increased complexity, psychological strain and time load of their work has made it much more demanding. Requirements for their personal and professional qualities have risen, their duties and personal responsibilities have increased. Human resource development in education is therefore a task of primary importance which has to be carried out in different aspects at the same time. It is necessary to introduce a new concept of teacher education at higher education institutions and of in-service training as well, in order to systematically support their work, to improve their motivation for active personal and school development and to make teaching an attractive profession.

The precondition is *improving the levels of teachers' salaries* as formulated in the *Main Goals of Educational Policy*. The participation of teacher representatives not only in formulating educational policy and the development of educational programmes but also in stipulating goals of in-service training and changing working conditions is equally important. The efforts of teacher trade unions and pedagogical initiatives to date have to be brought together and the process of *shaping an autonomous socio-professional group* leading to working out an ethical code for the teaching profession and the establishment of an umbrella professional association must be strengthened.

Moreover, it is necessary to *stipulate obligatory general and specific preconditions* for entering educational professions. A new way of selecting applicants for teacher education based on an assessment of their motivation and personal qualities should be introduced. Analysis of existing study programmes and fields of teacher education has revealed that the basic profiles, contents of study and output requirements used in state examinations for first degrees are so different that there is no guarantee that all graduates are of the same standard. One remedy would be to introduce legislation prescribing a standard for teacher qualifications to be used as criterion for the accreditation of study programmes and fields designed by faculties, while still fully respecting the autonomy of higher education institutions. The standard would also include a binding framework structure of output requirements, define key components of qualifications (subject-specific, general education and personal, pedagogical-psychological, subject-related methodological and teaching practical) and the resulting structure of study components. The pedagogical-psychological component should be strengthened to 20-25% of time or credit requirements, with general university basics set at around 30%. Teaching practice involved in pedagogical-psychological and subject specific training should represent 10-12% of the time schedule of teaching study programmes. The quality of subject-specific study should also be improved and the development of field and subject specific methodology should be promoted.

It is also necessary to solve the problem of so-called complementary pedagogical study, which enables graduates from other faculties to gain the pedagogical qualification that is required of subject teachers. This should be a consecutive study programme leading to a state examination, which is subject to accreditation under the same conditions as other teaching study programmes.

The academic level of study does not in itself guarantee a sufficient quality of teacher training. For a long time, teacher education has been criticised for being out of touch with practice, and inadequately focused on the *development of socio-personal qualities and professional abilities*. Teacher education at present is stronger in pedagogical traditionalism than in the application of innovative approaches and the development of new relationships between education and social life. Therefore, it will be necessary to replace the traditional academic concept of teaching the pedagogical component of teacher education in isolated disciplines

by a *functionally integrated* concept based on experiential learning, training in theoretical reflection and self-reflection and on the application of methods of action research, with the subject specific component being more bound to the pedagogical-psychological one. Socio-personal development and training in communicative skills will occupy a very important position.

Further changes in teacher training are due to changes in teaching, new requirements placed on schools, such as increasing differentiation or even individualisation of teaching, new forms of group and independent work by pupils, integration of children with special needs, the introduction of compensatory programmes, promoting the education function of schools, inclusive education, new forms of team work by teachers, and the development of curricular and other documents. One essential part of initial education of teachers and other educational staff is an introduction to multicultural education, education for tolerance and against racism, including questions connected with the Holocaust.

These increasingly demanding tasks require full higher education qualification at the master's level for teachers in basic and secondary schools and bachelor's studies for teachers in kindergartens, out-of-school activities educators and instructors. (In this respect, it is necessary to consider a definition of a new category of 'auxiliary teaching staff' or 'teacher's assistant' with reduced demands for qualifications.) In accordance with such a concept of initial education, the practice of *mentoring beginning teachers* must be renewed. This is a task for experienced teachers with a specific qualification.

The obvious shortcomings in the effectiveness of teacher education are rooted largely in the present concept of clinical training schools. It will be necessary to legislatively define the relations between them and the respective faculty, similar to teaching hospitals. Beside these 'clinical' schools, there is also a need to substantially raise the number of quality 'laboratory' schools, where some faculty teachers can work and students can do their teaching practice. Adequate conditions for such schools must be created.

Another important measure is the institutional reinforcing of faculties of education within universities. In comparison with other faculties, where teachers are also trained, the faculties of education have specific, indispensable tasks - to shape the scientific basis for education research, to dis-

seminate innovation and to become centres of professional communication among all categories of teachers and with education authorities at central and regional levels. They have a central, coordinating role to play in the fields of teacher education and educational research and the Ministry of Education will support their role.

The qualification acquired in initial teacher education today is the most important criterion for the salary range of teachers. Salary increments are influenced by years of service. If we want to distinguish between the quality and complexity the work of teachers and other educational staff and express this in salary terms, it is necessary to develop *a system of career progression with a related salary progression*. This system, *based on the differentiation and categorisation of education activities* and on defining their qualification requirements, will allow an individual to advance professionally according to his functional specialisation as well as the quality and creativity of his work (in the case of heads of schools) towards a higher qualification and so higher salary levels. The system will introduce a number of qualification categories for teachers - such as a specialist in the development of a school educational programme and evaluation of school performance, a head of a methodological commission, an educational adviser, a co-operating or faculty teacher, a methodological and inspection expert - with a right to higher salaries. It will continue with other categories of management staff, starting with school heads, and define the standards for their qualifications. This system would link the individual and the team, school-wide dimensions of teacher work. It is expected to motivate teachers and other educational staff to work towards their professional and personal development, but above all for the development of the school as a whole.

Another complex system that is to be established is *a system of sector personnel policy* in the sense of human resource development. The main goal of the system is gradual long-term preparation and preliminary selection of suitable officials for demanding managerial and methodological tasks at the levels of schools, local and regional administration, supporting infrastructure and centre (the Ministry of Education and its subordinate organisations, the Czech School Inspectorate). The system of career progress will thus be enriched in terms of further development of the education system and at the same time create prerequisites for this development. Quantitative and qualitative monitoring of qualification structures, features, conditions and at-

titudes of teachers will constitute a basis for management and decision-making in education and for proposals for necessary intervention.

Continuing education and self-education of educational staff is an important characteristic of the teaching profession, its right and duty, and one of the fundamental criteria for assessment of teacher quality. Nowadays, the roles and everyday work of teachers and other educational staff, especially school heads and inspectors are changing greatly, and continuing in-service training represents an important component of individual development as well as one of the most significant elements of the organisation of school life. One of the main tasks of the Ministry of Education in managing the change is the *systematic support* of in-service training through its planned financing, the introduction of developmental programmes and ensuring the underpinning infrastructure. The proposed *common underpinning infrastructure* based on the network of pedagogical centres is sufficiently broad and flexible to link all those who need further education and those who are able to provide it. It will allow for the *participation of the best teachers and schools* and maximum utilisation of their experience, and at the same time the maximum *use of the potential* of higher education institutions, namely *faculties of education*.

Recommendations

- *To improve the position of educational staff as a socio-professional group*
 - To increase gradually salary levels in education. To focus the increase in salaries primarily on quality improvement and differentiation of activities.
 - To encourage various forms of professional associations and initiate the establishment of an umbrella professional organisation.
 - To prepare a fundamental document on the position of teachers that will define their rights and duties.
- *To improve the quality and functionality of initial teacher education*
 - To introduce a requirement of higher education for other categories of educational staff (kindergarten teachers, educators, instructors).
 - To introduce a standard for teacher qualifications as a criterion for the accreditation of study programmes.
 - To elaborate and introduce instruments for the selection of suitable applicants for the teaching profession.

- To define the position and role of faculty (clinical and laboratory) schools in the dissemination of the new concept of education and in providing teaching practice.
- To promote the development of specialist and subject-specific methodology.
- To revive the practice of mentoring beginning teachers.
- To support systematic research, development and action projects of faculties of education.
- *To differentiate education activities and to implement a system of career and salary progression*
 - To differentiate individual education activities, to introduce adequate categories and degrees of qualification.
 - To introduce a system of career progression based on reaching a qualification category and degree.
 - To link salary progression with career progression.
- *To establish a system of human resource development*
 - To propose a system of monitoring selective data on teachers and other educational staff.
 - To establish a system of preliminary selection and long-term preparation for demanding managerial and methodological functions.
 - To develop study programmes leading to a certificate for new qualification categories of educational staff.

B. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF INDIVIDUAL LEVELS AND FIELDS OF EDUCATION

5. Pre-school Education

The first years of life have a determining influence on the development of physical and psychological qualities and social attitudes of children and are of key importance in the formation of personality. It is *parents who are primarily responsible for their children's education* and parents are also their first teachers.

Institutional pre-school education supports the education influence of the family, complements it with specific incentives, develops and enriches them. Thus, it becomes a place where children acquire mainly social experience, basic knowledge of the world around them and the first stimuli for further education and lifelong learning.

The advantage of institutional pre-school education lies in *professional guidance of children, the planned creation of suitable conditions for their development and education*. In

cases of necessity, it can *compensate for shortcomings in meeting a child's needs and in developing stimulation*. Disadvantaged children receive assistance to balance differences and to improve their life and education chances.

At present, institutional pre-school education is provided prevalently *in kindergartens and involves usually children from three to six years of age*. Pre-school education is not compulsory. Its concept, aims and organisation have a positive influence on children's future success, both their performance and their ability to integrate into society. Nowadays, a new need is emerging and in exceptional cases children younger than three years could be admitted, as surveys show that 20% of children now come from single parent families.

In view of the importance of pre-school education as the initial phase of lifelong learning it is necessary *to further improve its quality and accessibility*. The major conditions for this are as follows – strengthening the position of pre-school education in the system of lifelong learning, making it more accessible, reevaluating the goals and content of pre-school education, and raising the qualifications of educational staff in pre-school education.

Recommendations:

- ❑ ***To guarantee the legal right of every child of pre-school age to pre-school education and provide a real opportunity to exercise this.***
 - To anchor pre-school education as an integral part of education system (pre-school level of education).
 - To stipulate by law that communities have an obligation to provide pre-school education for all children in a given age whose parents ask for it.
 - To utilise demographic decline and ensure general accessibility of pre-school education without any limitations, to establish preparatory classes in kindergartens and to integrate socially, culturally and physically or mentally handicapped children.
 - To establish preparatory classes intended for six-year-old children in basic schools only when no other solution is possible and ensure that these classes to work in accordance with strictly defined conditions.
 - To develop a system of social allowances and design a form of compensation for kindergartens to ensure that fees are not an obstacle to children participating in pre-school education.

- To adapt the financial normative to children with special needs, i.e. to differentiate this according the complexity of care needed.
- To enable a pre-school teacher to take part in decision making about a child starting or postponing compulsory education in basic school (reasons: expertise, long-term knowledge of a child).
- To create opportunities, in co-operation with other sectors involved in child care and education (the Ministries of Health, and Labour and Social Affairs), to develop programmes that could provide necessary social and expert assistance in the care and education of children younger than three years of age. To use existing experience and to co-operate with non-profit organisations in this area.
- In the framework of lifelong learning to promote the development of:
 - a) programmes ensuring quality care and education for children under three years of age especially through co-operation with the family and/or mother;
 - b) programmes that in the case of children with special needs would compensate for the children's handicaps (i.e. programmes providing a therapeutic environment, helping in the prevention and early diagnosis of developmental impairments, etc.) with particular regard to the needs of the Roma population.
 - c) programmes that would enable children living with their families to participate with the agreement of the family, in institutional education which enriches a child's activity and expertly supports its personal and social development.
- ❑ ***To elaborate a framework programme for pre-school education and to formulate new framework goals, contents and expected outcomes of education in it (child competences). At the same time, to stipulate conditions for the provision of pre-school education. To ensure that the framework programme is applied in accordance with the concrete conditions of schools and children – school curricula.***
 - To provide a legal basis for the framework programme of pre-school education, ensuring the requirement for every education institution to work in accordance with a school educational programme.
 - To create opportunities for children to be in contact with a healthy natural environment as much as pos-

sible, as such contact provides children with complex information necessary to understand functioning relations and allows them to be active.

- To allocate a part of public resources to fund research programmes intended to improve the quality of pre-school education.
- *To provide bachelor's programmes in faculties of education of universities or in post-secondary technical schools for pre-school teachers. The main reason for this is the broad spectrum of expert, special pedagogic and social knowledge and skills that pre-school teachers have to master. This measure can be seen also as an effort to improve their social and professional status.*
- To legislate for changes in required education and qualifications.
- To establish and financially secure a new study branch for initial education of pre-school teachers and compensatory programmes for in-service training. To develop other forms of further education within pedagogical centres.
- To transform existing upper secondary pedagogical schools, either into post-secondary technical schools or into upper secondary schools with general educational programmes, possibly with a pedagogical orientation (but not providing a full teaching qualification).

6. Basic Education

At present, basic education is the only phase of education that is compulsory for every child in the Czech Republic, and so lays the basis for the lifelong learning of the entire population.

Hence it is very important what education opportunities it offers, what educational environment it creates, how it motivates people to learn, how it influences the personal development of each pupil, how it prepares them for life and for living and acting together with others, how it equips them for personal life and work, as well as to adapt in today's fast-moving world.

Compulsory schooling is the main period when children with all levels of ability and from all social classes acquire experience in social relations in naturally heterogeneous groups of their peers. They inevitably influence each other and essential social capital is built as a precondition for reaching agreements in social, political and working matters in the future.

Basic education is divided into stages 1 and 2. Each stage has its own specific educational aims, methods and forms of work, but also its problems which have to be solved, and therefore they are dealt with separately here.

6.1. The first stage of basic education

From the point of view of pupil development, the first stage of basic education is a *very important and pedagogically specific stage of education*. For pupils it means a *transition* from freer and friendlier family life and pre-school education to *systematic compulsory education*. Entry into basic education is one of the most demanding periods an individual has to cope with during their life. It brings changes in timetables and routines, a different and more regular style of work, a new environment, people and relations, and changes in eating, drinking and motional routines.

These are the reasons why the first stage of basic education should have a greater respect for the *natural needs of pupils and their different levels* of maturity and learning and adjust teaching programmes in response to this.

The basis for a new approach to the first stage of basic education should thus be *as complex as possible a recognition of the individual needs and abilities of every pupil and respect for these both in teaching and in school life*. Pupils should not be shaped according to a uniform model. Every pupil has a right to their own pace, to make mistakes and find solutions, to assessment that reflects individual changes in learning and socialisation, to room for individual expression and views, for mutual communication, satisfaction of physiological needs, the need for safety, security, feeling, fellowship, self-confidence, and self-fulfilment. This trend should also *reduce the number of cases when a child defers starting school*, which reflect parents' fear that their children will experience difficulties at school, and also the *adverse impacts of initial failures on a child's relations with school, teachers and further education*.

The main purpose of the first stage is to create the conditions for lifelong learning - acquiring basic habits and skills for work in and outside school and a motivation to learn, mastering basic literacy as an instrument for further successful education, the gradual forming of a coherent view of the world, including relations to the environment based on a responsive, knowledge and active approach to its protection, the cultivation of a pupil's personality (their attitudes, value orientation, and interests) and of their health.

The first stage of basic education has an essential role in the early correction of possible disadvantages, but also in the recognition and *encouragement of different pupils' interests, abilities or talents*. Using systematic support of every individual it is necessary to *gradually minimise the separation of gifted pupils into selective classes* throughout their studies. Similarly it is necessary to *minimise the permanent separation of pupils with social, health and learning problems*.

Changes in the concept of instruction mean above all *changes in teachers' and parents' thinking*. This means a change in their view of the needs and abilities of pupils, on the goals of education, on the content of study and methods for achieving the goals. It also means *changes in the pedagogical autonomy of teachers* - i.e. the possibility to develop teaching materials that are based on the concrete level of pupils, the conditions of a school, a teacher's own working style and their idea of how to offer high quality instruction and to try out new methods and forms of teaching.

The basis for such a conception of education is a *favourable social, emotional and working atmosphere*. Schools must be places where pupils experience positive feelings and interesting experiences. The prevailing emphasis on performance and rapid progress in learning based on a steady model of lessons, on passing on ready-made knowledge, on enforced discipline, on competition and success at the expense of others, on the dominant position of teachers, on permanent guidance and overprotection of pupils must be replaced by a *greater emphasis on active learning* (including a return to play and playing activities), *on a combination of activities inside and outside the school building, with an emphasis on activities in the natural environment which enable pupils to acquire experiences that cannot be conveyed in any other way, on a variety of teaching methods*, which encourage pupils to search, ask questions, express their own views, make mistakes, create, invent and discover, *on communication and co-operation between pupils or between pupils and teachers, on concrete partial tasks suited to pupils' abilities, on help and support in problem solving, and also on an overall positive character of assessment*. It is necessary to increase activities in the natural environment as a means of learning, to emphasise environmental education and to improve pupils' physical fitness.

An appropriate working atmosphere, close human contacts between teachers and pupils and between pupils, which are transformed into generally recognised codes (rules), based on mutual understanding, respect, co-operation, activity

and space for everybody, are all very important for the education of pupils in a given age.

Every teacher should be able to *work individually with the whole range of the child population* and to master basic procedures in the correction of learning and other problems. Teachers at the first stage have to be part of an *expert team* equipped with specific skills. They should have their representatives in school management. Their *collaboration with expert teams of teachers at the second stage* in creating of favourable climate in the school and possibly the school curriculum is very important, as is *co-operation with pupils' parents*, who remain the highest authority for pupils in this period and without whose assistance education and the solving of possible problems is more difficult.

6.2. The second stage of basic education

The second stage of basic education completes basic (compulsory) education. At present, it takes place at the second stage of basic schools or in the lower grades of multi-year secondary schools (general secondary schools - "gymnázium" and conservatories). Sociologists see this selection of children as socially unjust, because it reflects advantages given by the knowledge, economic and social position of the families the children come from (so-called cultural capital), rather than pupils' real intellectual abilities.

How demanding the second stage is depends on the considerable hormonal, physical, psychological and personality changes taking place in pupils during puberty, which begins earlier now than in former generations. These changes reveal themselves especially in *more marked individual differences between pupils* - in efforts to express their own identity, to set themselves apart from others, in wide fluctuations of performance, working and living, interests, feelings and moods, views and standpoints, in criticism of adults and their world, in contradictory assessments of themselves, their capabilities and ideas about the future and their future occupation. Another significant feature of this period is the *rejecting of tested truths* and the effort to experience everything themselves.

All these polarities are linked with developmental leaps or stagnations and can be both a driving force and a brake on co-operation. When a suitable mode of work based on respect for individual conditions and tolerance of the qualities of others is applied, *the diversity and mutual influence among members of a natural population group create a basis*

for the natural development of all – for knowledge of life in various situations and relations, for mastering and solving conflicts. Therefore class collectives of pupils should remain together as long as possible even in this period.

It has been proven by international and Czech pedagogical experience that integrated schools intended for the whole population of children at the age of compulsory schooling are able to satisfy even the special education needs of highly gifted and talented pupils, provided that their efforts at differentiation and individualisation of teaching are promoted.

The main purpose of the second stage is to provide pupils with as good a basis of general education as possible. This means equipping them with clear attitudes towards basic human values and with such general knowledge and practical skills as enable them to continue in further increasingly specialised education and in the pursuit of various leisure activities, without either encouraging or limiting them in exploring new fields of human knowledge and in taking up new activities.

The emphasis is on motivation for learning, on mastering of basic strategies of learning, developing their own abilities and interests, creativity and creative problem solving, mastering effective communication, on co-operation and respect for other people's work, the ability to act as a free personality, on tolerance and considerateness, on a sensitive and perceptive attitude towards people and nature, but also on knowledge and the ability to influence a situation in the right direction, on a responsible attitude towards themselves and their health, on a realistic estimate of their own resources.

