

# **Tertiary Education in the Czech Republic**

**White Paper on Education in CR - Part III**  
*(National programme for the development of education)*

**Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports**  
**Prague 2001**



# Tertiary Education

## A. General Questions

### 1. The formation of the tertiary sector of education

*Tertiary education comprises all types of citizen's education acknowledged by the state as a follow up to the completed general secondary education or completed general secondary technical education ended by final secondary school leaving examination (maturita).*

In spite of large diversity of forms the tertiary sector of education has some general characteristics, which make it different from other sectors and which allow to consider it in one entity. In this sector of education *adult* people are educated, with full legal responsibility, independence in decision making and strong motivation and responsible approach towards education. The relation between the teachers and students makes it possible to use other forms of education and adequate influence of students on functioning of educational institutions. Unprecedented acceleration in the scientific and technical development has its greatest impact on the tertiary sector in particular, which cannot function without permanent active research and other creative activities of teachers and students according to the type of educational institution.

In the tertiary sector the highest stages of education can be achieved, its level has much influence on the quality of life of the society itself. Its level has crucial influence on the whole educational system, since all teachers for all grades of schools are educated in this particular sector. Institutions of tertiary education representing some of the basic elements of infrastructure of the region and state provide services to other citizens. It means that they offer inter alia educational opportunities in the form of specialised, innovative, re-qualification, language and other courses in the framework of life-long learning. An effective co-operation with the region is indispensable from the point of view of development of both partners involved – educational institutions and self-administered institutions in the region.

The shaping of the tertiary sector of education in the Czech education system has been based on the following goals:

- ⇒• the main aim is to create a distinctly diversified sector of tertiary education, with the sufficient capacity, utmost transferable, facilitating change or continuation in study – at any age and time. It will enable to use specific preoccupations, requirements and needs of the applicants for study and shape the profile of the graduates in such a way to be adaptable to the demands of labour market;
- ⇒• in accordance with one of the main goals of the educational policy of the Czech government it is necessary to make possible for the half of the population group of 19 years age to participate in one of the existing types of tertiary education before the year 2005;
- ⇒• an equal and up to maximum level open access to education will be safeguarded by elimination any reason for any kind of discrimination;

- ⇒ in accordance with the overall trend in the world the concept of the lifelong learning will be stressed, the development of which will be possible only in the diversified and transferable structure of not only tertiary sector but the educational system as a whole, providing modern forms of study using information and communication technologies;
- our vision will be the same as the ambitious goal of the European Union countries, which is also part of the Bologna Declaration and anticipates that every student in the tertiary sector of education will spend in the future part of their study outside their own school, if possible abroad. The mobility of academic people will get the same support;
- the quality evaluation of education will be considered as a complex process, which is directed primarily to elimination of shortcomings and permanent perfection on the basis of self-evaluation and opinions of relevant experts;
- a long- term goal is to make use and promote the development of human resources in the following way: a) to take care of personality and professional development of the staff in the tertiary sector of education through the system of lifelong learning, b) to assist students in orientation in study opportunities, in finding the optimum study course and orientation in the labour market by development of advisory centres providing study, psychological and professional guidance.

The increase of number of educated people belongs to the priorities of every country and gives evidence about its culture, maturity and economic development. *The population has shown a steady increase of interest in education.*

*The rising number of young people*, who enter the institutions of tertiary education manifests that the spectrum of not only abilities and skills has widened in comparison with the similar age group ten years ago, but also shows a broader spectrum of ideas about future career building. The applicants for study come from far more versatile spectrum of social background, which represent different motivation for study and gives them a range of economic opportunities including the possible length of study. To meet the demands and abilities of future students, to saturate the needs of society and at the same time *prevent the quality of education from slipping, is possible only through broader diversification of study opportunities* in the tertiary sector of education.

The final state should satisfy different needs and requirements of the applicants for study, to offer alternative ways of study, it should be readable and transparent, generally compatible with a high level of mutual transferability and it should respect the trends in Europe.

The main task of the education system, especially that of tertiary education, is to prepare the students for a successful entry into the labour market and become employable. *It does not mean that the sphere of education as a whole should be subordinated to the world of labour. More than that these two areas - education and labour market - are in relation of mutual influencing. Both are to a certain extent autonomous, but still affecting each other.*

The needs of economy and society have been rapidly developing. The graduates from higher education institutions and other institutions of tertiary education have to acquire such knowledge and skills, which enable

them to assert themselves even in the changing requirements of the labour market. The development of education and culture can have vice versa a strong effect on the dynamics of the economy development.

The long-term goal is to harmonise the outputs of the tertiary sector of education with the needs and requirements of employers and providing sufficient and reliable information both in the area of job opportunities and in the sphere of study opportunities. The institutions of the tertiary sector of education have to develop contacts with employers as well as their graduates. They will get relevant information and the possibility to co-operate on contents and layout of study and existing offer in the lifelong system of education.