At this stage of basic education, the most important thing is to continue recognising, encouraging and development *individual pupils' potential*. Teachers have to learn how to react better to the individual needs of pupils and their current level of knowledge, and to provide them with effective support. *The class-teacher* has a significant role to play and should accompany the children during as long a period of compulsory education as possible. That is why it is very important to *differentiate between obligatory and optional parts elements* at this stage of education. Linked with this is the attempt to postpone decision-making on future specialisation but at the same time to provide pupils with a sufficient idea of further study, career and life path. Psychological surveys both in this country and elsewhere have shown that the age of 11 is too early for such fundamental decisions.

Relations between teachers and pupils are very important and must be based on confidence, mutual respect, room for everybody to express their views, consistency in work and the accomplishment of tasks, objective assessment, the introduction of an active element of democracy into school life, on transferring a larger part on responsibility for their own behaviour to pupils.

Assessment should in principle be based on clearly set tasks or fields of education and on rules and criteria that are set out clearly in advance. It must be above all aimed to *reveal what pupils know*, not to discover mistakes and inadequacies.

Changes in the conception of teaching at the second stage of basic education mean primarily a consistent shift from *passing on ready-made knowledge* – systems, reviews and values – to *ways of their searching and finding*, from the prevailing dominant role of a teacher as a mediator of learning to using the natural activity of pupils of a given age and their extracurricular interests and knowledge to develop their own larger projects and work based on finding and classifying information.

Therefore teachers need to *move beyond a universal scheme of the teaching process* and a static structure of lessons and teaching methods, and rethink the effective and ineffective utilisation of teaching time, *to renew close co-operation with teachers* of the same and apparently different subjects.

The second stage of basic education is based largely on a *mingling of life in school with life outside school*. Thus the differences between 'learned at school' and 'acquired elsewhere' have blurred and there is room for testing the truthfulness and functionality of the knowledge presented. The *relationship between schools and pupils' parents* is still important and a pupil should take part in this dialogue.

Recommendations:

- ❑ **To accentuate the importance and specific elements of the first and the second stages of basic education in major pedagogical documents and consequent elements of the education system.**
- To define the first and the second stages of basic education in law as two independent education levels with specific goals and needs.
- To see the professional qualifications of teachers at the first stage of basic education as the equivalent to the subject-specific education of teachers at higher

stages (in terms of its importance, complexity and remuneration).

□ **To create a framework educational programme for basic education and to stipulate specific goals, contents, output key competences and conditions for education at the first and the second stages of basic education. To support the development of school educational programmes with specific features for each of the first and the second stages.**

- To apply a system of school stimulation for the preparation and introduction of high quality educational programmes, for internal differentiation and profiling of schools in accordance with pupils' needs.
- To increase teachers' autonomy by a legislatively guaranteed choice of methods and forms of teaching in basic education, but also the responsibility for changes in the concept of instruction.

□ **To provide a comprehensive solution for a gradual transition towards integrated and internally differentiated basic education which makes it possible to create the best possible conditions for all pupils, for the development of talents and the integration of pupils with health and social disadvantages, and which removes the reasons for separating pupils into specialised schools and classes.**

At the first stage:

- To encourage more variety in the organisation and individualisation of teaching at the first stage of basic education by increasing the numbers of teaching hours in teaching plans.
- To use the fall in the numbers of pupils to fund a broadening and differentiation of teaching (strengthening of language teaching starting from the third grade, of computing skills, optional subjects, project teaching, introduction of teaching assistants, school psychologists, etc.).

At the second stage:

- To begin a planned reduction of multiyear programmes of general secondary schools ("gymnázium"), introducing legislation on this measure, as one of the principle changes in the education system.
- To legislatively, organisationally, personally, materially and financially guarantee the wealth of content and inner differentiation of the second stage of basic

education, making it possible to preserve natural heterogeneous groups of pupils in a single class.

- By setting a flexible upper limit of teaching hours in teaching plans in accordance with a school's conditions, to allow a higher proportion of optional subjects, the integration of subjects, two levels of subject teaching, teaching in blocks and projects, teaching in heterogeneous groups, free work, teaching according to a week plan, teaching on site and other forms of differentiation and individualisation in accordance with the interests and special needs of pupils.
- To link activities resulting from a teaching plan to a broad offer of optional and leisure time activities in the school routine. To involve pupils' parents as far as possible in all school activities.
- To promote the quality of the second stage of basic education by creating the positions of assistant or auxiliary teacher, school psychologist, and coordinators of concrete education activities.
- To provide grants to support programmes and projects for the development of an internally differentiated second stage of basic education.
- To conduct on-going comparative research that could prove the effectiveness of changes implemented at the second stage of basic education. To publish the results and good experiences of schools.

□ **To emphasise the overall transformation of school life and teaching, to support innovative programmes and activities in response to the needs of pupils at given age.**

- To change the climate in classrooms, the ways of motivating pupils, to identify and test different methods and forms of instruction, to publish the experience of the best teachers, to initiate the preparation of new teaching materials, to encourage research to assess innovative changes at the first and second stages through the provision of grants.
- To introduce the position of an education assistant filled by graduates from upper secondary schools and post-secondary technical schools specialising in pedagogical and social subjects, and possibly by teacher education graduates.
- To introduce changes in pupil assessment, to assess pupils principally with respect to their individual performance. To enable verbal assessment during the

whole first stage of basic education, based on consensus between school and parents.

- To introduce a system of final or continuous assessment of pupils' learning, the conclusions of which would be accepted by upper secondary schools at admission to these schools.
 - To emphasise continuous assessment of pupils, not by examination. To end the first stage of basic education with general assessment of a child's development, as an important report for the child and its parents, which should promote the child's further development. To end the second stage of basic education with a general assessment of a pupil's development, of their potential for future education and a recommendation of branches of study or vocational training that should become a basis for their admission.
 - In evaluating a school, to concentrate on the work of school management, higher participation of teachers in deciding the content and organisation of education, co-operation between teachers in their professional work, structuring of instruction, its quality and challenges, the general atmosphere of school life, communication between pupils and teachers, methods of assessing education outcomes, and close co-operation with parents. To develop criteria for this evaluation.
 - To give recognition to teachers working with pupils with social and health disadvantages as well as talented pupils, for methodological coordination of a given education area at school, for guidance of teacher students (faculty teachers) and for other additional activities.
 - To introduce improvements in the system of producing textbooks and worksheets for pupils as a basis for differentiated and individualised teaching.
- **To change the conception of teacher education for the first and second stages of basic education through qualification requirements set by the state, while preserving the master's level, to ensure a balance between the subject-specific, pedagogical-psychological, subject methodological, and practical components of training.**
- To aim teacher education at a broader spectrum of professional skills connected with the integrated teaching, the transformation of school life, team de-

velopment of school educational programmes, assessment of pupils, etc. To create an appropriate model of entry examinations (personality capabilities, working with young people, pedagogical practice).

- To broaden and improve the quality of teacher education in team and innovative activities, to include a larger proportion of personal social training, didactics, special pedagogy and practice.
- To give teachers recognition not only for the educational results achieved but also for their efforts to transform teacher-pupil relations, the climate in the classroom, suitable motivation for learning and an individual approach to pupils.
- To introduce multi-speciality training for teachers of the second stage and provide more opportunities for extended study of the third teaching qualification at faculties that prepare teachers, as a precondition for the integration of subjects.
- To support a project of further teacher education focused on a change of attitudes through experience learning (psychological part - introductory cycle), pedagogical skills (co-operative learning, team co-operation management, project learning), working on their own development (self-assessment, communication, conflict solving, video-training of interactions, stress managing), training of teaching staff in team co-operation in carrying out a common project.

7. Upper Secondary General, Technical and Vocational Education

Upper secondary education at present takes place in three relatively separate types of schools: *general* in upper secondary general schools ("gymnázium"), *specialised technical, economic, agricultural, artistic, etc.* mostly in upper secondary technical schools ("střední odborná škola"), and *vocational* in upper secondary vocational schools ("střední odborné učiliště"). This situation is not suited to new needs, so the goal now is to create an *open, coherent and transparent system* of upper secondary education with educational programmes with varying proportions of general and specialist, theoretical and practical components, which offer opportunities for transfer and are possibly interlinked. As the great majority of population attends upper secondary education and it is not the end of schooling, it is essential that upper secondary education pays attention above all to

building a basis for lifelong learning and for civic and professional participation in society.

For these reasons, *a new national programme of education and framework educational programmes* must be developed which determines the final competences of graduates in view of the new demands. Educational programmes for upper secondary education will put emphasis on the following tasks:

1. *To ensure that young people are ready for lifelong learning*

Upper secondary education creates the basis for lifelong learning. It provides young people with the necessary instruments and motivation, stimulates intellectual curiosity, develops skills in working with information, prepares for active participation in life in society, teaches a healthy way of life, provides system of values.

2. *To promote the employability of young people throughout their lives*

The ability to find work throughout their life depends not only on whether an individual gains adequate qualifications, but also, and principally, on whether they are equipped with a *sufficiently broad general and generally specific basis of education and with key competences* that are necessary for finding a job and enable easier retraining. Part and parcel of educational programmes will be career guidance and an introduction to the world of work.

3. *To develop a broader general basis of education*

Education content will be augmented by a European dimension, above all by support for foreign language teaching and multicultural education. Education for democracy and active citizenship will be developed further and there will also be significant support for work with information and information technologies, and education for environmental planning and protection. In technical education, the emphasis will be put on general technical education, based on mastering adequate fields of general education, and on basic technical education in a chosen specialisation.

4. *To apply generally usable so-called key competences*

These involve capabilities, skills, attitudes, values and other personality characteristics which enable an individual to act adequately and effectively in various work and life situations. Their development should be supported by changes in style of teaching, since competences are based on activities, not on knowledge. These include communication, ability to learn, social competence, problem solving and work with information technologies.

The national programme of education and framework educational programmes will determine the required standard of key competences, a general basis of education, and in technical education a general technical basis of education, at the national level. This way, rules and the content framework for the development of school educational programmes will be set to ensure that the system is coherent and the education provided is comparable throughout the system. Within this framework, schools will act autonomously in developing their own educational programmes.

New demands introduced by the information society demand above all that a greater number of young people have an advanced level of education (upper secondary education leading to the “maturitní zkouška” or higher) and that overall standards of general education are raised. This need is confirmed by surveys of so-called functional literacy, which revealed a relatively low level of general skills among upper secondary school leavers, especially those from vocational training.

In this context, the *development of generally oriented educational programmes* will be supported, so that they can accommodate at least 30% of young people in upper secondary education by 2005. In addition to educational programmes at upper secondary general schools (“gymnázium”), there will be support in the field of technical education for the development of general education and broadly profiled technical educational programmes, such as *technical and economic lycea* that prepare students for tertiary education and whose capacity will be gradually extended. With the promotion of *extension courses* enabling students completing vocational training to pass the “maturitní zkouška”, the proportion of population leaving secondary schools with the “maturitní zkouška” as the school-leaving examination should increase substantially to reach 75% of population year by 2005.

The final assessment of pupils in educational programmes completed by the “maturitní zkouška” at present does not enable a general comparison of their achievements. This fact reduces the information value of the certificate (the “maturitní vysvědčení”) both for higher education institutions and for employers. Because an increasing proportion of the population will be passing the “maturitní zkouška”, having completed various types of educational programmes, it will be necessary to differentiate output requirements while ensuring that they are comparable.

Catalogues of output requirements will be drawn up for the common part of the “maturitní zkouška” at *two levels of achievement*, and every pupil in whatever educational programme will be able to choose the appropriate level, which may differ for various subjects and subject areas. *The writing and discussion of a final essay* can be included in the ‘profiled’ or school-specific part of the “maturitní zkouška”. The final essay enables a more complex assessment of students, including their key competences and capacity for further education.

There are still barriers between individual types of upper secondary schools that make it difficult to ensure that the education offered is sufficiently flexible and varied to satisfy the diverse interests of pupils and to meet the changing demands of further education and the labour market.

In individual types of schools it is possible to teach only a certain type of educational programme and these are seen as linear 3- or 4-year study programmes. Therefore pupils must decide on their school and field of study at the age of 15, before entering upper secondary school and the possibilities of altering this decision are very limited. As a result, some pupils do not continue their education at upper secondary school level (6%) or do not complete their chosen educational programme (up to 10% of pupils in secondary vocational schools) and they leave school without completing the upper secondary level and without a qualification.

In view of this, the development of the school network will continue to favour *integrated or polyvalent schools*, i.e. education institutions offering general and technical educational programmes and providing education at various levels under the same roof. These programmes can influence and combine with each other and allow rich, open and variable education paths, so that every pupil can complete a certificated course of study suited to their abilities. At the same time, traditional schools oriented towards one or a few specialised programmes will continue to exist. The internal organisation of educational programmes will be concern of the schools, and will continue to be specific for upper secondary general schools (“gymnázium”) and for upper secondary technical schools.

7.1. Upper secondary general education

Despite the fact that this type of education is intended primarily as a preparation for immediately progression to higher education, it must accept a broader population of

pupils than to date. It should therefore also offer content and subjects that are useful for working life and for some occupations.

For this reason, the framework educational programme for the “gymnázium” will be developed in a way that will make it possible to vary the curriculum to a large extent. In addition to the possibility of a purely academic education, the curriculum will gain a broad general education element, possibly including selected, technically oriented, elements. This will lead to the necessity to change teaching methods and priorities to support the development of the key competences mentioned above, the extension of foreign language teaching and better utilisation of information technology.

At the same time, the framework educational programme allows a more flexible organisation of teaching. As a result, pupils will be able to create their own individualised courses of study within schools, by means of optional and non-compulsory subjects according their educational or employment aims.

7.2. Upper secondary technical education

Upper secondary technical education comprises existing study and vocational branches, offering a broad spectrum of subjects and content, which should be developed to allow every applicant to choose a course of study that is adapted to their abilities and interests, and to the demands of the labour market. Pupils should be able to change their initial choice during the course of their education, and continue their education at the point at which they ended if they left school or did not complete their studies.

This can be achieved through a system of linked educational programmes with flexible structures (e.g. branched, arranged in stages), which enable pupils to alter their choice during the course of their education and to acquire partial certificated output after completing a part of educational programme, so that nobody has to leave school without a specialist qualification. This development will gradually move towards a *modular and credit arrangement of educational programmes*, in which educational programmes will be made up of independent units or education modules, seen as elements of a building set from which it is possible to create various combinations. Thus it will be possible to accommodate individual courses of study, to move easily through the whole sector of technical education and to link up more simply with further education.

An important problem of upper secondary education which requires a special attention is the *transition of secondary school graduates from school to work* if they do not continue their studies at a tertiary or other educational institution. Special attention and support must be provided those who for various reasons do not complete upper secondary education or gain any specialist qualification usable on the labour market. At present, the transition of young people from school to work has been prolonged and has become more complicated, as is shown by the high unemployment rate of school leavers. Therefore, it is necessary to implement a number of supporting *measures in co-operation with social partners*, i.e. with representatives of employers and employees at central and in particular at regional and local levels.

One of the reasons for the difficult transition from school to work is the fact that employers have only limited possibilities to influence technical and vocational education, which usually takes place in the school environment, which is very distinct from the real working environment, even in the case of apprentice practical work.

Almost 65% of those completing apprenticeships have never spent time in the working environment during their vocational training and so have no real idea about it. For this reason, it is important that pupils have opportunities to acquire practical experience in real company environments during their studies and that their training is relevant to their future employment opportunities. One of the ways to achieve this is by legislating for the *participation of representatives of employers in the final examinations of vocational training graduates*. These representatives need to be fully-fledged members of examination boards in order to be able to influence the requirements on graduates and their assessment.

Also in co-operation with employers, it is necessary to arrange for every pupil in upper secondary technical and vocational education (initially at least for pupils in vocational training) to have no less than *several months of supervised practice in a company*. Even in that limited time it would be possible for pupils to become familiar with the real working environment, work relations, work ethics and communication in the working place, as well as to establish contacts and acquire first-hand experience with personal presentation, which they can use later on in looking for a job.

Other necessary measures are support for *professional and career guidance, professional orientation and an introduction to the world of work as compulsory parts of the curricu-*

lum of upper secondary schools, development of an information system on employers' requirements, on school leavers' preparation, on the situation on labour market, etc., and compensatory educational programmes intended for groups of young people without qualifications and for young unemployed people.

Recommendations:

- ❑ To increase the proportion of the population completing *upper secondary education and passing the "maturitní zkouška"* to 75% of the cohort of the year. To increase the proportion of general educational programmes, including broadly-profiled technical educational programmes leading to tertiary education (e.g. lyceum) to 30% and to support the broadening of extension courses for graduates from vocational training.
- ❑ To create and provide a legislative basis for a *national programme of education and framework educational programmes* based on a broad knowledge basis and key competences and implementing these in school educational programmes.
- ❑ To increase the variety of *educational programmes offered by upper secondary general schools* ("gymnázium") so that they have both an academic and a broad general education element and serve various education needs.
- ❑ To promote the development of branched educational programmes arranged in a series of stages and to gradually introduce a *modular system of educational programmes in technical and vocational education*, enabling easier vertical and horizontal shifts and links with further education.
- ❑ To create a two-level common section of the "maturitní zkouška" with room for a pupil's choice. A school-specific (profiled) part of the "maturitní zkouška" can involve the preparation and discussion of a *final essay*.
- ❑ To develop the school network towards the establishing of *polyvalent schools*, i.e. schools offering general and technical educational programmes at various levels.
- ❑ To implement *supporting measures* improving the transition of school leavers to work, in co-operation with social partners:

- to pass legislation ensuring the participation of employers' representatives at final vocational training examinations
- to support and provide a legislative basis for a period of supervised practice in a company, of at least several months, for every pupil in technical and vocational education
- to promote the development of professional and career guidance and counselling
- to encourage the development of an information system in the area of education and work relations
- to support the development of compensatory educational programmes intended for young unemployed people.

8. Out-of-school Education and the Use of Leisure Time

Out-of-school education is a complex of education, cognitive, recreational and other activities both systematic and occasional, whose aim is to utilise leisure time purposefully and effectively and to enable pupils to acquire knowledge and skills outside organised schooling.

It has educational, cultural, health (restorative and relaxing), social and preventive functions. It leads participants towards self-fulfilment and self-knowledge, discovering their own abilities and developing these. It is part of the cultivation of personality and the development of talents and helps create and strengthen social relations. Since the natural environment has a positive influence on the physical and psychological state of children, young people and adults, while staying in a de-natured environment can cause anxiety and aggression, changes social behaviour and has negative consequences for health, it is necessary to provide children and young people with as many open-air activities as possible in a healthy natural environment.

The existing network of interest-related education is made up of specialised facilities - leisure centres for children and young people, and also includes extracurricular activities of after-school clubs, and leisure clubs in schools, dormitories, centres of education care and other education facilities.

The priority of meeting individual education needs and supporting the development of each individual's potential means an unusual increase in the demands on the capacity in recreational education as well. The network of leisure time facilities is no longer sufficient and has ceased to be

directly accessible to the majority of children, whether for transport or social reasons.

The main tendency, therefore, is to expand the function of schools to include leisure time activities for all age categories as well. There is a school in nearly every community and it is the most natural and accessible place, especially for children and their parents.