## 2. Goals and structure of tertiary education

*The scientific, research, development or any other creative activity will become a an attribute for the definition of tertiary education. The interconnection of study with such activity, its type and quantity, will differ various kinds of higher education study programmes from higher professional study and other opportunities for study in this sector of education.*

Study programmes in the sector of tertiary education will concentrate on future placement of graduates in society and adaptation to the rapidly changing structure of the labour market. It will focus on education for critical and creative thinking, awareness of the necessity of permanent education and accommodation to new opportunities and needs.

All students of the sector of tertiary education should have chance *to be actively involved in a creative activity* combined with the course study, which creates *a stimulating setting* and has a strong *motivation effect* on them.

### 2.1 Structure of levels of education

The institutional structure of tertiary education will react to the new challenges by changes, which will concern the redistribution of capacities and clear definition of goals concerning all its parts.

➡ *Post secondary specialised study following the maturita examination and finished with a certificate and practised in a form of short, study cycles on a modular basis (with the length of study of one or two years) will enable to get specialised knowledge on higher than secondary level. The modular structure of this post-maturita study will allow those who successfully finish it and will decide to continue in their study, to use these modules in higher professional study and reach an appropriate level of qualification.*

- *Higher professional study* will remain as a type of short study, providing special qualification to the graduates of secondary schools. It will exist as a three year study leading to a complete qualification with a description „diploma specialist in a subject of.....“ (abbr. DiS). It is necessary to open the possibility of transferability between the programmes of higher professional study and Bachelor study programmes. Three year programmes, which will be capable to go through accreditation procedure successfully, will be transformed into Bachelor programmes.

- *Bachelor study*, which is defined as a study using contemporary specialised knowledge and methods together with essential theoretical base and creative activity, will represent in accordance with the Bologna Declaration a diversified set of programmes with more or less applicable orientation with regard to the favourable chance to be successful in the labour market, but also a further study in Master programmes.
- *Master study* is oriented to acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge based on scientific, research and other creative activities, which is an inseparable part of it. It will be designed, in line with the development of Bachelor study programmes, primarily as a continuation study to these programmes. Similarly to other previous cases its structure will be modular in order to enable as large as possible transferability of the tertiary sector of education.
- *Doctoral study* as the highest level of tertiary education is primarily concerned with research and development and independent creative activity.
- *Other types of study acknowledged by the state* provided by the state and public institutions within the lifelong learning are usually short term forms of study oriented to special professions or interests.

## **2.2 Institutional Structure of Tertiary Education Sector**

- *Higher education institution of university type* - offer all types of higher education study programmes and different types of study in the frame of lifelong learning. Master and especially Doctoral programmes of study demand that the courses of instruction make effective use of existing research capacities not only of these institutions but also utilise the capacities of other research and development institutions. This applies foremost to the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, which has an irreplaceable scientific potential for preparation of young scientists in Doctoral study programmes. The strategy of research and development in higher education institutions is based on the National Policy of Research and Development from the year 1999.
- *Higher education institutions of non-university type* - offer mainly Bachelor programmes and courses of further education. Their future role is envisaged in as multidisciplinary educational institutions, which are expected to saturate the educational needs of the specific region. Broad range of study branches, their combinations, availability and variability together with sufficient number of students, are inevitable for maintaining the quality and efficient use of finances. The integral part of their activities are the joint projects with firms, consultancy and training activities, projects of applied research, international co-operation.
- *Higher professional schools* - provide higher professional three year study and post secondary study. These schools can provide also Bachelor study programmes but only in co-operation with a higher education institution. It is possible for higher professional schools to apply for the change in status and become a higher education institution of non-university type provided their study programmes are accredited as Bachelor programmes. In certain regions higher professional schools may find their main role in provision of further education.
- *Institutions with specialised post-maturita study* are mostly those secondary schools, which offer their services to the tertiary sector, mainly in similar subjects, which are taught in their entire secondary programmes of study.

- *Other educational institutions* of tertiary sector provide a number of different study courses acknowledged by the state. As a rule there are courses of several months duration leading to new qualifications (lifelong learning programmes) or courses of non-formal schooling for interest groups, which could become under certain circumstances in a spirit of Bologna Declaration a part of integrated formal education system.

### 3. Participation in the tertiary education - a quantitative prognosis

*One of the main tasks of the educational policy of the Czech government is to enable before the 2005 half of the population group of 19 years old to participate in one of the forms of tertiary education.*

The corresponding goal is that two thirds or three fourths of the young people will pass the secondary school final examination (*maturita*) at general secondary or technical secondary education.

The capacity of the tertiary sector of education has to take into account the growing interest of the older population groups in study which they can feel as necessary for completion of formal study at certain stage, but also have interest in the courses of lifelong learning. Possibly only a small part of this group would apply for a face to face form of study, the other will be offered new forms of study using information and communication technology (distance and combined form of learning). The number of foreign students will be compensated by Czech students studying at higher education institutions abroad.