The main reason behind this is the *new concept of schools*, which strengthens their education role. To be personally important and meaningful for pupils, the school must provide as many opportunities, incentives and attractions as possible in various fields of activity and cognition, so that pupils can learn about them, become interested in them, and then (it is hoped correctly) choose between them. School is seen as a protective environment that offers the possibility to try many things without any risk.

With the individualisation and increased differentiation of teaching, the sharp borders between compulsory instruction, optional and non-compulsory subjects in school, leisure-time activities and pure leisure time become blurred into a continuum of activities at school. *School has become an open institution*, open to both parents and the community, and so what it offers is logically expanding into further education and leisure-time activities.

In view of the fact that the long-term transformation in the character of the family has affected its education influence, and peer groups *have gained in importance* among young people as well as other actors (often commercially based) including emerging subcultures, the dangers for young people (caused by drugs, violence, and bullying) are increasing. If we do not guarantee new conditions in every school, with a rich selection of sensible, positive opportunities that attract children from the street, i.e. if we do not try to use this natural desire of young people to join in groups to create 'positive gangs' (which could be partially monitored), this will be a major failure.

The third (but far from negligible) reason for the proposed alternative is *economic* one. Schools are very expensive to operate and will become even more costly with new equipment. Many parents cannot afford similar (ICT) equipment at home. Therefore we must try to maximise the material, spatial, and human potential already held in schools, not only during normal instruction, but afterwards as well.

Several primary and secondary schools are already working as *community education and cultural centres* for

children, young people, and other people. They provide them with education services in their leisure time, according to their needs, serve as counselling and guidance centres and as natural centres of community life. The system of *community schools* makes it possible to use the human resources of a community for education and leisure time activities. Such broader activity should be financed primarily by the state with contributions from the community, local firms and sponsors, or foundations. This activity is particularly significant in areas with high unemployment, in suburbs and in small communities. A clear prerequisite for this is to create a function of coordinator (a social educator).

Major roles in education developing personal interests are played by language schools and basic art schools, which fulfil an even broader social-preventive function. Basic art schools provide all interested people who have the necessary abilities, a basic education in music, dance, fine arts, literature and drama. They represent the *broadest platform for the discovery and development of talented people*. The most gifted students are prepared for further education in conservatories, upper secondary and post-secondary schools and in higher education institutions focused on arts and teacher training. Art education thus becomes an important component in the personal development of numbers of pupils, students and adults. This is why such schools have a fundamental importance for any study programmes and for the quality of future life.

A network of leisure time facilities is still a necessity. For this reason, it is necessary to recommend further developments in this field (particularly freely accessible activities), namely in the time-tested system of leisure centres, making them more financially accessible. These facilities should play an important coordinating and methodological role in the future and have the staff and equipment needed for this.

The system of national competitions, festivals and shows intended for pupils of basic and secondary schools should be continued as an excellent motivation for talented individuals.

An increasingly important education role is played by libraries, theatres, galleries, museums, planetariums, botanical and zoological gardens, and other institutions outside schooling.

The list of opportunities for leisure time activities of children and young people is completed by the deserving work of civic societies, sport clubs, churches, foundations, etc.

The provision of freely accessible clubs as a social network for leisure time of children and young people has an exceptional importance from the point of view of prevention. It is worth involving potential young clients in decision-making about the content of activities according to their interests (non-traditional sports, music and relaxation activities, art therapy...). The importance of this non-state area of out-of-school education will continue to grow.

The current trends and specific demands placed on educational staff and volunteers in leisure-time education require high-quality *specialised professional training*. The current qualification of 'educator' neither meets demands of this profession, nor reflects all aspects of its activities. The basic member of this profession can be described as a *pedagogue of leisure time activities or social educator* (regardless of an institution, their concrete position in the education process or their content specialisation). This pedagogue performs, in general, education, social and guidance activities and also works as an organiser and initiator of leisure time activities. The upper secondary pedagogical schools and higher education institutions indeed reflect this reality in their educational programmes, but until now there has been no unified concept of study programmes such as *Leisure Time Education and Social Education*.

Recommendations:

- ❑ To enable access to quality out-of-school education for all children, especially those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds as a means of prevention of social-pathological phenomena, as well as encouraging gifted and talented individuals with clear ambitions, by financial support from the state.
- ❑ To provide state funding for the expansion of schools' activities as education and cultural centres in communities and to establish the position of coordinator in schools.
- ❑ To establish or strengthen study programmes for Leisure Time Education and Social Education at higher education institutions.

9. Education of Gifted Individuals

In all developed countries, great attention is paid to the teaching of gifted individuals and the development of their talents. *Gifted people bring qualities into society which can*

be applied in international competition, whether intellectual, technical, artistic, or sporting. Small countries that have limited raw materials and means of production have to make the best possible use of the talents of their people. The creations, ideas and performances of gifted individuals not only contribute to their own personal satisfaction (self-realisation), but also enrich the society as a whole and create distinct elements of its culture. Major global problems cannot be solved without using the exceptional intellectual and moral quality of researchers. *Creating the necessary conditions for the development and self-realisation of gifted individuals* is in the interest of the whole society.

Gifted people are those who show *exceptionally high levels of activity* whether in general or in a limited area, as well as those whose *potential* has not yet been recognised either by tests or by experts (in the other words, those who have not realised their potential, namely children and so-called underachievers). *Talent in children* is usually understood as *more rapid development in comparison with children of the same age, while in adults it shows itself in a high level of activity based on many years' intensive work*. Potential can develop into a high level of activity only under conditions which provide adequate equipment and psychological opportunities for learning.

There is as yet no coherent system for developing gifted individuals in the Czech Republic. *The basic strategy of the state* should be to offer the youngest pre-school children and pupils of basic schools as wide as possible a spectrum of activities (intellectual, musical, artistic, language, technical, motor, etc.), so that their abilities can be tested and their talents discovered. *Thus as broad as possible an offer of activities at various levels is a prerequisite for the manifestation of talent and its discovery at the most appropriate time*. In this way, the system of developing gifted individual is linked with the offer of various educational programmes and with a system of organising leisure time activities.

A *school psychologist* has the best opportunity to identify and solve the personal and education problems of gifted pupils (in particular exceptionally intellectually gifted but introverted individuals) in the course of diagnostic work.

Teachers have to be trained to work with gifted children. This should become a part of the *compulsory education of teachers and psychologists* working in education. Teachers have to learn and use *modern teaching methods* that are used in working with gifted individuals in the world and which are suitable for potential development of all pupils. These include co-operative and project teaching, programmes focused on children's

personal development, their self-confidence and resulting creativity, and also an emphasis on the development of intellectual abilities, e.g. critical thinking. To fulfil these demanding tasks, *teachers need suitable conditions for their work* and their own personal growth. Only if they *develop their own social and emotional intelligence*, will they be able to cultivate this in their pupils and to help them to become fully rounded adults.

It is necessary to differentiate between the education of *gifted* individuals and that of *exceptionally gifted* individuals, who make up only 1-2% in population but whose creative potential has a significant value for society. The fundamental thing is *accessibility of activities* so that an individual can demonstrate his talent, *repeating opportunities* for an activity after certain period, and *non-exclusion of gifted individuals from the system* of talent assessment when they fail in one specific activity. In any case, an individual should have *a possibility to enter the system when the time is right for them, even repeatedly and at any time during their life*.

The range of activities on offer and the education of gifted people should be guaranteed and supported at several levels: *at the family level*, which should have the greatest interest in the development of one of its members and search for opportunities for this, *at the level of governmental and public administration* (central, regional, and local education, cultural, sporting and other institutions of individual sectors), which should guarantee and co-ordinate the whole system of development of gifted people, and *at the non-governmental organisation level* (civic associations, foundations, private subject, etc.), which supplement the core system. However, *the basis of care of gifted individuals lies in compulsory education and its differentiation and individualisation especially at the second stage of basic school*. School and out-of-school relations of gifted pupils with their peers of the same age are very important for their social, but also intellectual development.

Co-operation between all sectors is of great importance, because a talent can be used in all areas of life. The major problem is to *bring together the resources necessary* for the development of gifted individuals, because the later that a talent is recognised *the higher the level of conditions, exceptional forms of study and care by topic teachers, trainers and experts* that is required to develop it. It is often necessary to take a multi-faceted approach to solving problems with the socialisation of talented people (but also to educate the majority towards tolerance of gifted individuals), with their inclusion on the labour market or their health that can result from their exceptional talents and one-sided orientation.

The whole system has to be underpinned by conceptual preparation of teachers and other experts for work with gifted individuals, by the continuous development of methods for recognising gifts and developing talents, by the creation of teaching aids and methodological materials for teachers, by monitoring the effectiveness of the system, by promotion, etc. Because there are international organisations dealing with gifted individuals that arrange exchanges of experience, research, postgraduate courses for teachers, conferences and workshops, and these organisations also have members in this country, we can just systematically continue in what already exists.

Recommendations:

- *The essential elements of the development of exceptionally gifted individuals have to be created by leisure time activities intended for the broadest possible segment of the population (especially for children and young people).*
 - To incorporate modern knowledge on the manifestations and needs of gifted and exceptionally gifted individuals and on the ways of working with them into initial and further teacher education.
 - To create the broadest possible offer of accessible activities of various types for pre-school children and pupils of basic school as an opportunity to demonstrate their talent. To provide increasingly varied programmes of education and recreational activities with respect to the needs and possibilities of gifted pupils.
 - To elaborate, translate, and modify specialised literature, aids, and other methodological materials for teachers working with gifted pupils in various forms and stages of education. To utilise co-operation with foreign experts in this area.
- *To realise a coherent system of care of gifted individuals in the Czech Republic.*
 - To build a central specialised institution which would bring together counselling, pedagogical and research activity in the education of gifted individuals, including teacher education. A centre for the study and development of talent that is closely linked with a faculty of teacher or psychologist education is a tried and tested model in the world.

- To establish a function of a coordinator at pedagogical-psychological guidance centres in regions. The coordinator would monitor the needs and possibilities of gifted people education in the region, inform the public about these problems, and co-operate with the central institution.
- To continue and further develop a successful tradition of competitions for gifted individuals in various areas of interest in pedagogical centres.
- To support research in the area of recognising gifted individuals and of verifying effective methods for their development. To elaborate a system of monitoring the success of a given system.
- *To create programmes for the development of exceptionally gifted individuals and to ensure its accessibility.*
 - To enable exceptionally gifted individuals to move vertically and horizontally through the education system according to their current level and interest, regardless of the age of the child (pupil, student) or parallel study at various levels of education (basic school and upper secondary school, upper secondary school and higher education institution, possibly even basic school and higher education institutions). If necessary, to enable other individual and experimental forms of education of an exceptionally gifted individual.

10. Education of Individuals with Health and Social Disadvantages

The education of children with special education needs, i.e. children who, without an individual, specialised approach, are disadvantaged in the educational arena for health-related or social reasons, has seen a qualitative shift during the last ten years. There has been a gradual change in the view of these children from negative descriptions of their disabilities toward an emphasis on their performance and the application of a humanistic approach to solving the problem.

The principal trends in special education are dealing with the *elimination of segregated education of children with special needs and their integration into the common education stream*, while keeping an alternative choice of education path for these children and the task of guaranteeing equal access to education for all children.

The traditional division between the education of the so-called intact majority of pupils and the education of a minority group of pupils with special education needs has been replaced by *alternative offer of educational programmes and forms of education and by encouraging integrative tendencies*. The integrative tendencies, however, face a lack of readiness of normal schools to work with children with special education needs from a professional, personal and technical point of view.

At present, *increasing numbers of pupils with learning difficulties* are being recorded. This increase, which runs counter to the decline in total numbers of pupils in schools, represents pupils with neurological or psychiatric problems, also including pupils with learning and concentration disorders, children with hyperactivity and behaviour disorders or emotional disorders resulting from it. *The numbers of children at risk in their development as a result of a disadvantageous socio-economic environment are increasing*.

The state's task is to ensure the maximum autonomy of the parents of all these children in deciding on the form of their education, while the quality of all existing forms of education must be preserved. *Close links between special education and the normal education stream are necessary* for this. The quality of a solution depends on the readiness of a school to admit an individual who is somehow excluded from a commonly accepted norm as an equal partner. The principle of integration and inclusion can only be implemented in synergy with a fundamental reform of the education system as a whole.

It is necessary to *radically change the traditional concept of education*, to accommodate its contents, form and methods to children and pupils with special education needs and to gain society-wide support for this change. The necessary changes concern both physical access to education (the physical adaptation of buildings, including interiors, equipping schools with compensatory aids, etc.) and qualitative pedagogical and organisational changes with the possibility of respecting a child's individuality and their needs, to vary education procedures and to individualise instruction instead of sticking to standardised teaching plans. There must also be a change in relations with the parents of disadvantaged children, seeing parents as equal partners and involving them at both school and national levels.

Integration may not be possible on a mass level, but where parents wish it and a school is able to guarantee the

conditions and fulfil the criteria this trend will be encouraged. The subjects which can be mastered by the child (e.g. practical activities) are taught within the class group, while others are taught individually or in small groups with the assistance of a specially trained teacher. The experience of around one hundred schools which work in this way on an experimental basis show that there is mutual profit, for both the integrated pupils and their schoolmates, who learn in natural way to accept and understand differences.

Special schools will be transformed into basic schools with special educational programmes for pupils with special education needs. Children with mental handicaps and those who cannot be successful in normal basic schools for other reasons will continue to be educated in these schools, but without any stigma that could restrict them in their choice of a future career.

The counselling and guidance system has to play a more significant role than it has to date. It should share in the creation of necessary conditions for children with special education needs. In addition to the traditional provision of specialised assistance to support education, career guidance and choice of an education path, counselling in education also has to aim at *strengthening the prevention of social pathology* in schools and education facilities, to promote and *create conditions for the development of pupils' personalities* and the harmonisation of relations between family and school, to *encourage the integration* of children with health-related handicaps into common types of schools and to *create an inclusive environment* in classes and schools. It is necessary to *disseminate information on special pedagogical procedures and methods of work among educational staff of common schools at all levels*.

A very important task of the education sector is to *guarantee education for seriously handicapped children*. These children were excluded from education in the past, as they were exempted from compulsory education by law. It is necessary to *extend educational programmes in special schools* with programmes intended for mentally handicapped children and children who are not able to attend school regularly, in accordance with contemporary European trends.

Another important part of education system is *alternative education and the prevention of social-pathologic phenomena* in schools and education facilities. Thus, a conception of special education encompasses the area of preventive educational care. Institutional preventive educational care in education facilities takes place both in *facilities of peda-*

gological-psychological counselling and in diagnostic institutes. These facilities have to provide preventive educational care of children and young people who have shown signs of social-pathological behaviour, if correctional education or preventive education in alternative educational facilities is not ordered. Preventive educational care can take place in voluntary, all-day or short-term institutional forms. Contact with nature and animals, and work with earth and plants supervised by experienced educational staff have a strong therapeutic effect. Facilities of preventive educational care provide special assistance for children, parents and educational staff in solving difficulties concerning education.

It has become increasingly obvious that *the beginning of care for children has to be shifted from 3 years of age to their birth*. This means deliberately extending care to the most vulnerable age group, as Czech and foreign research has shown that some basic features of personality are formed in this period. It is at this time that early deep-rooted antisocial structures can emerge, which are hard to eliminate later.

Within the prevention of social pathology, it is necessary to influence a personality at a time when it is most open to external impacts, and when negative education actions by parents can be successfully countered by special educational-psychological methods that are within the scope of the education system. The concept of care for children in educational facilities has to *respect the need to humanise the education process* in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It has been necessary to *form a conceptual base for a way to provide correctional or preventive education* ordered for youngsters by courts, when their development has been disturbed by insufficient parental care or as a result of their own a-social behaviour.

An increasing need for new types of education facilities with different education approaches adapted to different kinds of disabilities of pupils can be expected as a result of requirements imposed by practice.

Recommendations:

- ***To analyse and co-ordinate the participation of individual sectors in the care of pupils with health disabilities and social disadvantages. To decide responsibilities in the area of early childhood care.***
 - To provide a legislative and political basis for the responsibility of sectors concerning *equal access to edu-*

cation for all children regardless of the degree of health disabilities or social disadvantages.

- To decide responsibilities in the area of providing early childhood care to children with health disabilities and children who live in poor social-economic environments or outside the culture of the majority society.
- ***To sensitively transform special schools into basic schools with special educational programmes.***
 - To introduce educational programmes intended for pupils with special education needs (pupils who need a special approach because of major disturbances in learning or behaviour, mental or other disabilities) that cannot be met with education in normal basic schools, in these facilities.
- ***To ensure the readiness of main-stream schools to integrate children with special educational needs in professional, personal and technical terms. To introduce the necessary changes in teacher education.***
 - To support integration in basic schools by means of development programmes, including the introduction of a function of a special pedagogue and assistant, and the preparation of teachers for the integration of children with special education needs.
- ***To establish special schools for children with severe health handicaps only (e.g. special school, rehabilitation classes).***
 - The opportunity to educate is closely connected with the need to *solve questions of transport* for pupils with severe physical handicaps, autism, several disabilities, etc. to schools and *questions of personal assistance*, including its use during the education process.
- ***To solve questions of activating people with health disabilities who will never earn their living.***
 - To promote ‘the right of school leavers to first employment’ in collaboration with employment agencies, so that young school leavers will not become fixed in a passive way of life and social dependence on unemployment benefits, and to *organise courses to supplement the education of school leavers* who did not complete compulsory education. To establish activation centres in specialised schools and practical schools, programmes of vocational training, preparation for

the transition from school to work, and at the same time to lead people with health-related disadvantages to a certain degree of personal independence.

- ***To prepare a conceptual basis of how to carry out correctional education or preventive education.***
 - To prepare a project for new types of education facilities for correctional education and prevention to

meet the needs of society, and, in collaboration with other sectors, to prepare a project for the inclusion of these children into the normal population after the end of correctional education.

- To provide care for children under the age of 3 years as a form of extended preventive education care in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health.

III. *Tertiary Education*

A. COMMON ISSUES

1. Shaping of the Tertiary Education Sector

The tertiary education sector is understood as all types of education recognised by the state, that follow general upper secondary education or upper secondary technical education and the final examination (“maturitní zkouška”).

In spite of a wide diversity of forms, the tertiary education sector has several common features that distinguish it from other sectors and enable it to be seen and treated as a whole. It provides education for *adults*, who have full legal responsibility, are autonomous in their decision-making, with clear motivation and a responsible attitude to education. *The relations between teachers and students* create space for other forms of education and for *students to have a decisive effect on how educational institutions operate*. Unprecedentedly rapid scientific and technological development is reflected most in tertiary education, which is not sustainable without research and other creative activities by teachers and for some types of educational institutions, students as well.

The tertiary sector is where the highest levels of education are achieved, which means that its level has a considerable influence on the quality of life of the entire society. It has a major influence on the education system as a whole, because it is this sector that educates teachers for all levels of schools. Tertiary educational institutions also provide services for other people as one of the *basic elements of the regional and national infrastructure*. It means that among other things they offer education in the form of specialised, innovative, retraining, language, and other courses within the framework of lifelong education. (In the whole of Part III, the term ‘lifelong education’ is used in the sense that it is defined in the Higher Education Act, no 111/1998 Coll.¹) Cooperation with regions is necessary for the development of both parties – educational institutions and autonomous institutions in the region.

The aims underlying the formation of the tertiary education sector in the Czech education system are as follows:

- The main purpose is to create a richly diversified tertiary

¹ Article 60. Lifelong Education. Higher education institutions may provide lifelong educational programmes – either free of charge, or subject to payment – within the framework of their educational activity and beyond the scope of their study programmes. Lifelong education can be either vocation-oriented or interest-oriented.

education sector, with sufficient capacity, openness and opportunities for transfer, enabling students to change or continue their studies at any age or time. Thus, it will be possible to use the specific abilities, requirements and needs of applicants for study and to profile graduates so that they will find opportunities on the labour market.

- In accordance with one of the main goals of Czech educational policy, it is necessary to enable half the 19-year-olds in any year to enter some type of tertiary education by 2005.
- Equal and maximum open access to education will be ensured, eliminating discrimination for whatever reason.
- In accordance with world trends, the concept of lifelong learning will be stressed. For this, it is necessary to have a diversified and permeable structure not only of the tertiary sector, but of the education system as a whole, offering modern forms of studies using information and communication technologies.
- The ambitious goal of EU countries, included in the Bologna Declaration, that every student in the tertiary sector will in future spend a part of their study outside their own educational institution, possibly abroad, will also become ours. In the same way, the mobility of academics will be encouraged.
- Evaluation of the quality of education will be seen as a complex matter, focused mainly on eliminating shortcomings and on continuous improvement based on the results of self-evaluation and on the recommendations of evaluating experts.
- The long-term goal is to utilise and support human resource development as far as possible: a) to take care of the personal and professional growth of staff of the tertiary education sector through lifelong education; b) to help students to be well informed on educational opportunities, to find optimal educational paths, and to orientate themselves on the labour market by establishing counselling centres providing study and psychological counselling and career guidance.

An increase in the number of educated people in the population is one of the priorities of every country and a testimony to its culture, development and economic position. *The population is becoming more and more interested in education.*

The growth in the number of young people entering tertiary educational institutions is bringing not only a substantial

widening of the spectrum of abilities and knowledge in comparison with the same group ten years ago, but also more diversified ideas about personal development. Applicants for study come from a wider range of social backgrounds, which gives them very different motivations for study and different economic conditions, including the possible duration of study. In order to meet the requirements and abilities of future students and without *diminishing the quality of education it is possible to further diversify the study offer* in the tertiary education sector.

The target state should be to satisfy the different needs and requirements of applicants for education, to offer various educational paths, to be understandable and clear, generally compatible with ample opportunities for transfers, and to follow European trends.

The basic task of the education system, and of the tertiary education in particular, is to prepare graduates so that they will be able to find work. *This does not mean, however, that education as a whole should be subordinated to the world of work. These areas – education and the labour market – influence each other closely; both are autonomous to a certain degree, but still dependent on each other.*

The needs of economy and society are developing very fast. For this reason, graduates from universities and other tertiary educational institutions have to acquire such knowledge and skill that will enable them to find suitable work even in a changing labour market. The development of education can have a powerful influence on the development of the economy.

One long-term goal is the harmonisation of outputs from the tertiary education sector with the needs and requirements of employers, and the provision of sufficient and reliable information both on job opportunities and on the education offer. Therefore, tertiary education institutions have to be in contact with employers as well as with their own graduates so that they receive relevant information and are able to cooperate in developing the content and organisation of teaching and the creation of an education offer within the framework of lifelong learning.

2. The Goals and Structure of Tertiary Education

Scientific work, research and development and other creative activity is a defining sign of tertiary education. The linking of studies with these activities, their type and quality distinguish

the various types of higher education study programmes from post-secondary technical education and other types of study in this education sector.

Studies and educational programmes in tertiary education will focus on the future work of graduates in society and the rapidly changing composition of the labour market. They concentrate on education for critical and creative thinking, awareness of the need for continuing education, and adaptation to new possibilities and needs.

All students in the tertiary education sector should have the opportunity to participate actively in creative work linked with instruction, which provides strong incentives and motivates them strongly for further work.

2.1. The structure of tertiary education programmes

The structure of tertiary education programmes will respond to new challenges by changes based on the regrouping of capacities and the clarification of the goals of all its parts.

- *Extension technical studies* (“pomaturitní studium”), leading to a certificate, provide technical knowledge at a higher level than that of secondary education through the form of short, modular study cycles (one or two years). The modular structure of extension studies enables graduates who want to continue their education to complete modules in post-secondary technical education to achieve an adequate qualification.
- *Post-secondary technical education* (“vyšší odborné vzdělání”) will continue to be provided in short study programmes providing technical qualification for graduates from upper secondary schools. They will be organised in three-year cycles leading to a qualification as a ‘Specialist with Diploma’. It is necessary to provide some opportunity for moving between programmes of post-secondary technical education and bachelor’s study programmes. Three-year programmes which successfully pass accreditation procedures will be transformed into degree programmes leading to a bachelor’s degree.
- *Bachelor’s studies* utilising modern specialised knowledge and methods, together with necessary theoretical basics and creative activity will, in accordance with the Bologna Declaration, represent a varied set of programmes with a more or less applied orientation, *which prepare students for the labour market as well as for further education studying for a master’s degree.*

- *Master's programmes* are focused on acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge based on scientific, research and other creative activities, which are an inseparable part of this. In accordance with the development of bachelor's study programmes, they will be seen as following on from these. As in the other cases, their structure will be modular to enable the maximum possibilities for moving throughout the tertiary education sector.
- *Doctoral studies*, as the highest level of tertiary education, are focused primarily all on research and development and independent creative activities.
- *Various other forms of study recognised by the state* and provided by state and non-state institutions within the framework of lifelong education are usually short types of study with a vocational or recreational orientation.

2.2. The institutional structure of the tertiary education sector

- *Universities* offer all types of higher education study programmes and various types of study in programmes of lifelong education. Master's and doctoral programmes require that the instruction in these types of institutions makes effective use of the scientific capacities not only of the institutions themselves, but also of other research and development institutes. In the first place there is the Czech Academy of Sciences, whose scientific potential is an irreplaceable resource in the education of young students on doctoral programmes. Plans for research and development in universities will follow the document National Policy of Research and Development (1999).
- *Non-university higher education institutions* ("neuniverzitní vysoké školy") offer mostly bachelor's programmes and continuing education courses. They should be established with a vision of larger multidisciplinary educational institutions, offering courses that will satisfy the educational needs in a region. A wider spectrum of subjects on offer, possibilities for combining these, options and variability, and also a sufficient number of students are necessary to achieve quality and effective use of funds. Part of these institutions' activity is in common projects with firms, consulting and training activities, applied research projects and international cooperation.
- *Post-secondary technical schools* ("vyšší odborné školy") offer post-secondary technical 2-3.5-year programmes and extension technical studies. They can also offer

bachelor's programmes, but only in cooperation with a higher education institution. A post-secondary technical school can apply for a change in its status and become a non-university higher education institution, if its study programmes are accredited as bachelor's courses. In some regions, the main role of post-secondary technical schools may lie in the provision of further education.

- *Institutions offering extension technical studies* will be primarily upper secondary technical schools, which have extended their work into the tertiary sector, most often in the same branch that they offer at the upper secondary level.
- *Other educational institutions* of the tertiary sector offer various types of study recognised by the state. These are as a rule personal interest or qualification courses of several months in duration (i.e. programmes of lifelong education), which under certain conditions should enable, in the spirit of the Bologna declaration, a move into a coherent formal type of education.

3. Quantitative Forecast of Participation in Tertiary Education

One of the main goals of the Czech Government's educational policy is to enable half of the 19 year olds in any year to enter some type of tertiary education by 2005 (see also Chapter I.4.).

An interconnected goal is that two thirds to three quarters of young people pass the "maturitní zkouška" in upper secondary general or upper secondary technical education.

The capacity of the tertiary education sector has to take into account the growing interest of middle age and older people in studying. These individuals may want to study for a formal qualification or may be interested in courses as a part of lifelong education. Probably only a small part of this group would apply for full-time study and the others will need to be offered new forms of education using information and communication technologies (distance and combined forms of study). The numbers of foreign students will be compensated for by Czech students in higher education institutions abroad.

To accomplish this goal we suppose, that:

- In higher education institutions, there will be a *substantial restructuring* in the numbers of students pursuing

individual types of study programmes. Of students in higher education institutions today, fewer than 15% of students leave after a bachelor's degree (i.e. do not continue immediately in further education), around 80% of students are on master's programmes and a little over 5% of students on doctoral programmes. It is necessary to stress that if the proportion of young people entering higher education institutions from the relevant population group increases, it would not be possible to educate such a high number of students at master's level without a decline in the quality of graduates. Test calculations were, therefore, based on an aim that *about half of students will complete bachelor's programmes or attain the level of specialist with diploma in post-secondary technical school (see below). In that case, if 60 000 students enter first years and the failure rate remains unchanged, the total number of students in bachelor's and master's programmes would rise to 195 000.*

- Increased ease of movement through the education system should mean that the number of students dropping out should decrease. *An estimate of the fall in this number means that the total number of students may increase by around 5000.*
- About 5000 students will continue to enter doctoral study programmes annually (i.e. 25% of graduates from master's programmes). It is necessary to improve the effectiveness of these programmes and to decrease the absolute failure rate. *The total number of students in these programmes could be estimated at 15 000.*
- Around 5000 new students will enter post-secondary technical schools every year, while 10 000 students will start in extension studies. *The total number in both these types of study will remain practically the same, i.e. around 30 000.*
- About 10 000 students will attend new private higher education institutions.
- The total number of students in the tertiary education sector will be 250 000 (about 195 000 in bachelor's and master's study programmes, 15 000 doctoral students, 30 000 students in post-secondary technical schools and 10 000 students in private higher education institutions), representing an increase of 12% over the current number of 223 000.

The input capacity is important for admission into the tertiary sector. Theoretically, according to long-term aims of existing higher education institutions, including private ones,

the test estimates mentioned above, and the balances of post-secondary technical schools, these institutions will have about 75 000 study places for new applicants. It is difficult to estimate the total increase in the offer of higher education institutions, post-secondary technical schools within the framework of lifelong education, and the capacity of other educational institutions, which is not exactly mapped out, and so it is practical to make a very realistic estimate of about 10 000 additional places in the tertiary education sector. The total input capacity will thus be for around 85 000 students.

If the offer of higher education institutions and post-secondary technical schools was used by 19 years old applicants only (new graduates from upper secondary schools), around 57% of this age group could study here in 2005 (130 907), i.e. more than 80% of graduates from upper secondary schools. It is supposed, however, that a part of the capacity will be taken up by older applicants, while some new graduates will avail themselves of the various courses offered by other educational institutions. Applicants from the adult population will be interested both in degree programmes and in various kinds of lifelong education courses, but in both cases primarily in distance or combined forms of study. Current statistics speak roughly of 25% applicants above the age of 19, but these are strongly influenced by the number of graduates from upper secondary schools who apply for the second or third time. The increase in the number of real adult applicants has so far been insignificant, but world trends suggest that such an increase can be expected.

Therefore, we base our estimate on 50% of the age group of upper secondary school leavers plus approximately one additional third of this number of adult applicants. This gives an approximate number of 85 500 potential applicants.

If these estimates prove valid the number of study places in tertiary sector would approximately match the number of people interested in study, in the sense of global supply and demand. *Nevertheless, it cannot be supposed that global satisfaction of demand will eliminate sectoral irregularity.* Because at the same time it is necessary to meet the needs of the state, given requirements for graduates from vocational or sectoral fields signalled by the labour market, applicants will have to be informed about the current situation. Special support and motivation should be given to the choice of education in technical fields, which is often underesti-

mated by graduates from upper secondary schools. As to teacher education, it is important that those choosing this see teaching as their lifelong aim.

Note: Students of military schools and the police academy, totalling around 5000, are not included in test calculations and estimates. No marked increase in their number is expected.

4. Access to Education and the Care of Students

Access to education is equal and as open as possible, eliminating discrimination for whatever reason.

Equality of access to education in higher education institutions and post-secondary technical schools means that everybody who fulfils the conditions for admission stipulated by law has a right to study in one or several study programmes. Entrance examinations form a part of admission procedures in the majority of higher education institutions and post-secondary technical school, especially for certain popular subjects. The examination results provide a means of listing applicants according their success. In art subjects these examinations are usually in the form of talent examinations.

A fundamental change will be the introduction of a so-called 'state final examination' (the "státní maturitní zkouška"), with a part of the examination is set at a national level, making it possible to compare the results at a national level. In the relatively near future, this examination could significantly simplify entrance examinations, although probably not quite replace it for all subjects.

The simplest, presumably the fairest, and the most suitable with respect to the optimal utilisation of applicants' abilities would be *free access* of graduates from upper secondary schools *into tertiary education without entrance examinations*, and this is the long-term goal. A prerequisite for this is the creation of a sufficient number of educational opportunities in the diversified tertiary sector. Completely free access to education will be always complicated by varying interest in various subjects on one hand and by the demands of the labour market or the threat of unemployment on the other hand.

Discrimination in this country has definitely nothing to do with race, gender, religion or political opinion. It is necessary

to avoid possible problems in the case of applicants with health-related handicaps or applicants from socially and economically underprivileged groups of the population.

The long-term goal is an optimal use and support of human resource development. This means helping students to be well informed on educational opportunities, to identify optimal educational paths and orientate themselves on the labour market by establishing counselling centres providing study and psychological counselling and career guidance.

The precondition for proper choice of one's educational path or for changing it is enough information on educational opportunities at home and abroad. In spite of existing access to regularly updated information through publications, websites, etc., consultation with an expert is in many cases irreplaceable. Therefore, it is necessary to continue to establish counselling centres in educational institutions, which provide students not only with the services mentioned above, but also help them to acquire needed skills and habits and to improve their own study skills.

It is necessary to ensure that groups of applicants coming from 'non-traditional environments' (from areas remote from educational centres, from families with parents with a low level of education, or from a social background which puts them into an unequal position in comparison with other colleagues, etc.) have an opportunity to gain the knowledge needed for study and so to prevent the continuation of social differences between various groups in society. The solution is in the provision of information and education courses that enable them to apply for further education with the same chances as anyone else. The development of counselling and guidance services for applicants for further education in cooperation with counselling activities in the secondary education sector is of great importance here.

Another task is the care of students - preparing them for greater professional flexibility, creative, cultural and communication skills and moral values.

Relations between students and teachers must contribute to successful study. Teachers have to find first of all a partner, a human relation, to be interested in their performance and problems, to provide them with advice and real help when it is needed. They have to utilise the students' knowledge and skills as important feedback on their teaching activities, to give students opportunities for creative activities and benefit from their cooperation - to form a real academic community.

5. The Transferability and Modular Structure of Study and Educational Programmes

Modular study programmes using a credit system that provides for changes during the course of studies allow people to continue studying when necessary throughout their whole life, in the same institution or a different one, at home or abroad. Nevertheless, this must always be under the condition that the requirements of the study programme (module) are met. These requirements will be agreed on by the respective educational institutions.

The fundamental importance of a modular system allowing for changes of direction is of particular importance in the possibility to spend part of study in another institution, including study abroad. The possibility to change or correct a choice of study when the original choice proves inappropriate is also important, due to changes in living conditions, unmanageable requirements, etc. In accordance with the Bologna declaration, the permeability of the tertiary sector will be mainly in the *vertical* direction. Students in a higher education institution will have an opportunity, after completing a bachelor's degree, to continue in a master's programme in the same or another institution. A similar opportunity will be presented by continuity between higher education and post-secondary technical education. It is also necessary to ensure *horizontal permeability*, i.e. transitions between individual study programmes. It is not always possible to see such transferability as automatic and agreement between the relevant educational institutions and an assessment of individual cases is important.

A serious problem, which has not yet been solved in this country is *the possibility of shifting from a higher level of education to a lower level*, i.e. the possibility of transferring from higher education study programmes to post-secondary technical ones if the original choice was inappropriate or the demands of a programme are unmanageable. This will reduce the *number of students dropping out from their studies* without receiving an academic, professional title or certificate for the completed module(s), which is particularly high in a number of subjects.

Such transfers will be made easier by a *modular structure of study*. A *module* is a coherent part of a study programme, which is arranged by assembling modules

to create greater educational wholes. Modules can be changed relatively quickly, replaced, left out or included in a study programme in response to the current or expected demands of the world of work or the study capabilities and interests of students. The modular structure of study enables suitable shaping and changing of educational paths throughout the tertiary education system, facilitates mobility of students (fulfils the goals of the Bologna declaration) and *promotes the concept of lifelong education*.

Transferability of studies will be simplified by using of a credit system. The *credit system* means that completion of a part of the study programme is assessed by standardised units, i.e. credits. Higher education institutions will introduce credit systems based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) that is used in EU countries and supported by EU educational programmes. This European trend will be encouraged in post-secondary technical schools, too.

The maximum possible openness of the system of tertiary education can be built up step by step, primarily on the basis of the provision of information. To a large extent it is necessary to use legislation, both current and proposed, which promotes this strategy. The Higher Education Institutions Act does not place any obstacles in the way of these aims, the Education Bill takes the modular structure into account even for education in extension courses, which then becomes a possible part of further education in post-secondary technical schools.

6. New Forms of Study

High numbers of students and their widely varying interests place ever increasing requirements on the provision of new forms of study in addition to the usual full-time studies. The strategy for the development of these forms of study is discussed in detail in the Conception of the State Information Policy in Education. (A quantitative forecast of non full-time forms of study is also discussed in section 1.4.3.) New forms of study, in the terminology of the Higher Education Institutions Act, include *distance or combined study*, the use of information and communication technologies, enabling students to shape educational paths and study loads in accordance with their personal abilities, and will make a significant contribution to the vision of a tertiary education system that which facilitates entrance to education throughout life.

New forms of study contribute to the diversification of study options as follows:

- They can offer an opportunity to study to higher numbers of applicants without substantial demands on increases in numbers of teachers and room capacities.
- They allow for the individualisation of study plans, i.e. a very flexible approach to study content and shaping one's own educational path and pace of study according to current needs (bearing in mind the offer of study modules and compulsory contents of an accredited study programme).
- They allow many gainfully employed people who cannot and even do not want to interrupt their employment, but who want to extend their education or to acquire new information and knowledge in their sphere of activity or in another area, to enter education.

Extension of the network of distance education centres in higher education institutions in the Czech Republic will also facilitate access to foreign educational institutions and to distance study programmes and courses offered e.g. within the European network of distance education. This of course means substantially *higher requirements on financial resources* for equipment with information technology, the development of multimedia teaching materials, gaining access to paid foreign programmes, etc., and on the organisation of study *during its introductory phase*. Another basic requirement is a *new type of teacher/tutor education in distance and combined forms of study*.

The effective mastering and use of new forms of study and the need for newly qualified teachers can only be achieved through a broad and well-organised cooperation of tertiary educational institutions. At present, the building of this cooperation from the bottom up, based on centres of distance education established in higher education institutions within the framework of the PHARE programme, seems to be effective. The existing capacity of the centres should be developed and promoted and *their activities extended to post-secondary technical schools*. The possible establishing of other centres should lead to a better distributed network of study opportunities created by coordinated activities, similar to those offered by open universities in some countries. They should enable the best possible access to modern form of education for all interested individuals.

B. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF PARTS OF THE TERTIARY EDUCATION SECTOR

7. Education in Higher Education Institutions

A substantial part of the tertiary education sector is made up of higher education institutions, which are the highest link of the education system and the highest centres of scholarship. The basic activity of higher education institutions is teaching, inseparably linked with research and development, and other creative or artistic activities. No less important is their significance for the social and economic development of society. Higher education institutions not only have to fulfil this other function, but they also have to present themselves to society in this way and use all available means to this end - internal and external evaluation and publication of its results, long-term goals of the institution's development, and annual reports. The major role in opening institutions toward society should be played by offers of programmes within the framework of lifelong education, which could support changes in the approach to education values.