To achieve the aforementioned goal the following conditions are to be fulfilled:

- we anticipate *substantial restructuring* in numbers of students enrolled in available study programmes of higher education. At present the structure of higher education students comprise nearly 15 % students who have been finishing their Bachelor study programme (they do not immediately continue in their study), about 80 % of Master study programmes and little more than 5 % students in Doctoral study programmes. It is necessary to stress that if a number of young people of relevant age group entering higher education study would increase, it will not be possible to satisfy such a large number of students in Master programmes of study without the loss of the quality in graduate level. Model calculations were based on the target that *about half of the students will finish the Bachelor study programmes or get the level of diploma specialist at higher professional schools. In such a case, when 60 000 students enter the first year and by current drop out rate, the overall number of students in Bachelor and Master programmes would reach 195 000;*
- the improved situation in general transferability should lead to the reduction of number of higher education students, who fail and would not finish their study. *It is estimated that the reduction of drop out students could result in total increase of student numbers by approximately 5000;*
- approximately 5000 students are expected to enter Doctoral programmes every year (which means in relation to the graduates in Master programmes about 25 %). It is necessary to increase the effectiveness of this study and reduce overall failure rate in absolute numbers. *The total number of students in these programmes can be estimated at 15 000;*

- higher professional schools expect admission of approximately 5 000 new students yearly, 10 000 will enter post-maturita study. *The total number of students in both types of study will be practically the same as now, i.e. about 30 000;*
- the number of students who will be admitted for study at new private higher education institutions will reach about 10 000.

*The total number of students in the tertiary education sector will reach 250 000 (about 195 000 in Bachelor and Master programmes, 15 000 students in Doctoral programmes, 30 000 students in higher professional schools and 10 000 students in private higher education institutions) contrary to the present number of 223 000, which represents the increase of 12 % compared with the present state).*

*The capacity for admission is essential for admission policy in the tertiary sector of education.* Theoretically, according to long term plans of the existing higher education institutions including the private institutions, aforementioned model calculations and estimates of higher professional schools, all these educational institutions will have at disposal every year about 75 000 places for new applicants. The total increase in offering places in higher education institutions and higher professional schools in the framework of lifelong learning and the capacity of other educational institutions, which is not precisely defined, could be estimated very roughly and thus it is reasonable to make a realistic presumption of about further 10 000 study places in the sector of tertiary education. The total capacity for admission will then be approximately 85 000 study opportunities.

*If the offer of higher education institutions and higher professional schools (75 000 places) could be utilised just by the 19 year old applicants (who just passed the final leaving examination from secondary schools) in 2005 about 57 % of this age group (130 907) could start their study, which represents more than 80 % of those who passed their maturita examination. It is expected that part of the admission capacity will be filled by older applicants rather than new secondary school leavers and on the other hand, part of new secondary school leavers will take advantage of various courses provided by other educational institutions. The applicants from the group of adult population will show interest not only in the regular study programmes leading to academic degrees but also in a number of courses within the framework of lifelong learning, in both cases primarily in distance or combined forms of learning. Current statistics show that about 25 % applicants are older than 19 years, but it must be taken into account that there is a number of those who try second or third chance for admission after finishing their secondary schools. The increase in number of really adult applicants is so far not obvious, but with a view to the trends elsewhere in the world it is necessary to take it into account.*

In estimating the demand we have to consider 50 % of the age group of secondary school leavers plus about one third of this number of those, who can be described as applicants from group of adults. We arrive at the number of roughly 85 500 potential applicants.

If these estimates prove to be real then the total offer of study in the tertiary sector of education would roughly correspond to places demanded by the applicants. One cannot *expect that the overall saturation of demand would eliminate its disproportion in terms of subject and fields of study offered.* Since the needs of the state have to be considered, manifested by the demands for specific professions and special branches that are signalled by the labour market, it is necessary to inform the applicants about current situation. A special support and motivation is needed in case of technical subjects and their choice by applicants, since this study is



sometimes regarded as less valuable by the secondary school leavers. In case of teacher training programmes, such study should be chosen by those who have a serious interest and dedication to do such a profession.

**Note:** In model calculations and estimates students of military schools and police academy, whose number is about 5 000, are not included. It is estimated that their number will not differ much either.

#### **4. Access to education and care for students**

*The access to education is based on equity and is utmost open, eliminating discrimination for whatever reason.*

*The equity in access to education* in higher education institutions and higher professional schools is manifested by the fact that everybody who fulfilled the conditions for admission to study given by the law has the right to study in the framework of one or more study programmes. At most of higher education institutions and higher professional schools, especially at those with study subjects which are highly demanded, the entrance examinations are introduced as a part of the admission procedure. The results of these examinations are used for making the lists of successful applicants, whereas at subjects of art it is common to undergo a talent examination.