7.1. Quantitative development and the structure of study programmes

The structure stated here has started to take shape in higher education institutions since 1999, with the implementation of the Higher Education Institutions Act. The existing capacities of higher education institutions, in view of demographic developments, roughly meet expected requirements on the number of students. *Thus no major development, particularly of non-university higher education institutions is envisaged, but a focus on quality is necessary*. Increased capacity will be enabled through development programmes in those fields where demand for study has been unmet in the long term.

The only newly established university, the Tomas Bata University in Zlin, which will incorporate two existing faculties of the Technical University in Brno, will open in 2001.

The development of non-university higher education institutions will continue both through establishing other private institutions, some certainly on the basis of quality private post-secondary technical schools, and through es-

establishing public non-university higher education institutions from selected state post-secondary technical schools.

Private higher education institutions are a fairly new element in the system and have been allowed by the Higher Education Institutions Act since 1 January 1999. Several dozen applications for state approval to function as a private higher education institution had been submitted by legal entities by the end of 2000. The majority of these related to the establishment of a non-university higher education institution, a number of them based on prosperous post-secondary technical schools. In total, 12 state authorisations to work as a private higher education institution were granted by the end of 2000.

Developments in the offer of study programmes will be based on the assumption that roughly one half of graduates will leave for work after finishing their bachelor's degree or post-secondary technical education. To this end it is necessary to create concrete conditions for graduate employment and to raise their social standing through public debate.

The requirements of a suitable quantitative structure with respect to the numbers of students admitted to bachelor's and master's programmes have not yet been met. In accordance with the Bologna declaration, an *increase in numbers of students* in higher education institutions will be largely limited to *bachelor's programmes*, whose study contents allow graduates to gain qualifications suitable for the open European labour market. At the same time, they allow students to continue in education whether immediately or after a period and achieving certain prescribed conditions. More generally focused bachelor's programmes, which enable employment but also more concrete study in further education should be encouraged.

The conception of bachelor's studies has been changing gradually and in some cases already fulfils the requirement of a broad spectrum of study programmes as well as the requirement for a completed qualification. *Restructuring leading to suitably balanced numbers of students in bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes will be gradual and will provide for undivided master's programmes in those subjects where it is recommended by the Accreditation Commission.*

The suitable combination of types of study programmes with adequate scientific and other creative activities will in the future obviously lead to the *constitution of three characteristic groups of higher education institutions*:

- Higher education institutions where the majority of study programmes (master's and doctoral) will include applied topical scientific research and education for research work.
- Higher education institutions where scientific research and education for research work will be offered in one or several study programmes, while other programmes will have a primarily practical professional character connected with applied research and various types of creative activities.
- Higher education institutions focused primarily on bachelor's programmes with the application of creative activities (non-university higher education institutions).

These naturally differentiated groups of higher education institutions should be respected and their distinct characters must be taken into account. Nevertheless, it is necessary to stress that no one group can be seen as better or as worse than another, due to differences in the conception of study and creative activities.

The system of a multi-layered division of higher education institutions (see above) influenced by targeted financing of research and development is clearly more suitable than the possible dividing into so-called research universities and teaching universities that is usual in some countries. However, it does not exclude the possibility that some universities in this country could become research universities in the future.

7.2. Academic staff and students

Development of the system of higher education institutions is closely connected with improvements in the qualifications of academic staff as the quality of teaching, research and other creative activities is directly linked with the quality of these staff.

The lack of fully qualified teachers and their age structure is the biggest problem in the majority of newly established higher education institutions. That is why higher education institutions are educating young academic staff, namely in doctoral programmes, with the goal of improving an unfavourable age structure. The greatest emphasis, in accordance with opportunities, will be on creating better conditions for the scientific work of young academics and to strive to support this within the framework of development programmes. A current major problem is a socio-economic position of academics, especially young ones. Future in-

creases in financial resources will enable higher education institutions to make an effective decision on numbers of academic staff and related financial assessment.

Besides supporting young academic staff, it will be also important to encourage the professional growth of other academic staff, especially in the areas of information science, languages, scientific disciplines and increasing professionalism in school management. The use of short-time courses, short-term and medium-term study visits abroad, doctoral studies and a modular course focused on the education of managerial staff, which was created within a PHARE programme, is envisaged.

Increase in numbers of students in bachelor's programmes requires an adequate structure of academic staff. Teaching abilities will become more important for academics teaching on bachelor's programmes. The professional development of young teachers, therefore, should be focused on acquiring pedagogical knowledge, through courses within the framework of lifelong education, including those accredited at an international level. Specialists from the world of work should also teach in higher education institutions and their number has to be balanced with core staff of the given institution. Different requirements placed on the qualification structure of teaching staff on bachelor's programmes will be the subject of more general discussions and negotiations with the Accreditation Commission.

An important part of the activities of higher education institutions is creating a social background for students. This is not only a question of determination and of ensuring sufficient capacities in accommodation and catering facilities and improving their quality with regard to international student exchanges, but also an extension of tutorial and support activities so that students will be integrated into the higher education environment as quickly as possible and can devote themselves to their main activity – studying.

In connection with the lengthening of the total average duration of education at all school levels, it will be necessary to adjust age limits and other conditions for the indirect support of education in social and tax laws, thus allowing for the higher ages of higher education students.

7.3. Internationalisation and international cooperation

The Czech Republic will support the building of an open European education space through the development of international

cooperation and the fulfilling of international agreements and declarations (the Lisbon Convention; the Sorbonne Declaration, 1998; the Bologna Declaration, 1999) along with the concurrent preservation of specific elements of Czech cultural and education traditions.

International cooperation, which is based on the mobility of students and teachers, is facilitated by flexible study programmes and a gradual harmonisation of these. An important step in support of the idea to create an open European space of higher education was the signing of the *Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education at the meeting in Bologna in 1999 (the Bologna Declaration)*. The Czech Republic is one of 31 signatories (29 states) of this document.

The basic idea of the Bologna Declaration is *a gradual transition (over a ten-year period) to a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle will require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years (bachelor's studies). The degree awarded after the first cycle will also be relevant to the open European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification.* The second cycle should lead to a master's and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries.

The Czech system of tertiary education, ideas of flexibility and openness described in previous paragraphs, and a three level structure of higher education set by the Higher Education Institutions Act meet the requirements of the Bologna Declaration to a large extent and will therefore be developed further. However, the Higher Education Institutions Act does not allow students to enter doctoral programmes directly after finishing a bachelor's degree.

As a guarantor of the quality of education, the state can make a significant contribution to facilitating the international mobility of students and graduates.

The signing of the Convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications in the European region (the so-called Lisbon Convention signed in 1997) was directed at this, as were the conclusions of a bilateral agreement on the recognition of achieved education. The Lisbon Convention, which the Czech Republic joined in February 2000, can be considered as a suitable instrument for fulfilling the Bologna Declaration. Its most important idea, which represents a change for all signatory countries, is the recognition of a higher education degree or a part of studies based primarily on the completed study load (gaining of credits),

the general concept of study content and the quality of a given higher education institution, not on the basis of the actual equivalence of completed study, as was the case in the past.

An ambitious goal of EU countries, which envisages that every higher education student will spend part of their studies outside their own institution, preferably abroad, is also part of our vision. The mobility of academic staff will also be encouraged.

International cooperation requires the improvement, broadening and deepening of *language training*, which facilitates the mobility of students and teachers. EU education programmes are an important contribution to mobility and cooperation, creating necessary material, technical and political conditions, as are other international bilateral and multilateral agreements and proposed international programmes (e.g. the prepared common programme of Canada and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe). It is necessary to promote the important role of *the mobility of higher education teachers*, which brings further education and experience not only to teachers themselves, but through them to their students, too. The mobility of teachers allows them to participate in the preparation of common study programmes, which not only contributes to their own improvement but also simplifies and promotes the mobility of students.

7.4. Quality evaluation

Evaluation of the quality of education will be seen as a complex matter, focused first of all on removing shortages and continuing improvement based on the recommendations of experts. Internal evaluation activities will be coordinated with external evaluation in order to achieve the maximum effectiveness of the efforts expended.

Quality in education is given by the extent to which certain requirements, stipulated as the goals of an educational institution with respect to the effective investment of financial resources, are fulfilled. The immediate user, who assesses and mainly experiences the quality of education, is first the student, then employers, parents, teachers (academic staff), users of research and development, state representatives and other users of an educational institution's services. It is clear that each group of users takes a different and very specific view of the fulfilment of educational goals. This conception

confirms that it is not possible to seek only one quality of (tertiary) education, but that quality is a multidimensional notion.

Quality evaluation in higher education is connected with a high level of autonomy and self-governance of higher education institutions, with responsibility for the quality of activities provided, with effective management of resources which the state invests in education, and with the accessibility of information not only to the expert public.

It is higher education institutions that prepare their strategies of development and so they have not only the possibility, but also a legal duty to plan their aims in accordance with the requirements of all users of the services provided and with the requirements of the state. Then evaluation can be based on the fulfilment of those stipulated aims and judged by the extent to which the aims were attained.

Institutions and study programmes are subjected to both internal and external quality evaluation. Internal evaluation means that the given subjects assess themselves. The law leaves the form and further use of the internal evaluation to be decided by the educational institution in question. Internal quality evaluation is governed by Higher Education Institutions Act, no. 111/1998 Coll., and falls within the authority of the Accreditation Commission, which is an independent expert body appointed by the Government.

From the technical point of view, it is necessary to coordinate external evaluation with internal evaluation activities in order to use similar data, as otherwise academic staff could be overburdened by participation in evaluation activity, which would become an end in itself.

The purpose is to gradually develop a structured system of external quality evaluation, in which the predominant but not the only role will be played by the evaluation required by the Higher Education Institutions Act, carried out by academic staff and experts in the respective fields. Employers of future graduates, professional chambers, regional governments and other bodies, e.g. those aiming to monitor the forming of attitudes to the environment and sustainable development and to create a sufficiently informative picture of a given educational institution for public, should also intervene in external evaluation.

An increasingly important role will be played by external evaluation by an international organisation or a foreign higher education institution, which could influence the reputation of Czech institutions in international competition and support the position of our graduates on the international labour market.

The results of quality evaluation will not have a direct impact on the allocation of funds. An adequate period will be always provided so that discovered mistakes can be corrected. The outcomes of evaluation will not be used primarily for comparison of various institutions and making ladders, as the object of evaluation will be the extent to which the stated goals were achieved.

Evaluation in tertiary education has to be focused primarily on removing or reducing discovered weaknesses on the base of accepted recommendations over a set period. The way that the results of an evaluation are used has to be clearly stipulated in advance and possible punishments can be applied only after repeated negative evaluations. A quantity of long-term experience with using various mechanisms of quality evaluation confirms that a *direct linking of quality evaluation with the allocation of funding is inappropriate*. One basic instrument promoting the use of the results of evaluation is their accessibility to the public. Motivation for gaining additional financial resources has to be sought in development programmes, whose outcomes will affect quality evaluation.

The multidimensional meaning of the notion of quality in education means that it is not appropriate to compare various kinds of educational institutions in the tertiary sector and rank them on a scale. The purposes and missions of individual institutions of the tertiary education sector are very varied and are set by their strategic development plans, which can differ from each other, and so it is necessary to assess them according to how they cope with the given tasks. Comparison can be suitable and motivating only in case of evaluation of similar activities.

7.5. Lifelong education

In accordance with world trends, the concept of lifelong education will be stressed. Its development requires a diversified and flexible structure not only of the tertiary sector, but of the education system as a whole, offering modern forms of studies using information and communication technologies. In this system it will be possible to provide applicants with such access to education that they will be able to choose their own educational path, appropriate to their interest and abilities, to change it if necessary and to continue in education throughout their life.

An emphasis on a general concept of lifelong education, which is connected with the creation of a diverse and per-

meable structure not only of tertiary education, but the education system as a whole, is a worldwide trend.

Higher education institutions take part in lifelong education through the implementation of programmes and courses and it is expected that this activity will increase. The objective, nevertheless, should not be for the offer of study of individual subjects, courses and modules within this framework to virtually duplicate that of accredited study programmes. Such a situation would very quickly lead to an undesirable end, creating two fundamentally different groups of students: one studying in proper accredited programmes thus free of charge, while the other group would pay for the same studies. Such a situation is totally unacceptable.

On the other hand, it is highly desirable that qualifications achieved in this manner be accepted as far as possible when entering accredited programmes, again in line with the ideas of the Bologna Declaration. There should be a general move to ensure that it is the education gained that is substantial, not the qualification gained. The offer should be guided not only by the declared interests of potential participants, but also by demands of the state (ministries, labour offices, etc.).

New forms of study based particularly on using new information and communication technologies, which will intervene in the development of the whole tertiary education system, will have a dominant role to play in lifelong education. Especially in the framework of lifelong education courses, it is necessary to prepare courses intended for non-traditional groups of students who did not, for various reasons, enter tertiary education or did not complete it, as well as for employees whose occupations require further education.

8. Education at Post-secondary Technical Schools

Post-secondary technical studies and the institutions which provide them, are *relatively new elements in the Czech education system*, and therefore it is quite natural that there are substantially more specific problems necessary that must be solved in this field than with higher education institutions. The reform of state administration, when regional bodies are taking over responsibility for this part of the education system, is creating a new situation that will lead to a better linking with regional needs.

8.1. Restructuring of the network of post-secondary technical schools and their educational programmes

The basic framework for the needed *restructuring of the network of post-secondary technical schools and their educational programmes* was provided by stipulations in the Education Bill concerning a uniform three-year duration of educational programmes of post-secondary technical schools and the introduction of extension technical studies lasting one or two years. The goals are as follows:

- to transfer shorter programmes, especially those provided at post-secondary technical schools coexisting with upper secondary technical schools, to the category of extension technical studies, after individual evaluation
- to ensure that post-secondary technical schools offering high quality programmes are secure in personnel and material terms, particularly those which supplement the educational offer of higher education institutions or work in regional centres or agglomerations where the offer of tertiary education is insufficient
- to reduce atomisation of post-secondary technical schools, for example through linking schools with similar programmes or possibly with various programmes, in organisationally and economically effective units
- to transform post-secondary technical schools whose programmes are accredited as bachelor's programmes into non-university higher education institutions.

Several circumstances are favourable for attaining these goals. The majority of post-secondary technical schools coexisting with upper secondary technical schools were established as a result of the impossibility of offering extension studies. If this reason disappears, it would *not be necessary to maintain the largely formal existence of a specific upper secondary technical school*. Information is available on the quality of some upper secondary technical schools, which simplifies the need for demanding surveys and evaluation, but this information must be classified and analysed. The expected publication of framework educational programmes and the proposed ending of the validity of curricula by 1 September 2005 will require that other existing educational programmes of post-secondary technical schools are evaluated.

Educational programmes of post-secondary technical schools will represent an original educational offer accepted and respected by social partners and the labour market

in the diversified tertiary education sector. This offer will be a flexible complement to bachelor's programmes offered by higher education institutions. The modular structure of the programmes should make it possible to study individual modules, even separately, and to receive a certificate on their successful completion, as well as to accept modules completed elsewhere (e.g. in extension studies).

The reintroduction of extension technical studies is desirable and topical because of the lack of short forms of education for graduates from upper secondary general/technical schools. This enables them to acquire basic technical knowledge confirmed by a certificate through short study cycles. The reintroduction of this type of study as laid out in the Education Bill will contribute to the broadening and flexibility of diversified and original study opportunities in the tertiary education sector.

The modular structure of study and the planned introduction of a credit system of education will support the possibility of moving throughout the whole tertiary education system according to stated goals. It must be explicitly stated that post-secondary technical schools will accept modules of extension studies that lead to a certificate and enable graduates to continue in studies leading to the title of Specialist with Diploma. The openness of educational programmes of post-secondary technical schools and extension studies to students from higher education institutions who decide to change their educational paths, accounts for a high proportion of higher education students who fail to acquire higher level of qualification.

The prerequisite for further development of post-secondary technical schools is their greater participation in international cooperation and support of students' and teachers' mobility. It is necessary to encourage their participation in EU education programmes and to involve large independent post-secondary technical schools alongside higher education institutions in the SOCRATES/ERASMUS sub-programme.

8.2. The establishment of non-university higher education institutions

A number of non-university higher education institutions have already been established. This does not present any technical problem even when the original post-secondary technical school does not cease to exist, but continues to offer those educational programmes that were not accredit-

ed as bachelor's courses. As to state post-secondary technical schools, there has not yet been any transformation (the law does not allow for a state non-university higher education institution in the education sector) and the only possible way to establish a public non-university higher education institution is to pass another law. From 2001, the regions will take over responsibility for these non-university higher education institutions, which on the one hand provide for the possibility that a region (a legal subject) becomes a founder of a "private" non-university higher education institution, but on the other hand will complicate property issues if a public non-university higher education institution is established. In any case, the possibility to establish public non-university higher education institutions from pre-selected post-secondary technical schools and maybe later on from others according to the development of their study programmes will be promoted. The possibility to offer an accredited bachelor's programme in cooperation with an existing higher education institution, or to become a part of the latter still exists and is suitable for those post-secondary technical schools that want to accredit only one or few educational programmes, which are too small to become an autonomous higher education institution, and so on. In view of the fact that these potential public non-university higher education institutions, or common higher education programmes represent an increase in the number of higher education students, it is necessary to confirm an increase in funding for higher education institutions, from which the legal claims of subsidies will be covered.

8.3. Teachers of post-secondary technical schools

The quality of post-secondary technical schools, as an important part of the tertiary sector, depends on the quality of teachers. Just as the content and organisation of studies differs from other upper secondary schools, so do the requirements on their teachers:

- The main responsibility for teaching in post-secondary technical schools lies with core teachers, even if the role of external higher education teachers and experts from the world of work is also important.
- The emphasis on the practical part of education has to be reflected in qualification requirements and career growth. Professionally oriented educational pro-

grammes require teachers to have the opportunity to follow developments in their respective fields; the best solution for them is to participate in the world of work.

- It is necessary to enable in-service education and training of teachers both in cooperation with higher education institutions and through study visits in firms.
- The prerequisite for this is a lower number of teaching hours in comparison with upper secondary school.

8.4. Evaluation of post-secondary technical education

There is no evaluation body in the area of post-secondary technical schools similar to the Accreditation Commission in higher education. The evaluation of post-secondary technical education is carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate, and a non-state programme called the EVOS (by the Association of Schools of Post-secondary Studies) does this on a voluntary basis. The programme is inspired by foreign experience in the non-university education sector and uses its own evaluation of schools. This evaluation does not cover all post-secondary technical schools because of its voluntary nature and relative high cost of evaluation.

The position of post-secondary technical schools in the tertiary education sector requires a similar view of the quality of education provided, as well as of the mechanism of quality, evaluation as for higher education institutions. In this case, the evaluation of educational programmes of post-secondary technical schools can remain within the remit of the Ministry of Education, which can charge a group consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Czech School Inspectorate, the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education and other external experts with this activity. The external experts must include *representatives of employers*, who bring their specific view into evaluation and can bring in their demands on post-secondary technical education. With respect to establishing and managing post-secondary technical schools, a commission at the level of the Ministry of Education seems to be a suitable body for systematic continuous evaluation of educational programmes and should have the power to require documentary studies, as outcomes of a respective school's self-evaluation. The evaluation criteria used must be appropriate to the tertiary level of education and its aims.

Recommendations:

- ❑ The broadening of research culture and creative activity will become a defining sign of tertiary education. Studies should be linked with scientific or other creative activity, the type and quantity of which distinguishes different types of higher education programmes, and adequate institutions.
- ❑ The development of study programmes will be directed towards achieving the aim that approximately one half of graduates leave for employment after completing a bachelor's degree or post-secondary technical studies. It is necessary to create concrete conditions for successful placements of graduates and increase their social recognition by general information activity.
- ❑ The permeable and modular system of study will gradually allow individuals to continue in education immediately or later, in the same school or another, at home or abroad, but always under the condition that requirements of the respective continuing study programme (module) are fulfilled according to agreement between both educational institutions.
- ❑ In this system, applicants will be able to choose their own educational path appropriate to their interest

and capabilities, to change it if necessary, and continue in education throughout their life.

- ❑ The Czech Republic will support the building of an open European education space through international cooperation development and the respecting of international conventions and declarations (the Lisbon Convention, the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations), at the same time preserving specific elements of Czech cultural and education traditions.
- ❑ The system of external quality evaluation will take into account the different goals and tasks of individual institutions of the tertiary sector. The results of quality evaluation of institutions will not be used for their comparison. The object of evaluation will be the extent to which the goals were fulfilled. Internal evaluation activities will be coordinated with those of external evaluation in order to maximise the effectiveness of work. Evaluation results will not be directly connected with the allocation of financial resources. An adequate period will be always provided for the correction of identified mistakes.
- ❑ Students will be educated for high professional flexibility, creative skills, cultural and communication skills and moral values. Education for democratic citizenship, multi-cultural, tolerant and moral values will be developed even in the tertiary education sector.

IV.

Adult Education

A. COMMON ISSUES

1. Adult Education as an Integral Part of the Education System

Rapid *development of education for adults*, whose living conditions allow them to make independent decisions on their personal life and who are employed (or seek employment) or are pursuing their own interests in their post-productive age, is one of the most distinctive trends in the education system today. It is primarily due to the requirements of the economy: the need for continuous innovation of products and services (including the implementation of new technologies), to increase productivity, quality and effectiveness, and so improve competitiveness. Other more general needs have also been increasing (e.g. to use information technologies, to speak foreign languages, to improve our care of the changing environment). As a result, the countries, companies and individuals that want to meet these needs are seeking to develop and support adult education. The necessity of adult education is further increased by shifts in employment structure, changes in the content of work, and in people's own desire to improve their education, whether to improve their career prospects or purely for their own interests. From the point of view of the individual, adult education increases people's employability and their career prospects and earning potential. There is also an expansion in more general adult education, in areas such as personality development or civic roles. All these phenomena and trends are also making themselves felt in the economic and social life of the Czech Republic.

Forecasts show that the need for adult education will increase further in coming years and it will have an even greater impact on economic output, at both macroeconomic and microeconomic levels. For that reason, the concept of lifelong learning encompassing initial (preparatory) and further education in a mutually interconnected whole which provides for the possibility of transferring from any part of the education system to another has become a determining concept in education today. It is based on the principle that if people want to cope with the rapid development of their environment and actively influence it, the education acquired during their schooldays is not sufficient, and they need the opportunity and the desire to continue to learn. Education has spread from youth to adulthood, from schools to other institutions, moved beyond the education sector and has become a matter for all sectors.

In comparison with initial (or preparatory) education of children and youth at schools, adult education is the *most varied* part of education systems. It is focused on *very diversified target groups* (e.g. employees of companies and other institutions, applicants for employment, citizens in general), who differ not only by scope, age, profession, but above all in their motives for learning, etc. Adult education is offered by *various providers* (state or non-state), from many sectors. Subjects taught in educational programmes and courses vary widely and different methods of teaching and learning are used. The costs of adult education are covered from various resources, public and private.

In an effort to deal systematically with the broad and differentiated area of adult education and to take the particular features of its different parts into account, we have distinguished three main parts of adult education in this chapter:

- *Adult education leading to a formal level of education.* Mostly adult education provided in all types of state and non-state upper secondary and post-secondary technical schools and higher education institutions offers a “second chance” for people who, for whatever reason, have not reached the desired level of education earlier.
- *Continuing vocational education.* This includes both obligatory (regulated) and non-obligatory training and retraining of employees, and the training and retraining of job seekers.
- *Other parts of adult education*, e.g. education satisfying personal interests, civic education, education for seniors, etc.

Comparison of the indicators of adult education in this country and abroad, especially in the European Union countries, shows clearly that adult education in this country has been developing more *slowly* and in recent years quantitative indicators of adult education have even started to *decrease*, which is virtually unknown in international comparisons. Only about one quarter of Czech companies consider education as a priority of their personnel policy, or human resource development as a part of strategy of their development. In the majority of sectors there are no coherent systems of employee education. On average, the expenditure of Czech companies and institutions intended for employee education is not even half of what is invested in Western European countries. Only every twentieth job seeker takes part in retraining schemes. Although demo-

graphic trends have led to an increase in the proportion of elderly people in this country, there has been no perceptible development in their education. *This lag has far reaching consequences for the present and particularly for the future:* it is a major barrier to economic growth and standard of living and it is inconsistent with both general trends which will influence the Czech Republic more and more in the future (e.g. internationalisation, the information revolution), and with requirements resulting from expected membership in the European Union (e.g. freedom of movement for workers, comparability of qualifications). The aims and efforts of strategic and other documents to date (e.g. the National Employment Plan, the Sector Operating Programme of Human Resource Development) are surely desirable and useful, but they cannot in themselves solve the accumulated problems. If the Czech Republic does not want to continue to lag behind and, through its lack of action, to condemn itself to the role of a country with an underdeveloped labour force that is able to manage just simpler technologies, *substantial changes* are necessary in adult education.

2. Key Problems of Adult Education and their Solution

Analyses, studies, and discussions on adult education in this country particularly in recent years, have clearly shown that there are *three key problems* in the area of adult education as a whole, and so in all three of its parts: first, no clear distribution of responsibilities, second, nonexistent or ineffective motivation, and third, a lack of systematic instruments for the development of adult education. These three key problems are the overwhelming contributors to the backwardness of adult education in the Czech Republic and give rise to other problems in this area. Therefore, a solution to these three problems will represent *three priorities of adult education development in the Czech Republic in the near future.*

The problem of responsibilities and a legal framework

The core of the problem of *unclear responsibilities* lies in the lack of a legal framework which would stipulate the powers and responsibilities of individual actors that influence the development of adult education. This means that no state or non-state body has the overall responsibility

for adult education. Isolated attempts to develop strategies, conceptions or priorities of adult education development, mostly through the initiative of some non-state institutions have not so far awakened any interest among the relevant government bodies, with the exception of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Thus adult education in the Czech Republic has largely developed spontaneously, without any planned underpinning influence of the state, and therefore insufficiently. Neither government bodies nor social partners have until now taken general European trends in adult education into account in their activities (see e.g. Lifelong Learning for All – OECD 1996, Hamburg Declaration and Agenda for the Future – UNESCO 1997, Teaching and Learning, Towards the Learning Society – European Commission 1995) or specific recommendations for the development of adult education in the Czech Republic (e.g. OECD: Reports on National Policies in Education: Czech Republic, 1996).

For this reason, we suggest drawing up and implementing a legal framework for the development of adult education, in co-operation with state bodies, employers, trade unions, communities, regions and professional bodies. The legal framework governing a number of legislative documents should determine the following issues of adult education:

- powers and responsibilities of the most important actors in the development of adult education (the state, employers, trade unions, communities and regions, professional bodies)
- the rules for financing the main areas of adult education
- financial and non-financial stimuli for the development of adult education
- mechanisms for quality assurance, accreditation, certification and further aspects of adult education.

Within the suggested legal framework of the development of adult education, the law defining the areas of responsibility of ministries should be amended so that their responsibilities in adult education are explicitly stated. Because adult education affects all sectors, all ministries should take over the tasks in further vocational training in their respective sectors. The role of sectoral bodies should also increase in relation to the content, assessment and certification of initial education at schools. Besides these tasks, we suggest that some ministries should be given specific areas

of responsibility, e.g. the Ministry of Education for adult education in schools or civic and recreational education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for the retraining of job applicants and for questions relating to professional standards and so on. Some of the state bodies should be entrusted with the co-ordination of the different bodies involved. Besides state bodies, the designed legal framework should also define the competences of other actors, primarily social partners, community and regional bodies, chambers, professional bodies, etc. including regional councils for adult education, civic associations, etc., and the mechanisms for their co-operation. The role of non-state bodies in the development of adult education should also increase.

The problem of motivation

The root of the problem of motivation lies in the fact that there are no incentives and mechanisms to effectively stimulate adult education development. It has become clear that without effective stimuli, spontaneous development of adult education against a background of state passivity cannot hope to meet the needs of a progressive economy and association to the European Union. Therefore, we suggest immediately launching a project focusing on *the design and implementation of effective financial and non-financial incentives or systemic mechanisms* to stimulate the development of adult education.

These works should be based on a *tripartite agreement*, i.e. with the participation of the state, employers and trade unions. The incentives should be characterised first of all by *indirectness*, i.e. they should be expected to co-operate in creating a framework for the development of adult education in which individual actors (namely education providers, members of specific groups of learners, applicants for education, employers, etc.) will themselves decide whether to use them or not and to what extent.

Further we suggest developing and implementing *several* incentives, principally *financial* ones, with each incentive having its specific purpose and focusing on a specific target group. These should include at least the following incentives:

- for employers, so that their expenditure on employee education will be higher and more effective;
- for employees, so that they will continue to learn to the largest possible extent;
- for job applicants, so that they will undertake training and retraining;

- for education providers, so that they will be interested in broadening the education offer and facilitating access to education for various target groups (while maintaining quality criteria);
- for individuals, so that their interest in education will increase;
- for specific target groups (disadvantaged people, minority groups, etc.).

In addition to financial incentives, we suggest developing and implementing also non-financial incentives based, for example, on prestige appreciation awards when certain criteria of adult education or human resource development are fulfilled. Such incentives should be applied both at the level of individual sectors and overall. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs should become entrusted with this task, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education.

The problem of mechanisms for the systematic development of adult education

The lack of mechanisms for systematic development of adult education development means that there is, for example, no proper quality assurance in this extensive area, no system of certification of adult education, and an inadequate infrastructure of adult education (monitoring, research, international co-operation). This makes it more difficult for adult applicants to orientate themselves in the education offer, hampers recognition of education outcomes, and so reduces access to adult education. Therefore, we suggest introducing a number of measures aimed at developing and implementing several systematic mechanisms to improve adult education development.

In the future, the body which is responsible for a certain aspect of adult education should be responsible for *quality assurance*, while institutions carrying out the work make decisions on the means of quality assurance themselves. Quality assurance would also improve the systematic application of the principle of *accreditation* in adult education. Wider implementation of this systematic mechanism, however, requires considerable preparation, during which at least two substantial problems have to be dealt with. The first problem is to specify the content of the accreditation to guarantee the improvement and greater effectiveness of the activities of providers, teachers/lecturers, etc., and the improvement of educational programmes. The second problem lies in deciding the borders of accreditation, i.e.

in defining what educational programmes or providers or teachers/lecturers should be accredited and what should not. We suggest the Ministry of Education is entrusted with this task, in co-operation with other relevant institutions, including non-state ones.

Improved certification of adult education outputs in this greatly differentiated area would both facilitate orientation of all users of certificates (providers, learners, personnel managers, etc.) and access to further education through extension of certification of outputs acquired by non-formal learning. One possible way to improve output certification would be to impose an obligation on all education providers or those who issue certificates to add grades expressing the scope and level of the completed education. In addition to the need to introduce a mechanism of certification at the national level, there is need for a 'supranational' aspect of this mechanism, i.e. the need to introduce a transparent comparison between Czech and foreign qualifications and certificates. The Ministry of Education, or a state or non-state institution charged by the Ministry of Education, should be responsible for this. A significant step has already been made with the decision that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other subjects, prepare regulations on certification.

The whole area of adult education would also be improved by improving the *infrastructure of adult education* including supporting systems such as information systems, monitoring, analysis, research, counselling, and international co-operation. Therefore, we suggest that once responsibilities have been decided, the responsible institutions should, under co-ordination of the Ministry of Education and in co-operation with the Association of Institutes for Adult Education, agree on procedures leading to an optimum use of a publicly available database on providers of adult education and their educational programmes, which will be administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and which is linked with information systems used in employment services. Procedures leading to improvements in regular statistical surveys of adult education, to support for research, and international co-operation and internationalisation in the area of adult education should be also agreed on.

Besides the three key problems mentioned above in relation to adult education as a whole, it is necessary to solve several specific problems concerning certain parts of adult education.

B. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF PARTS OF ADULT EDUCATION

3. Education of Adults in Schools and Higher Education Institutions

Existing conditions for education leading to recognised qualifications offer only limited opportunities for adults, because they are mostly based on educational programmes lasting several years, which is difficult for some learners or their employers to accept. This reduces the take up of adult education, so that adults make up only a fraction of the total number of learners at schools: approximately 8% in upper secondary schools, 10% in post-secondary technical schools, and 10% in higher education institutions. These proportions should increase in coming years. Therefore, we suggest *facilitating access to such education for adults*. In addition to existing long-term educational programmes, adults will also be able to study (and have recognised) *shorter sections of educational programmes* (e.g. on a modular basis), and knowledge and skills, which *adults have acquired outside formal education* will be taken into account and recognised as well. We further suggest removing quantitative regulation of extension studies leading to the final examination ("maturitní zkouška") and intended for graduates from vocational training. This regulation is one of the serious administrative barriers to access to education. Adult education leading to a recognised qualification should offer a second chance for those who for various reasons did not achieve this level of education earlier. The Ministry of Education should be responsible for these tasks, in collaboration with schools, their associations and its institutes.

The access of adults to education leading to a general educational qualification could and should be facilitated by several other measures. First of all, *distance education should be more generally used*. We suggest that the Ministry of Education, in co-operation with the institutions mentioned above, should rapidly support a broadening of the offer of distance education provided by upper secondary and post-secondary schools, higher education institutions and other providers.

In efforts to extend adult studies leading to general qualifications, we further suggest that the Ministry of Education should give schools which provide this type of education an *increase in basic subsidy* per student, by at least one third.

Access of adults to this education could then be facilitated by a *stipulation of paid leave* for education, which employers would give their employees to an extent to be agreed on in joint tripartite negotiations by state representatives, employers and trade unions. We suggest that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is entrusted with this task.

4. Continuing Vocational Education

The largest part of adult education is continuing vocational education. Its significance, quality and quantity have the greatest influence on adult education as a whole and its effectiveness in economy. Although some companies and sectors in the Czech Republic have an excellent level of human resource development, the average scope of further vocational education is markedly lower than in European Union countries and the gap between the Czech Republic and the European union is in fact widening.

One aspect of further vocational education is created by *regulated (i.e. obligatory) continuing vocational education*, which is a prerequisite for certain specialist activities (e.g. specific electrical work, operation of pressure tanks, but also specific medical work). Responsibility for obligatory vocational education should lie with the relevant sector bodies (ministries) or professional bodies.

The largest area of (non-obligatory) *continuing vocational education* has the biggest impact on capability to innovate and therefore special attention should be paid to it. It is the area where we consider the introduction of effective *incentives for employers to stimulate them to invest more in their employees' education* to be the most urgent. We suggest outlining the concrete form of the conditions in tripartite negotiations between state representatives, employers and trade unions, including whether the incentives will be based on tax relief, on the adjustment of payroll taxes, on obligatory transfers or other principles. The experience of countries in which such incentives are applied successfully should be taken into account, as well as the specific conditions in the Czech Republic. Incentives for employers should be developed in parallel with the preparation and implementation of the other incentives mentioned above. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs should be responsible for this, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Concern for human resource development both at company and sectoral or regional levels is still insufficiently developed in this country. Managers would sometimes prefer

to invest in 'technology' than in 'people'. Therefore, we suggest that projects focusing on innovative approaches in human resource development and on the dissemination of positive experience should receive greater support from national, regional and sectoral bodies in the future.

5. Retraining

Retraining is a most significant form of education for job applicants registered in Labour Offices, and employed people, usually those threatened by unemployment, can also take part in it. Retraining, as one of the measures of active employment policy, makes a significant contribution to increasing the rate of employment, because around 70% of those completing such schemes find a job. Although the numbers of participants in retraining courses has risen in recent years, only about 5% of job applicants attend them, while the majority passively receive unemployment benefits, which is negative from the point of view both of the state and the job seekers themselves.

Therefore, we suggest *increasing the numbers participating in retraining schemes*, mainly through the following measures:

- an increase in the volume of funding earmarked for active employment policy (this measure has been implemented since the National Employment Plan was approved last year)
- broadening of retraining programmes focusing on specific groups of job applicants (e.g. school leavers, women, handicapped persons, people without qualifications, etc.)
- strengthening of the profit motive of job applicants to undertake retraining, by increasing the difference between the level of unemployment benefit for those on retraining courses, and those who are not
- improvement in information and guidance activities, focusing on increasing the willingness of job applicants to attend retraining courses.

These measures should be carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which has already put some of them into practice. *Greater involvement of upper secondary vocational and technical, post-secondary technical schools and higher education institutions* in retraining could help to increase the numbers of participants in retraining courses. Schools' commitment to retraining should be better ap-

praised by education, local and regional authorities. The Ministry of Education should make it possible for applicants who are not registered at Labour Offices, whether they are employed or not, to take part in retraining courses.

6. Education Satisfying Personal Interests and Civic Education for Adults

Personal interests education, which is normally initiated by an individual, serves primarily to develop hobbies or personally motivated knowledge, but at the same time its results can be used in an individual's professional career and contribute to an increase in the general level of education in the country. Civic education improves knowledge, general awareness and civic values relating to specific social, political and other issues. This is why these aspects of adult education, provided by trade unions, churches, local and regional bodies, civic initiatives, etc., should be encouraged.

We suggest that individuals' expenditure on education, whether recreational education or any other category of adult education, should become a *deductible item* for their income tax base. Although the Ministry of Education should have the responsibility for recreational education, this task would be undertaken by the Ministry of Finance.

The scope, intensity and other parameters of adult education are influenced by the general social environment, which can promote or retard education. Lifelong learning should therefore be placed on the higher rungs of the value ladders of both the society and individuals in the near future. Politicians and the media should pay greater attention to lifelong learning. Lifelong learning and its infrastructure should be promoted, including support for information technology in education, and educational, informative

and cultural activities of various institutions (museums, libraries). Media, namely 'public-service' television and radio should also pay greater attention to adult education, because their participation in these activities is extremely low.

Recommendations:

- ❑ **To create a legal framework for the development of adult education**
 - To define the powers and responsibilities of the most important actors in the development of adult education (the state, employers, trade unions, communities and regions, professional bodies).
 - To set out rules for financing the main parts of adult education.
- ❑ **To develop and implement a system of financial and non-financial incentives**
 - for employers, to make their expenditures on employees' education higher and more effective
 - for employees, to encourage them to undertake further vocational education and retraining courses
 - for education providers, to broaden the education offer and to facilitate access to it for different target groups
 - for individuals, to increase their interest in education.
- ❑ **To establish mechanisms for the systematic development of adult education focusing on**
 - quality assurance, accreditation and certification
 - information system and supporting systems
 - adult education research
 - broadening of the base for initial education and in-service training of educational staff in adult education, methodological and counselling services.

V.