The principal change will be the introduction of „*state maturita*“ (the common part of *maturita*) and the comparability of its result at the national level, which in relatively near future would facilitate the admission procedure, even if it would not substitute it in all of the study programmes.

The simplest and also the most equitable and from the point of view of applicant the most appropriate way of disclosing their abilities for study would be *the free admission of secondary school leavers into the tertiary sector of education without admission procedure*, which is a long-term goal. The precondition is the creation of sufficient number of education opportunities in diversified tertiary sector. However, completely free access to study will always be complicated by the uneven interest in different study branches on the one hand and the offer in the labour market, or the menace of unemployment on the other hand.

There is no discrimination in this country on the basis of race, sex, religion or political opinion. It is necessary to avoid any problems that could arise for any reason in case of applicants with health problems or applicants coming from socially and economically weak groups of population.

*A long term goal is a maximum support and use of human resource development. It means to assist students in orientation in study opportunities, in finding the best possible way of study, orientation in the labour market through establishing the consultancy centres providing study, psychological and professional guidance.*

The precondition for the choice of the best educational path or its change is to get enough information on educational opportunities at schools in the home country and abroad as well. In spite of the existing system, which enables access to regularly innovated information through publications, web pages etc, the consultation with a specialist is still irreplaceable. It is necessary to continue in building consultancy centres at institutions, which provide students apart from above mentioned services also with assistance to master all needed skills and competencies and improve their own study abilities.

It is also necessary to safeguard the possibility to upgrade knowledge needed for studies for groups of applicants who come from „non-traditional setting“ (from areas, which are remote from the study centres, from families with low level of education of parents or social background, which puts them into unfavourable position in relation to other colleagues etc.) and to prevent deepening of social differences among different groups of society. The solution is in organising a range of educational courses and training programmes, which give them chance to apply for further studies and be on equal terms with others. The system of *advisory centres for applicants* together with consultancy services plays a growing role in the secondary education sector.

*To take care of students means to fulfil other tasks to prepare them to be as much flexible as possible in terms of high professional level, to have such abilities as creativeness, culture and communication skills and other moral values.* The successful study is underpinned by a good relation between students and teachers. Teachers have to build such relations with students, which is based on partnership and human approach, they have to show interest in their study results and problems, to give them advice and real help when they need it. Using the knowledge and abilities of students as an important feed-back for their own teaching practice, giving students the possibility and using their co-operation for creative work enable to build together a real academic community.

## **5. Transferability and modular structure of study and training programmes**

*Transferable, module structured study programmes, using credit system, make it possible to continue the study throughout the whole life according to the needs of an individual at the same or different educational institution in the home country or abroad. It is under the condition, that the requirements of the subsequent study programme (module), which are to be agreed upon by the respective educational institutions, are fulfilled.*

The important feature of transferability and modular system consists of the possibility to spend a part of the study at a different education institution from student's own one including the study abroad. It is also important to have a possibility to change or make correction in choice of study in case, that the original decision was not suitable, the life conditions have changed, inability to meet increased demands and so on. The transferability of the tertiary sector of education will be accomplished in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Declaration primarily in *the vertical* direction. Higher education students will have chance after finishing Bachelor study to continue in subsequent Master programme at their home or other institution of higher education. Similar option will be available by a linkage between higher professional education and follow up higher education study. It is also necessary to enable *the horizontal transferability*, it means the transition between individual study programmes. Transferability –cannot be considered as a self-acting mechanism, the agreement between appropriate educational institutions and special consideration of individual cases will also play an important role.

A serious problem, that up to now has not yet been solved, is *transferability from the higher grade of study to lower level*. It concerns mainly the possibility to make a transfer from higher education study programme to higher professional study in case of inadequate original choice of study or failure to meet the demands. It will lead to *reduction of premature drop outs from study*, which are especially in some of the study

branches disproportionately high, without obtaining academic, professional title or certificate for a finished part of study (module).

The transferability will be facilitated by *the modular structure of study*. A *module* is defined as integrated part of the study programme, which is structured in such a way, allows individual modules arrange into higher educational structures. Modules can be relatively easy innovated, substituted, left out or included into study programme and thus response to current and future demands of practical life or study preconditions and interests of students. Modular structure of study makes appropriate choice of educational path or change more easily in the whole system of higher education, it facilitates mobility of students (in line with the goals of Bologna declaration) and *encourages the concept of lifelong education* properly.

The transferability of study is simplified by using the credit system. *The credit system* means that the completion of a part of study programme is evaluated by standardised units of study - credits. Higher education institutions introduce credit systems on basis of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which is used in the countries of European Union and upheld by the educational programmes of European Union. This European trend will be encouraged in higher professional schools, too.