Conclusion

The Main Strategic Guidelines of Educational Policy in the Czech Republic

The National Programme for the Development of Education was created on the basis of analysis and evaluation of the development of Czech schooling and the whole sphere of education during the decade after 1989. It follows the evaluation of the education system by Czech and foreign experts, and also uses outcomes from public discussion, in which educational and other public bodies, social partners and other interest groups of civic society took part. It is also grounded on an analysis of general trends in the European Union countries and other developed countries over a long period, and on systematic comparison of the state of the Czech education system with those in foreign countries. The programme defines general goals, principles and purposes which are to be respected and implemented by state and local government bodies, schools and all other actors of educational policy. *A precondition for the success of the proposed programme for education will be its inclusion in an overall strategy of socio-economic development of Czech society, together with consistent adherence to the principles of educational policy common in democratic countries.*

This document deals with the whole education sphere, perceived in a systematic way, its starting points and preconditions of development, general aspects and specific problems of individual education sectors and institutions. The goals set out and the detailed recommendations can be summarised in the form of the main strategic guidelines of educational policy, which were outlined and explained in the introductory chapter (see I. 1, 2).

The National Programme for the Development of Education holds that education must be a priority of socio-economic development of the Czech Republic, because it has a decisive influence on the human and social capital of society, on people's system of values and on the quality of their everyday life.

To ensure that the necessary changes of the education system take place, financial and political support from state and self-governing bodies, companies, civic society, media and individuals is indispensable. This support is expressed in a concrete form in a requirement *to gradually increase public expenditure on education so that it equals that in other developed countries and reaches 6% of the gross domestic product.*

The creation of political and economic conditions for a lasting change in access to investment in learning and education is thus a prerequisite for the implementation of the proposed strategic guidelines (see Chart).

Between 2001 and 2005, the National Programme for the Development of Education approved by a resolution of the Czech Government, No. 113 on 7 February 2001, will focus on the following strategic guidelines:

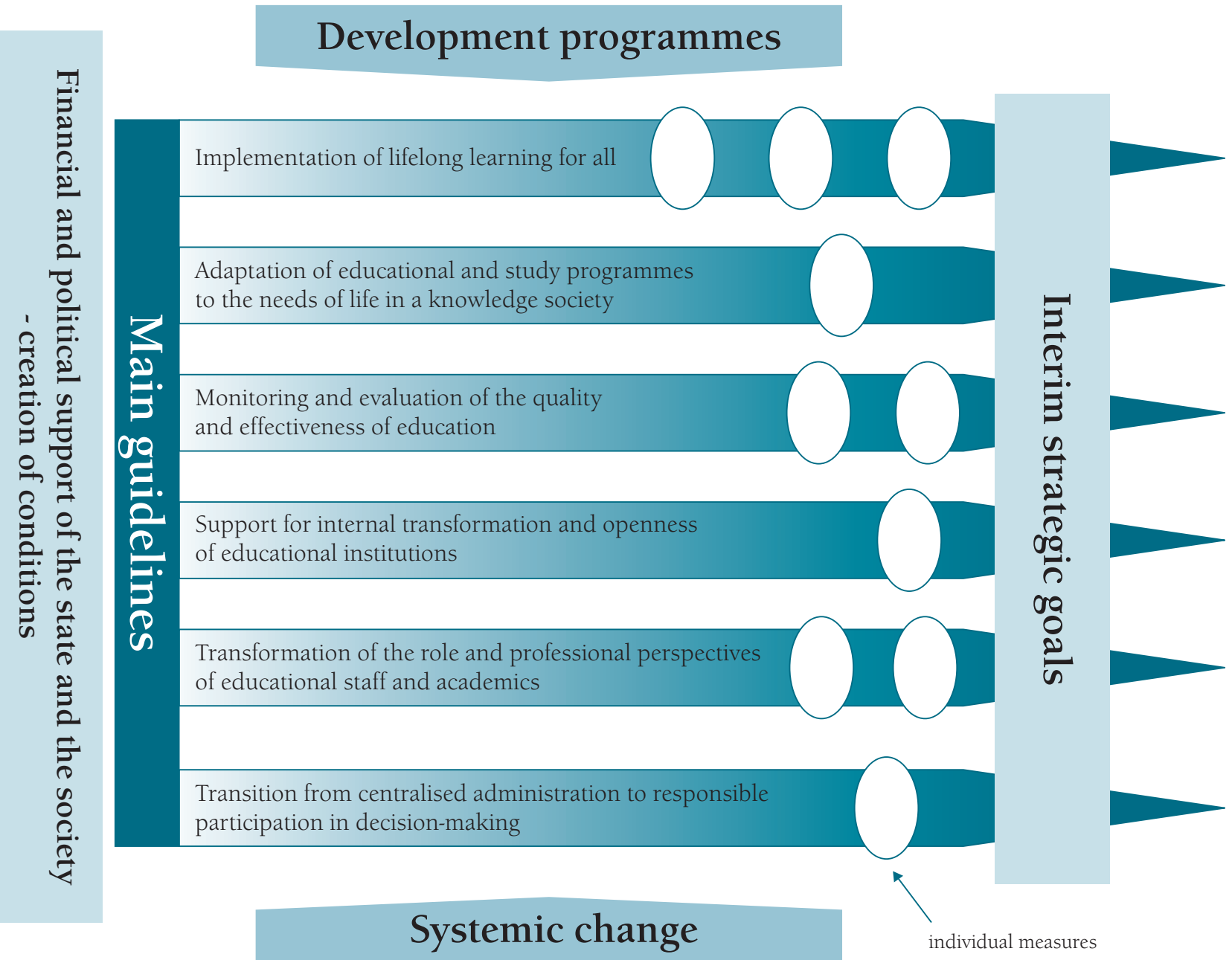
1. **The implementation of lifelong learning for all;**
2. **Adaptation of educational and study programmes to the needs of life in a knowledge society;**
3. **Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of education;**
4. **Support for the internal transformation and openness of educational institutions;**
5. **Transformation of the role and professional perspectives of educational staff and academics;**
6. **Transition from centralised administration to responsible participation in decision-making.**

Every strategic guideline includes a brief outline, followed by goals and proposed main measures, whose gradual implementation should lead to the fulfilment of the goals. The measures may be legal or organisational and are termed systemic changes in the chart. Nevertheless, change can also be implemented through development programmes which, on the basis of defined aims, time frame and special funding, can lead to the desired improvement in the participants or supporters of education. In many cases, both forms will mingle and indeed for many measures this will be essential.

1. Implementation of Lifelong Learning for All

To satisfy and stimulate the educational needs of children, youth and adults by sufficiently increasing the capacities of schools and other educational institutions, so that accessibility to all educational levels is assured and the opportunity for the maximum development of diverse abilities will be provided for all individuals throughout their lives, in accordance with the principles of equality and the utilisation of talent.

Human potential should not be wasted in this country. To create a broad offer of educational opportunities and



assure equitable access to education is one of the basic pre-conditions for giving everybody the opportunity to find their own educational path and develop, complete and alter it according to their needs throughout their life. This applies to the whole population – from the exceptionally gifted to individuals with physical or social disadvantages. It is in the interests of the whole society to recognise the potential of each individual as early as possible and to create conditions for their full development.

An individualised approach to children, pupils and students, and differentiation of the educational offer, together with other organisational measures in the education system makes it possible to respect, develop and utilise all kinds of talent and compensate for possible disadvantages relating either to the low ability of some individuals to insert themselves into a given education system, or to reduced possibilities to change or alter educational paths. Inequalities, whether material, social or physical or those resulting from ethnic or other differences, will be compensated for by mechanisms that reduce their consequences.

The *goal* is to enable the whole population to become participants in education at any point in their lives when it seems necessary and thus to be prepared for lifelong learning. With this aim, the possibilities for vertical and horizontal transferability between all levels and types of schools in the system will be broadened and links with other parts of the education system will be assured, so that everybody can continue their education at the same point where they interrupted it and do not have to go back or to start again from the beginning for formal and organisational reasons.

The main measures:

1.1. To ensure that education is fully accessible and that all levels of the education system offer people the opportunity to change their course of study

This calls for the creation of the currently lacking legislative, financial and organisational conditions and use of existing provisions to make the education system more open and flexible, from preschool education to adult education, both inside and outside schools. This will lead to a less selective system in the higher levels of education, to better possibilities for moving between various educational programmes, and to more possibilities for a second chance for all those who want to re-enter the education system at a later stage in their lives. The promotion and development of modular arrangement of educational programmes, es-

pecially in upper secondary technical education and in the tertiary sector, in accordance with the Bologna Declaration, will allow links with further educational programmes. The development of a modular system will be supported through specific *development programmes*.

1.2. To promote the individualisation and differentiation of the educational process at all levels of the education system

Existing conditions will be used to the maximum and further legislative and organisational conditions will be created to enable the educational process to be shaped on the levels of both the individual and the group, including educational programmes for individuals as well as group teaching. Special attention will be paid to the second stage of the basic school. The creation of an educational environment which enables the development of talented individuals and the integration of disadvantaged ones will be supported by a development programme focusing on changes in ways of teaching and on extending of educational offer, including recreational and further education.

1.3. To implement a system to develop talented and exceptionally gifted individuals

The promotion of a broad range of teaching and recreational activities and various competitions will create a basis for identifying gifted individuals. Regional coordinators will inform these pupils and their parents of adequate educational opportunities, of possibilities of flexible educational paths regardless of the pupil's age, or possibly of an individual form of education. Counselling, pedagogical and research activities in the area of education of gifted individuals and support for the development of educational programmes and methodological materials will be coordinated through a central specialised institution. This system must include teacher education and in-service training focused on the promotion of talent and the development of gifts.

1.4. To promote the education of disadvantaged individuals

The education of physically, mentally, and socially disadvantaged individuals will be promoted by a broader introduction of specific development programmes. One important aspect will be an effort to integrate them into an inclusive school and to ensure that they reach the maximum attainable level of education. In addition, there will be compensatory programmes di-

rected first of all at preschool education for children from ethnically or culturally disadvantaged environments and on education for people without qualifications. Special attention will be paid to minority education and the education of foreigners and their children as a part of integration of these groups into the Czech society.

1.5. To increase the proportion of young people in upper secondary education who pass the school-leaving examination (the “maturitní zkouška”) to 75%

The increasing demands of individual, social and working life require that more and more young people acquire a higher level of skills. The way to achieve this is, among other things, to gradually increase the proportion of young people from each year who complete the various forms of upper secondary general or upper secondary technical education (passing the “maturitní zkouška”) to 75%. To this end, extension studies intended for pupils who have completed vocational education leading to an apprentice certificate will be supported. *Organisational, financial and other conditions* will be created to make full upper secondary education accessible to the majority of upper secondary schools.

1.6. To enable access to tertiary education for 50% of a respective population year

Financial, organisational, material and legislative conditions will be improved in order to satisfy the continuing interest in tertiary education. The restructuring of tertiary education will focus particularly on the development of bachelor’s study programmes and post-secondary technical studies so that roughly one half of tertiary sector graduates can find work on both the domestic and European labour markets. All types and forms of tertiary education will become integral parts of this sector and possibilities of transferring between them will be promoted. In order to assure an optimal structure of study and educational programmes of this sector there is a long-term plan to introduce a common law.

1.7. To promote the development of distance education

Distance education will be supported by specific *development programmes* based on the utilisation of information and communication technologies, and their linking with the general conception of the State Information Policy in Education. The development of dis-

tance education with the use of ICT will also broaden the availability of education and facilitate access to programmes offered within the framework of the European network of distance education and other international programmes. It is essential to encourage the participation of the media, namely ‘public service’ television – e.g. language courses, foreign language films and documents, educational programmes for children and adults. The basis for the development of distance education will consist of existing regional centres and the National Centre of Distance Education, which will continue to coordinate their activities.

1.8. To design and introduce a system of financial and non-financial incentives for developing adult education

A set of incentives for employers will be introduced to make their expenditure on employees’ education higher and more effective; to encourage employees to become more interested in education and enter vocational training and retraining; and to interest providers of education in broadening the education offer and facilitating access to education for various target groups and individuals as well.

2. Adaptation of Educational and Study Programmes to the Needs of Life in a Knowledge Society

To make education better and more functional by developing new educational programmes and courses which will meet the demands of an information and knowledge society, sustainable development, employment and needs of active participation in the life of a democratic society in integrated Europe, and at the same time will respect individual differences and living conditions of participants in education.

The basic starting point of changes in education is the idea of lifelong learning and employability. Schools at all levels are expected to provide pupils and students not only with a general knowledge base, but also to motivate and prepare them for lifelong learning, since it is obvious that school education is only the first phase of lifelong learning. With respect to subsequent education, whether in educational institutions at higher levels, or in further education courses, at the workplace or through self-education, school has a preparatory role. Readiness for lifelong learning depends on the ability of individuals to adapt themselves to changing living and working conditions, to

cope with new activities of a complex character, to enter new relations, to take over various roles and at the same time to retain their human, cultural, national and civic identity.

The goal is to accommodate the goals and contents of education both to the needs of personal, working and civic life, and to the varying abilities of pupils and students, so that the school will not provide just a broad knowledge basis and practical skills, but also adequate instruments, universally usable so-called key competences, which comprise communication skills, working with information and digital data, working in a team, learning, and also the ability to use all acquired competences in a creative way. Study programmes in the tertiary education system have to cope with rapid progress in scientific knowledge and to strive to develop students' creative capabilities.

The main measures:

2.1. To elaborate a state programme of education for children and young from 3 to 19 years of age

- The State Programme of Education (National Curriculum) will be anchored legislatively as a framework curricular document, defining basic spiritual and moral values including self-knowledge, key competences, goals and content areas of education, which will create the framework for the whole education system, i.e. from kindergartens up to upper secondary schools leading to the "maturitní zkouška". Within its framework, those areas important for life within an increasingly integrated Europe are emphasised: education for democratic citizenship, environmental education, media education, multicultural education and a European dimension, career orientation, economy and entrepreneurship. There will be an emphasis on strengthening pupils' and students' sense of belonging to their national traditions, cultural heritage and the native land. In the different sectors of the education system attention will be paid to the following aspects:
- Transformation of basic education, especially the *integrated second stage of the basic school* will strive to ensure that every pupil both acquires a basic education resulting from a framework programme of basic education, and further develops their inborn capacities. Teaching at various levels in the main fields of education (i.e. language and language communication, mathematics and its applications, information and communication tech-

nologies, people and society, people and nature, arts and culture, people and health, people and the world of work) followed with optional subjects and the development of recreational activities, will help to create an educational environment, which will actively support the development of talents as well as the integration of disadvantaged pupils.

- *Upper secondary general education following compulsory school attendance and preparing for studies in the tertiary sector* will be more differentiated, including the introduction of selected technically oriented content. There will be a particular emphasis on the development of key competences, foreign language teaching and the use of information and communication technologies.
- *Upper secondary technical education* will encompass larger proportions of general and general technical education and key competences. Technical education itself will be designed in accordance with the demands of world of work on the basis of a considerably reduced number of broadly conceived clusters of occupations in order to enable flexibility on the labour market. Practical work in companies will be an inseparable part of this.

2.2. To promote the implementation of the new conception of the National Programme of Education especially in the following priority areas:

- *Foreign languages*
The teaching of two foreign language will be guaranteed at all levels of schooling, so that every individual leaving upper secondary education (with the "maturitní zkouška") will be able to communicate at varying levels of proficiency in two foreign languages, one of which will be English. It is necessary to look for various ways to encourage media participation in increasing foreign language literacy of children, young people and adults.
- *Information and communication technologies (ICT)*
In accordance with the state information policy, the development of skills among of pupils at all school levels will be promoted, so that they can effectively use information and communication technologies in education and in their personal and working life. Conditions will be created for schools to be able to use ICT to modernise methods and forms of teaching, including developing teachers' skills in this area.

➤ *Environmental education*

The sustainable development aspects of the National Programme of Environmental Education and Information will be incorporated into the national programme of education, framework and school educational programmes.

➤ *Key competences*

Overall changes in the nature of teaching will be supported at all levels of schooling so that new active teaching strategies will be used and disseminated, namely project teaching and inter-subject integration, to enable the development of key competences as a means of transforming the encyclopaedic conception of education.

➤ *Textbooks, teaching aids and educational software*

The textbook programme will be developed and directed towards implementing the new conception of educational programmes; in this way the quality of textbooks and other auxiliary materials for teaching will be supported, initiated, coordinated and guaranteed.

2.3. *To link study programmes in the tertiary sector with scientific, research and development or other creative activity inside or outside educational institutions*

Development programmes for educational institutions of the tertiary sector will seek to link teaching with developments in science, research and development both within the education sector itself, including that abroad, and in collaboration with other scientific and research institutions and companies. The extent and form of active involvement of tertiary education institutions in these creative activities will differ depending on their type and the nature of the education provided.

2.4. *To use international cooperation in the development of study programmes and of mobility of educational staff, academics and students*

Adjustment to the knowledge society requires continuing development of international cooperation. The development programme will promote the creation of common study programmes and exchanges of academics, teachers, pupils and students of higher education institutions and post-secondary technical schools. This programme will supplement special support for EU educational programmes and increase resources for mobility in connection with joining the Bologna Declaration, as well as for the implementation of other international agreements, especially with OECD countries.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Quality and Effectiveness of Education

To develop a system of evaluation of educational institutions' activities at all levels of management and administration, monitoring of education outcomes, examinations, and assessment of the personal development levels and career orientation of children and young people.

In a decentralised system, the importance of evaluation is greatly increased and this means both assessment of individual pupils' work, and evaluation of a school as a whole, of the entire education system, or its parts and sectors. The higher level of school autonomy in decision-making has to be balanced by systematic evaluation of results to assure their quality and effectiveness. The existing external evaluation by the Czech School Inspectorate will be supplemented with internal evaluation of schools, self-reflection in an attempt to change and improve the quality of the education offered. Internal evaluation will be based on directives (methodology, criteria and standards) drawn up under the leadership of the Czech School Inspectorate.

To facilitate transition between individual education levels and an appropriate choice of future educational paths, it is necessary to introduce output assessment of pupils at the end of every stage of compulsory education, based on a diagnosis of their development so far and on their education results. Therefore the existing system of pedagogical-psychological and career counselling will be broadened and positions of school psychologists or special school pedagogues will be gradually introduced into schools.

In tertiary education, quality has to be seen in terms of the fulfilment of requirements stated by an educational institution in accordance with the demands of its founders (in state and public institutions especially in accordance with the requirements of the state) and with the demands of all users of education. Various types of evaluation at national and international levels should be linked so that their results can be used effectively.

The goal is to promote the creation of a rich and differentiated evaluation environment, with various forms of internal and external evaluation, and to establish mechanisms for drawing conclusions for improving of the education system and of individual schools.

The main measures:

3.1. To develop evaluation and information systems of regional education

Legislative and organisational conditions for providing an evaluation system at the levels of the school, education system and regions will be created. At the school level, internal evaluation will be gradually implemented, together with external evaluation by the Czech School Inspectorate, on the basis of the same methodology. Other forms of external evaluation (including participation of social partners) will also be applied at regional and the system-wide levels and they will be used in the preparation of long-term development aims and for annual reports. The information system, which will acquire a regional dimension, will be completed and will serve school administrations and local authorities, schools, employers, parents and the general public.

3.2. To establish a Centre for the Evaluation and Monitoring of Education Outcomes

A Centre for the Evaluation and Monitoring of Education Outcomes will be established as a special institution for the development of instruments (tests and test items, rating surveys and other methodological materials) and for the implementation of external evaluations, which would assure monitoring and measurement of education outcomes within both a national and international framework. Activities of the Centre will be closely linked with the preparation of curricular documents (the national educational programme and framework educational programmes).