Building of as transferable system of tertiary education as possible can be done in a gradual way only and primarily on the basis of broad enlightenment campaign. The existing and proposed legal norms, which promote such strategy, have to be used to full extent. The Higher Education Act has no objections to the above mentioned principles, the draft of the proposed Education Act takes into account the modular system for post-*maturita* education as well, which thus becomes a potential part of further study in higher professional school.

## 6. New forms of study

High number of students and their diversified interests result into the rise of demands for provision of new forms of study alongside the currently offered form of face to face learning. Strategy for development of these forms of education is described in more details in the Concept of the State Information Policy in Education. New forms of study, which are presented in the terminology of the Higher Education Act as *distance learning or combined learning*, make advantage of information and communication technologies, enable students to choose their own study path and volume of study according to their own possibilities and contribute substantially to such vision of tertiary education system, which makes it possible to enter the study process during the whole life.

New forms of study contribute to diversification of study opportunities by the fact that they:

- can offer the study to greater number of applicants without massive demand for increase of number of teachers and space facilities;
- facilitate the individualisation of study programmes, which means a very flexible approach to the contents of study and a choice of one's own study path and pace according to current needs (with regard to the offer of study modules and compulsory contents of accredited study programme);

- makes it possible for many economically active persons to enter the study without necessity to interrupt their jobs, if they cannot or do not want to, but they feel the necessity to complete their education or get new information and knowledge in the field of their specialisation or in another fields.

The development of distance learning centres network in the higher education institutions in the Czech Republic will make it possible to have an access to foreign educational subjects and distance study programmes and courses presented e.g. in the European Network of Distance Education. The essential question is, of course, *the increased demand for financial means* for information technology equipment, preparation of multi-media teaching materials, possibility to have access to funded international programmes and so on, as well as for organisation of study *in stage of its implementation*. Other substantial requirement is concerned with *the new type of training of teachers-tutors in distance or combined form of learning*.

Effective management and usage of new forms of learning and demand for teachers with new qualifications can be materialised only in broad and well organised co-operation of institutions in tertiary sector. At present the most effective way is the co-operation, which is built from bottom up, using the centres of distance education established in higher education institutions in the framework of Phare project. The existing capacity of these centres needs to be further developed and supported and *extend their activity also towards higher professional schools*. The extension of the system of these centres should result in properly distributed network and their co-ordinated activities should create the study opportunities similar to those, which are in some countries offered by open universities. And further on, to enable all applicants the best possible way to modern form of education.

## **B. Specific problems of the components of the tertiary education sector**

### **7. Education in higher education institutions**

The essential part of tertiary education sector is comprised of higher education institutions. They are the highest component of the educational system and top-level centres of knowledge. The principal activity of a higher education institution is teaching, inseparably connected with research and development and other creative or art activities. They have a great importance for social and economic development of society. Higher education institution must fulfil that function and it must present itself to the society in this sense and use for such purpose all available instruments – internal and external evaluation and publicising its results, long-term development plan of the institution and annual reports about its activities. An important role played by the higher education institution in its effort to open itself to the society should be enhanced by perspective offer of study opportunities in the framework of lifelong learning, which could also modify the approach towards education.

#### ***7.1 Quantitative development and structure of study programmes***

In the area of higher education institutions the structure according to aforementioned scheme started to be formed as early as in the year 1999 in connection with implementation of the Higher Education Act. At present the capacities of higher education institutions in relation to current demographic developments roughly correspond to anticipated demands for numbers of students. *A remarkable extensive development is not expected, especially with higher education institutions of university type, but it is necessary to focus them on quality.* The rise in capacities will be supported through development programmes in such study branches, where the demand for study is not saturated in the long run.

The only one newly established higher education institution of university type - Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín, which will incorporate two existing faculties of Brno University of Technology, located in Zlín, has come into effect in the year 2001.

The development of higher education institutions of non-university type will continue on the one hand through *the establishment of new private schools*, some of them will probably evolve from private higher professional schools of good quality, on the other hand as *new public higher education institutions* of non-university type established by law out of selected state higher professional schools.

Private higher education institutions are quite a new component in the system and their foundation is stipulated by the Higher Education Act starting on January 1, 1999. Before the end of the year 2000 some tens of applications have been submitted by legal entities to obtain a state approval to function as a private higher education institution. The majority of applications presupposed the establishment of the higher education institution of non-university type, a number of them made this request on the basis that they are regarded as a prosperous higher professional school. Until current time (April 2001) altogether state approval has been given to 14 schools to enable them to become private higher education institutions.

*The development of study opportunities and programmes will be oriented to the aim to the expected fact that about one half of graduates will enter labour market after finishing Bachelor or higher professional study.*

*The precondition to this development is the necessity to create conditions for finding good jobs and to increase their social status through effective enlightenment campaigns.*

The offer of higher education study opportunities does not yet reflect the requirement for suitable quantitative structure in relation to the number of admitted students in Bachelor and Master study programmes. In accordance with Bologna declaration *the increase in number of students* in higher education institutions will take place *in Bachelor study programmes only*, the contents of which will permit the graduates to get the qualification suitable for the open labour market of EU. At the same it must not exclude the possibility of continuation in the study either immediately or after some period of time and fulfilling necessary conditions. It is supposed that conditions will be created for availability of more generally oriented Bachelor study programmes, which facilitate better jobs opportunities, but also more concrete study specialisation during further study.

The concept of the Bachelor study programmes is gradually under change and in many cases meets demands for availability of broad range of study programmes and the requirement of full qualification. *Restructuring, which leads to properly balanced numbers in Bachelor, Master and Doctoral programmes, will be gradual and facilitate the offer integral Master programmes in such study branch, which will be recommended by the Accreditation Commission.*

A suitable combination of a certain type of study programme with appropriate scientific and further creative activity will apparently lead *in the future towards set up of three characteristic groups of higher education institutions:*

- higher education institutions, in which the majority of study programmes (Master and Doctoral) will be featured by a distinctly top level scientific research and preparation for a scientific career;
- higher education institutions, in which the scientific research will go alongside with scientific training in one or only a few study programmes, the rest of study programmes will have primarily practical professional orientation combined with applied research and other forms of creative activity;
- higher education institutions oriented mainly towards Bachelor study programmes with a component of creative activity (higher education institutions of non-university type).

*It is necessary to respect these naturally differentiated groups of higher education institutions and take for granted the disparities in their character. It is also needed to stress that because of these dissimilarities in concept of study and activities one group cannot be regarded as better or worse than the other two.*

The system of multi-level classification -of higher education institutions (see above) influenced also by targeted funding of research and development, is definitely more appropriate than possible division between so-called „research universities“ and „teaching universities“, as it is used in some countries. It is not far from truth that also in this country some higher education institutions could in the future get the character of research oriented ones.

## 7.2 Academicians and students

The development of higher education system is closely related to qualification rise of academicians. The quality of instruction, research and other creative activities of the institution definitely coincides with the quality of these specialists.

The shortage of higher ranking academicians and their age structure is the greatest problem of the most newly founded higher education institution. The institutions therefore introduce academic programmes for the preparation of young academic staff, especially in Doctoral programmes with the aim to reduce unfavourable age structure. Higher education institutions set as a priority the creation of better conditions for scientific activity of young academic staff members and work hard for their support in the framework of development programmes. The crucial problem is nowadays social and economic situation of academicians, especially the young ones. The perspective increase in funding will enable the higher education institution to decide effectively about the number of academic staff and related financial remuneration.

In addition to the support of young academicians other academic staff members will get support for their qualification rise especially in the field of information science, languages, scientific disciplines and professional management of the institution. It is anticipated that for these purposes short-term courses, short-term and medium-term study visits abroad, Doctoral study and modular course designed as a management training, prepared in the framework of Phare programme will be utilised.

The rise in number of students in *Bachelor study programmes* asks for a *corresponding structure of academic staff*. For teachers in Bachelor study programmes the competencies in pedagogical disciplines will gain importance. The qualification rise of young teachers should therefore focus on acquiring the pedagogical competencies provided by the courses in lifelong learning including those that are accredited on international level. Higher education institutions should also make use of the specialists from outside the academic world, who should form a balanced counterpart to the entire staff of the respective institution. Different requirements as to the qualification structure of the teaching staff for Bachelor programmes will be subject of more general discussions and part of the agenda of Accreditation Commission.

Another important part of the activity of higher education institutions is the building of social support for students. It concerns not only the provision of sufficient number of places in accommodation facilities and meal provision as well as improvement in the quality of these services in view of increased international student exchanges, but also extension of consultancy and assistance services so that all students could be integrated into the life of the higher education institution without delay and could devote their time to their main activity - the study.

In connection with the prolongation of the average length of study in all grades of schooling it is necessary with regard to higher education students in higher years of study to adjust the age limits and other conditions for indirect support of education in social and tax legislation acts.

### **7.3 Internationalisation and international co-operation**

*The Czech Republic is prepared to contribute to building of open European education area through development of international co-operation and realising international agreements and declarations (Lisbon convention, Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations) with preserving the specific Czech cultural and educational traditions.*

The international co-operation, which is primarily based on academic mobility of students and teachers, makes easier the transferability of study and gradual harmonisation of organisation of study. Signing of *joint declaration of ministers of education of European states at the meeting in Bologna in the year 1999 (the Bologna declaration)* has been an important step towards the promotion of the idea to create an open European higher education area. The Czech Republic is one of 1 signatories (29 states) of this document.