3.3. To create a system of diagnostic assessment of pupils and to broaden the existing system of counselling

Diagnostic assessment of every pupil will take place at the end of each stage of basic schools. It will be based on overall appraisal of their development, education outcomes and abilities for various forms of following education, which will result in a recommendation of a further educational path. This assessment will include a psychological assessment, particularly for pupils whose educational path choice requires special attention. In this respect, *organisational and material conditions* will be created for strengthening and broadening the existing systems of pedagogical-psychological and career counselling including the gradual introduction of psychologists in schools.

3.4. To implement a new conception of the “maturitní zkouška”

Upper secondary education will lead to a newly conceived final examination (the “maturitní zkouška”). It will have a common section that will allow comparability of results among students and schools and it will later simplify transition to the tertiary education. *Legislative and organisational guarantees* of the implementation of the reform of the “maturitní zkouška” represents an approval of target requirements, which will be assessed on two levels in the so-called common section of the “maturitní zkouška”, and the preparation of examinations and methodological instructions for the implementation of the profiled or school-specific section of the “maturitní zkouška”.

3.5. To develop an evaluation system for tertiary education

The evaluation of quality and accreditation in higher education is a statutory duty. The aim is to link internal evaluation of higher education institutions with students' participation, together with external evaluation by the Accreditation Commission, which is a basis for accreditation. The development programme will aim to establish a department within an existing research institution, which will focus on developing evaluation methodology and will influence the process of independent evaluation of higher education institutions supplemented by the views of other users of services provided by higher education institutions. The purpose is to gradually incorporate the national system of evaluation into a European network of institutions concerned with evaluation. A similar system of evaluation and accreditation with significant roles for employers, professional chambers and regional authorities must be created for post-secondary technical schools.

3.6. To elaborate and implement mechanisms for quality assurance in continuing education

To enable the building of a system of quality assurance for continuing education it is first of all necessary to design a legislative framework. The legislative framework will define not only the content of the system, but also its limits (i.e. it will stipulate what programmes and providers should be involved). Along with this, it is necessary to agree on a conceptual basis for the system of certification.

4. Support of the Internal Transformation and Openness of Educational Institutions

To develop the autonomy, innovative potential and equipment of schools, their openness to society and relations with the social environment through development programmes and establishing networks of cooperating schools. The broadening of cooperation between educational institutions and other research and development organisations will be promoted, as well as involvement in regional development, in tertiary education.

Schools are undergoing many significant changes at present. They have greater autonomy, their position in the education system and in society is changing, and so are their traditional functions and internal climate. All this places new and much greater demands on teachers, school heads and cooperation within educational staff. Such major changes cannot be ordered. They are determined by an initiative of the whole staff and at the same time they require clear support from the centre. Schools have to attract the active participation of parents, pupils and students as well. Close contacts between schools are indispensable for the dissemination of good practice. While basic and upper secondary schools are gradually becoming educational centres of communities, higher education institutions will gain an increasingly important role in the economic, social and cultural development of the whole region.

The goal of this systematic and complex support is to provide educational institutions with instruments for implementing changes, to help them to fulfil new tasks, while using experience from the work of the best schools and teachers in the realisation of both tested programmes and newly developed ones.

The main measures:

4.1. To create a complex system of instruments for developing school autonomy

Methodology for the preparation and implementation of long-term projects of school development, school self-evaluation, annual reports and school educational programmes will be developed. In view of the complexity of preparing these documents in schools, adequate programmes of in-service training for school heads, teachers and other educational staff will be introduced.

4.2. To establish the School Development Programme and to continue the activities of the Fund of Development of Higher Education Institutions

The goal of the new School Development Programme which will be announced by the Ministry of Education is to motivate schools to improve the quality of education and broaden the educational offer and at the same time to focus their initiative on the strategic aims of the National Programme for the Development of Education. The Ministry of Education will promote selected projects and thus differentiate its approach to individual schools according to their efforts and aims. The long-term goal of the programme is to create a network of high quality schools and to motivate other schools to try to join it. The programme will also ensure the dissemination of good practice from these quality schools and will stimulate networking of cooperating schools. The programme of the Fund for the Development of Higher Education Institutions, which focuses on innovation in higher education process and whose priorities are adapted on the base of annual analyses of new needs, will be promoted and broadened.

4.3. To build an infrastructure for supporting the work of schools and teachers

The newly established network of pedagogical centres will be used not only to ensure in-service training, but also for consulting, methodological and information activities in the implementation of development and innovative programmes (first of all the School Development Programme) and for the dissemination of school experience. Linking of activities of pedagogical centres with those of the Czech School Inspectorate, regional authorities and higher education institutions will create a foundation for regional cooperation.

4.4. To broaden the functions of basic and upper secondary schools

Basic and upper secondary schools will be supported by development programmes to broaden recreational and leisure time activities and to provide further education for adults. Schools should gradually become educational centres for communities, depending on their personnel and material possibilities. Their libraries, information centres and Internet connections will gain in importance during the process.

4.5. *To increase the roles of cultural-educational institutions and civic associations in education*

Besides schools and other educational institutions, theatres, museums, galleries, libraries, observatories, botanic and zoological gardens, culture centres and other extracurricular educational institutions and civic associations dealing with education, can share in cultivating the personalities of children, young people and adults and in developing their interests. Development programmes of the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Culture with special emphasis on aesthetic education and creative activities are intended for them. At the same time efforts will be made to ensure a greater role in education for 'public-service' radio and television.

4.6. *To strengthen the role of tertiary education institutions in regional development*

Higher education institutions and post-secondary technical schools will be promoted by *development programmes* so that they will contribute as much as possible to education in the regions, where young people and adults - employed and unemployed - are educated. In this respect, their collaboration with employers and public authority bodies will be promoted, so that schools can better recognise the educational needs of a region and improve their possibilities to satisfy educational demand. At the same time, their participation in regional programmes of development in all spheres of social life will be encouraged.

5. Transformation of the Role and Career Perspectives of Educational and Academic Staff

To support a transformation in the conception and performance of educational activity in all educational institutions, to strengthen the socio-professional position of educational and academic staff, to increase the quality of their education and in-service training, to create conditions for their career progress and higher motivation for personal improvement and team cooperation.

The decisive factor for the development of the Czech education system is an increase in the quality of work of all educational and academic staff, who are facing much greater demands than ever before as a consequence of the necessary transformation of education. Therefore,

their personal and professional development must be systematically promoted. This cannot be achieved without an overall increase in salary levels, which should confirm their social status as a respected socio-professional group.

The transformation of schools and the broadening of their functions are increasing the workload of educational staff and require both personal responsibility and pedagogical professionalism, and team cooperation in creating the profile and climate of schools. Therefore, adequate changes in initial education have to be introduced, together with sufficient opportunities for the continuing development of personal and professional qualities of teachers. At the same time it is necessary to offer sufficient incentives, both financial and in terms of career progress.

The goal is to create an interconnected system of initial education and in-service training of educational staff, including their career and salary progress, and thus to make the teaching profession attractive for talented and able people.

The main measures:

5.1. *To define and increase qualification levels of all categories of educational staff*

To complete the process of increasing the levels of education achieved by educational staff through issuing a binding legal standard, which will define categories of educational staff, stipulate the qualification levels required by the state, and the basic demands on the content structure of initial education and output examinations. The legislative measures will ensure that the required minimum level of education will be a master's degree for teachers at the first stage of basic schools, teachers of special educational programmes, teachers of general education subjects in basic and upper secondary schools, teachers of special subjects in upper secondary and post-secondary technical schools, and a bachelor's degree for teachers in kindergartens, instructors and social educators (leisure time education-ists, carers), taught in higher education institutions, or possibly post-secondary technical schools if the relevant bachelor's study programmes are accredited by an appropriate faculty of education. At the same time, higher education study programmes enabling teachers who are already employed in educational services to achieve higher qualifications will be promoted. Courses offering the possibility to acquire the pedagogical

component of teachers' qualifications for students and graduates without teaching specialisation will also be offered. Other specific measures should make it possible to involve specialists with practical experience in school activities and to strengthen the base for training specialists in the adult education sector.

5.2. *To improve the quality of initial training of educational staff*

Greater care will be devoted to the selection of applicants for teaching professions and to initial education for all categories of educational staff. Special emphasis must be placed on the pedagogical-psychological component, the mastering of necessary pedagogical skills and ensuring an adequate proportion of teaching practice and its quality throughout teacher education. For this reason, *legislative and organisational conditions* will be created for building faculty (clinical and laboratory) schools and for renewing of the system of mentoring of beginning teachers in schools by experienced teachers.

5.3. *To build the system of in-service training of educational staff*

The complex system of in-service training will serve not only for personal and professional development of individual teachers (and thus their career and salary progress), but it will help schools to fulfil their new tasks. The goal is to prepare them for changes resulting from school autonomy and the new conception of teaching focused on the development and motivation of pupils for independent learning. This system will be assured *organisationally and methodologically* by a network of centrally directed pedagogical centres in regions and will also utilise the potential of higher education institutions, particularly those faculties educating teachers, pedagogical associations and other organisations, as well as the experience of the best schools and teachers. Central and regional bodies should aim to create a network of facilities for in-service training and counselling for improvements in school that are closer to where they operate.

5.4. *To establish a system of career and salary progression for educational staff*

Legislative and material conditions will be created for introducing the new system of career progression, which will be based on differentiation and categorisation of educational activities and on defining qualification requirements for their performance. A new salary

scale will be determined on this basis and will enable qualification and salary progression of employees according to their specialisations and the quality and creativity of their work. At the same time, the system of remuneration according to merit, based on the assessment of the performance of educational staff will be developed further.

5.5. *To increase the scientific and pedagogical level of educational and academic staff in tertiary education*

Professional development of academic staff in tertiary education will continue within a programme of support for young academic staff, which will aim to improve the age structure of academic staff. A development programme will also aim to utilise a legal responsibility to ensure that educational staff can devote themselves primarily to scientific, research, development or other creative activities for a certain period of time, and will aim to increase the professional qualifications of those teachers in post-secondary technical schools, whose work represents an adequate creative activity. Courses of higher education pedagogy for beginning academic staff will also be supported.

5.6. *To restore the salary levels of educational and academic staff*

The principle will be that the average level of salaries of educational staff in regional public education should gradually be increased to 130% of the average salary in the economy as a whole. Higher education institutions will seek to gradually improve financial resources to ensure that salary levels of academic staff are equivalent to those of other highly qualified professionals in the national economy.

6. The Transition from Centralised Administration to Responsible Participation in Decision-making

To introduce decentralised administration of the educational sphere through state and regional or local authority bodies, with the effective participation of social partners and other representatives of civic society, as a process of planning, organising and evaluation based on strategic aims and implemented primarily through indirect instruments. In higher education, a balance will be sought between the autonomy and self-government of educational institutions and their responsibility to provide certain activities.

As in the reform of public administration, the guiding principle in the field of education is also democratisation, ensured primarily by decentralisation (i.e. by a shifting of responsibilities from the central level of state administration towards decentralised levels of regional and community government, and to further strengthening of school autonomy and the role of school councils) and by participation (i.e. of subjects interested in education – social partners, teachers, parents, students, etc. in decision-making at individual levels of management and administration of education). A similar tendency is being implemented in the area of financial flows – public budgets at different levels of public administration. In education, these reform processes are accompanied by changes in the responsibilities of the centre, regions, and schools and educational institutions.

The goal is to utilise the transformation process in public administration to effect changes in administration of education and educational sphere, so that these changes will contribute to the development and improvement of education. It requires making decisions and solving problems at the same level of administration where the problems emerge and where they can best be solved, with the participation of those who are concerned. The changes in quality of administration are conditions for the effective management of changes and the development of the whole education system.

The reform of the public administration virtually does not concern higher education institutions. Decentralisation in this area reaches up to the level of management of individual institutions, which are self-governing and enjoy autonomy given by law and academic rights and freedoms. The tasks of public administration are laid down by the Higher Education Institutions Act and their goal is to perfect indirect instruments of administration by allocation of state subsidies based on a harmonisation of the long-term development of individual higher education institutions with state policy for development in this area.

The main measures:

6.1. *To restructure the Ministry of Education in accordance with the new concept of administration and functions of the centre. To focus the efforts of the Ministry of Education on a limited number of key strategic functions in relation to the education system as a whole, and in cooperation with other sectors especially the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, etc.*

The goal is to relieve the Ministry of Education of its prevalently operational activities and to create organisational conditions for coordinating, regulatory and distributive activities in the area: the forming of middle and long-term conceptions and strategy, curricular policy and guarantees of the quality of education, gaining political support for the needs of the sphere of education, the initiation and implementation of legislative tasks, the strategy of financing the whole system, and the management of development programmes, the implementation of a policy of human resource development in the sector, building a knowledge and information base in cooperation with the Czech School Inspectorate and pedagogical centres. Independent agencies will also be used for these tasks, and the aim will be the maximum return on public funds spent in the system of education as a whole.

6.2. *To create a new structure of communication with social partners at all levels of management and administration*

To create legislative, organisational, and material conditions for the establishing and functioning of the inter-sector National Council for Education and Human Resource Development, appointed by the Government of the Czech Republic, then of adequate regional councils as partners of regional bodies of the state administration and self-government, and school councils as partners of individual school management, and thus enable the participation of social partners in all fundamental decision-making in the area of education, from the creation of long-term development plans in schools and their educational programmes, to the placement of graduates in the world of work.

6.3. *To use indirect instruments of administration, namely innovative and development programmes*

The coordination of educational policy within the country as a whole will be *legislatively and organisationally* encouraged by the harmonisation of long-term aims for the development of the education system, which will be drawn up by the Ministry of Education, and long-term aims for education development in regions, which will be drawn up by regional bodies. Annual reports (central and regional) on the state of education, prepared at regular intervals will be used in a similar way. Innovative and development programmes, announced by the Ministry of Education as one of the priorities of financial policy at all levels of education, will be an-

other instrument for promoting the aims of educational policy, to develop and improve the education provided in schools and educational institutions. At the same time, conditions will be created for the activities of regional education bodies and the establishment of innovative and development programmes at the regional level will be initiated, using EU structural funds.

6.4. *To develop an information and knowledge base for the sphere of management and educational practice*

The scientific-research and information base, the Czech School Inspectorate and new pedagogical centres in regions will be built as a significant supporting system for administration at central and regional levels. *Organisational and material conditions* will be created for the rationalisation of the *Programme of Support for Research and Development* announced by the Ministry of Education for the stabilisation and strengthening of research and development institutions in the sector and for establishing new higher education institutes focused on basic and applied research into education problems. The activities of all organisations mentioned above will be directed in accordance with the priorities of educational policy and at the same time will follow international scientific and research moves in this area. Scientists concerned with education will be involved in the activities of the National Council for Education and Human Resource Development.

6.5. *To take account of human resources in the administration of the education system*

In order to improve quality of education (and partially also selecting of) administrative staff, a *Centre for Education and In-service Training of Administrative Staff* at all levels of schools and educational institutions, and personnel of the Ministry of Education, the Czech School Inspectorate and public administration in the area of education will be established. A master's programme in School Management will also be offered as the main base for developing education of all levels of schools (primarily school heads and school inspectors).

6.6. *To create a legal framework for the development of adult education*

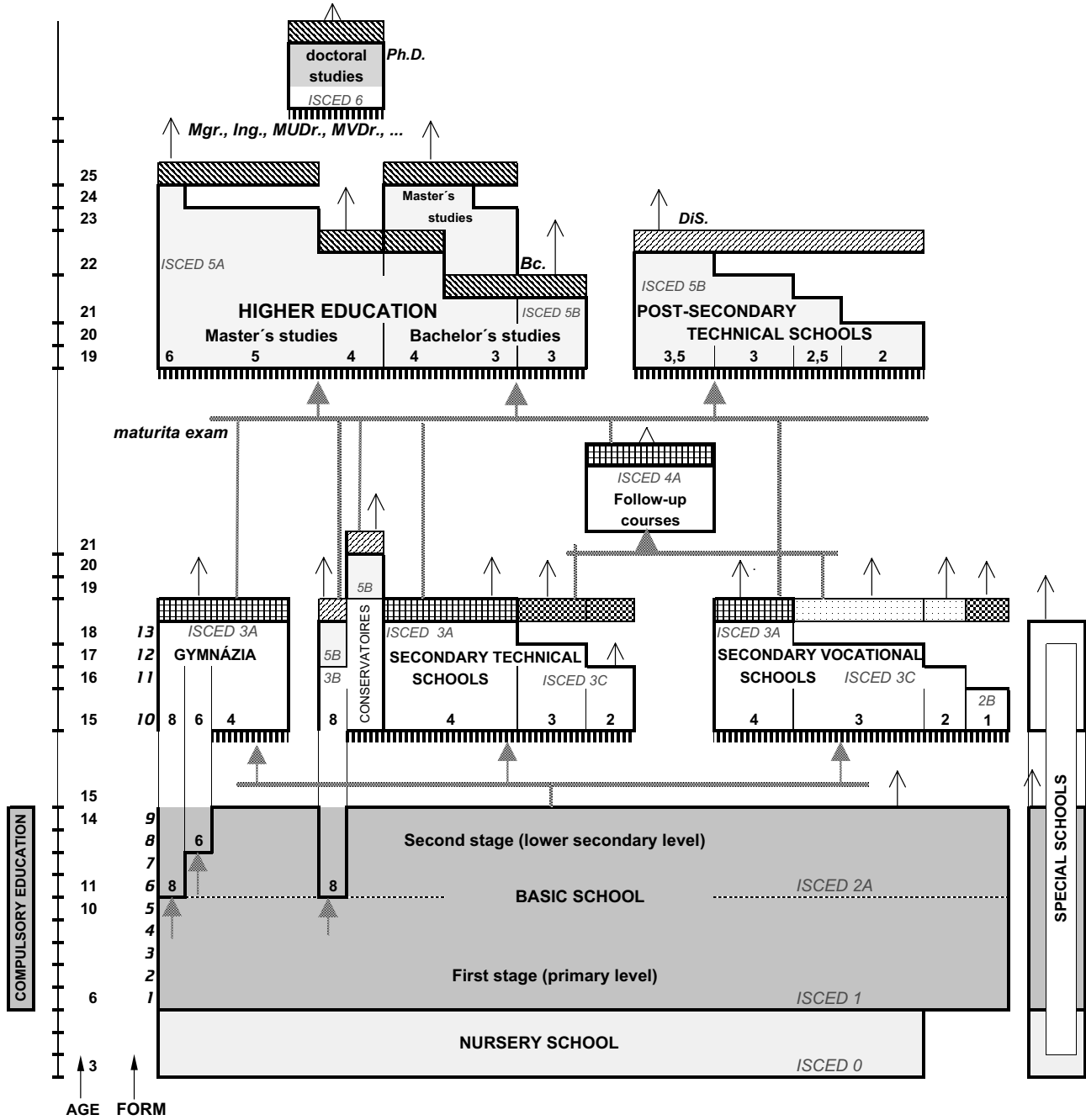
The *legal framework* of adult education will be created in collaboration between the Ministry of Education and other governmental bodies, social partners, employers, trade unions, communities and regions, and professional bodies, as it affects a range of legal norms. It will be concerned primarily with the following issues: the powers and responsibilities of the most important actors of adult education development (the state, employers, trade unions, communities and regions, and professional bodies), rules for financing the main areas of adult education, financial and non-financial incentives for its development, and mechanisms of quality assurance, accreditation and certification.

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
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Annex

Education System of the Czech Republic in 2000



Explanations:

-  final exam
 -  final exam + apprenticeship certificate
 -  maturita exam
 -  absolutorium
 -  final state exam, rigorous state exam, doctoral state exam
-  next educational level
 practise