The principal idea of the Bologna declaration is *the gradual transition (in the time frame of 10 years) towards three level higher education study*, in which the first (pre-graduate) level will be Bachelor study followed by a postgraduate study level. This level could be either short, leading to Master academic title, or long, finished by conferring the Doctorate (Ph.D.) degree. The declaration stresses three year *Bachelor programme, which enables to gain qualifications suitable for the open labour market in Europe*. At the same time it appeals for the transferability of the whole tertiary sector of education with a possibility to continue with the study based on the acknowledgement acquired in the framework of lifelong learning.

The Czech system of tertiary education, the idea of its transferability, as described above, and three level structure of higher education confirmed by the Higher Education Act is in compliance with the aforementioned document to a large extent, and therefore it will be developed in that sense. The admission to the Doctoral study programmes right after the finishing the Bachelor study is not allowed by the Higher Education Act.

The state as the guarantor of the quality of education can substantially facilitate the international mobility of students and graduates. To this effect the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (so called Lisbon Convention from the year 1997) has been signed, together with the conclusion of bilateral agreements on recognition of achieved education. Lisbon Convention, to which the Czech Republic acceded in February 2000, can be regarded as an appropriate instrument for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Its main idea, which means a change for all signatory countries, is the recognition of higher education diploma or period of study primarily on the basis of passed study load (expressed in number of credits gained), general contents of study programme and the quality of the respective higher education institution, contrary to the previously used system of judging real equivalence of the study.

*Our vision is the same as the ambitious goal of the countries of European Union, which anticipates that every student of higher education will spend in the future a part of their study at another institution, preferably abroad. The same support will be provided to academic mobility of teachers.*

The international co-operation demands improvement and extension of *language training*, which will facilitate mobility of students and teachers. The crucial instruments of mobility and co-operation, which *creates necessary material, technical and political conditions*, are the educational programmes of European Union, as well as other intergovernmental bilateral and multilateral programmes (such as joint programme of Canada with



the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which is under preparation). It is necessary to promote *the mobility of teachers in higher education*, which brings not only further education and experience to teachers themselves but also consequently to their students and enables to participate in the preparation of joint study programmes, which a besides its own improvement facilitate and make simpler student mobility as such.

#### **7.4 Quality Evaluation**

*The evaluation of the quality of education will be regarded as a complex process, which is aimed at elimination of weaknesses and seeks for permanent improvement based on recommendations of evaluation experts. The activities of the internal evaluation will be co-ordinated with the external evaluation in such a way to achieve maximum effect from the work devoted to it.*

*The quality of education depends on the level of fulfilment of certain conditions*, which are set as goals of educational institution with regard to efficient spending of financial means. The immediate user, who is judging the quality of education and who feels its impact, is the student in the first place, also his employers, parents, teachers (academic staff), users of research and development, representatives of the state and other users of educational services. It is obvious that the opinion of each of the named subjects how the educational goals should be realised, has a specific bias and can differ a lot one from another. Such concept gives testimony about the fact that it is not possible to seek for just one, *exclusive quality of education (tertiary)*, but it must be understood as a multidimensional notion.

*The quality evaluation* in higher education is connected with *high level of autonomy and self-governance* of higher education institutions accompanied by the requirement concerning accountability for quality of activities rendered, effective management of funds allocated by the state to education and demand for accessible information not only for the specialists.

Development plans are prepared by individual higher education institutions and they have not only the opportunity but *legal obligation* to plan their goals in compliance with the requirements of all users of provided services and requirements of the state. In the valuation fulfilling of these set goals can be reflected and judged to what extent the proclaimed goals have been achieved.

The institutions and study programmes are subject to *internal* as well as *external quality evaluation*. The internal evaluation means that the respective subject undergoes self evaluation procedure. The way and use of internal evaluation is according to the law within the discretion of the institution itself. *The external evaluation of the quality* is according to the Higher Education Act within the responsibility of the Accreditation Commission, which represents an independent expert body named by the government.

From the technical point of view it is purposeful to *co-ordinate* the external evaluation with the internal evaluation activity in such a way to make advantage in both cases of similar background data. In the opposite case the process of evaluation would become an excessive burden for the academic staff and the evaluation would become a task for its own sake.

The expected goal is to develop gradually a *structured system* of external quality evaluation, in which the prevailing, but not the exclusive, role will take the evaluation demanded by the Higher Education Act, carried out mainly by academic staff members and specialists in respective subjects. It is desirable to invite in the process of evaluation also the potential employers of future graduates, professional chambers, regional

administration bodies, as well as other subjects with the aim to monitor for example how the attitudes towards environmental protection or sustainable development are formed and thus give the public enough information about the educational institution concerned.

The external evaluation carried out by an *international organisation* or foreign institution of higher education, will play more and more important role, which can mean a rise in prestige of our institutions in the international competition and enhance the chances of our graduates in the international labour market.

*The results of the quality evaluation will not have direct influence on allocation of financial means. There will be always reasonable time for remedial measures. The evaluation results shall not be primarily used for mutual comparing of individual institutions for the purpose of ranking, because the aim of the evaluation will be the level of success in achieving certain goals.*

The evaluation in the tertiary sector of education should be oriented towards elimination or limitation of identified *shortcomings* on the basis of approved recommendations in the time frame, which is necessary for it. The way in which the evaluation results will be used must be clearly defined in advance and possible penalisation can be applied only after repeated negative results of evaluation. Frequent and long experience with using different systems of quality evaluation and the way the results are utilised, in many countries testify that it *is not appropriate to have direct conjunction between the quality evaluation and allocation of finances*. The principal instrument for positive usage of evaluation results is to publicise these results. Motivation for getting additional financial means is to be found in development programmes, success of which can favourably influence the quality evaluation.

Multidimensional contents of the notion of quality of education makes us believe that it is not appropriate to *compare* different kinds of educational institutions of the tertiary sector for the purpose of ranking. The reason for existence and the tasks of individual institutions are generally very diverse, in case of higher education institutions the main orientation is given by their strategic development plans, which can differ very distinctly one from another, and therefore it is necessary to judge them according to their success to fulfil them. The comparison can be appropriate and motivating in case of evaluating very similar activities.

## **7.5 Lifelong learning**

*In compliance with the world trends an accent is laid on the general concept of lifelong learning, the development of which can be achieved through diversified and transferable structure of not only tertiary sector, but the whole educational system offering modern forms of study and using information and communication technology. Such system enables the users the access to education and the possibility of their own choice of educational path corresponding to their interests and abilities in case of necessity to change it and continue in education throughout the whole life.*

It is the overall world trend to stress the general concept of lifelong learning, which has a correlation with formation of diversified and transferable structures not only in the tertiary sector but in the whole education system.

Higher education institutions take part in the development of lifelong learning by way of organising programmes and courses in this framework and there is an expectation that such provision will *be extended largely in course of time*. Such activities must not end in the offer of study of individual subjects, courses and

integrated modules in this framework, which would in practice be a copy of the contents of accredited study programmes. Such development would result very quickly in creation of two, in principle different groups of students in higher education institutions: those who would study in regular accredited study programmes free of charge, whereas the second group of students would be charged for the same kind of study. Such situation is not acceptable.

On the other hand it is highly desirable to recognise such education on the basis of relevant evidence when entering accredited study programmes, again, in compliance with the idea of the Bologna Declaration. Information and enlightenment activities will be oriented to the fact that the decisive factor is the achieved level of education, testified by a relevant certificate, not by an academic title. The offer should be regulated not only by the declared interest of potential participants, but also by the demand from the part of state (ministries, labour offices etc.).

The leading role in lifelong learning will be played by new forms of study, based especially on using new information and communication technologies, which will influence the development of the whole tertiary system by decisive way. It is necessary to offer education opportunities within the system of lifelong learning for non-traditional groups of students, who for various reasons did not enter the tertiary sector of education or who have not finished such education, for employed people who have to extend their education because of demands of their profession.

## **8. Education at higher professional schools**

Higher professional education and the institutions which provide it are relatively *new components of the Czech education system* and therefore it is quite natural that there are more specific problems which are to be solved than it is in the case of higher education sector. The new situation has developed following the reform of public administration and take-over of the responsibility for this part of educational system by regional authorities, which should result in closer conjunction between educational system and local needs.

### ***8.1 Restructuring of the network of higher professional schools and their educational programmes***

The provision of the Education Act draft about standard length of educational programmes of higher professional schools for three years and introduction of post-*maturita* specialised study at the length of one or two years give a basis for necessary *restructuring of the network of higher professional schools and their educational programmes*.

Their aim is as follows:

- on the basis of individual evaluation to transfer shorter programmes, especially those at higher professional schools co-existing with secondary vocational schools, into the category of post-*maturita* study;
- to retain in the school register those higher professional schools which have educational programmes of good quality with experienced teaching staff and equipment with the aim to complement the educational

provision of higher education sector or located in regional centres or areas with under-developed opportunities of tertiary education;

- to reduce the atomisation of higher professional schools e.g. by way of integration of higher professional school with existing similar programmes at one place, or possibly with different programmes, into well organised and economically efficient units; to transform higher professional schools the programmes of which will be accredited as the Bachelor ones into higher education institutions of non-university type.

To achieve these objections is facilitated by several conditions. The majority of higher professional schools which co-exist with secondary vocational schools have been established because there was not an opportunity to realise post-*maturita* study. If this reason is eliminated, *it will not be necessary to maintain more or less formal existence of respective higher professional school*. There is enough information about the quality of educational programmes of some higher professional schools, which makes it easier to reduce the demand for complicated and time-consuming evaluation. It is absolutely necessary to sort out and evaluate all available information. The publishing of general educational programmes and termination of validity of existing educational documentation on September 1, 2005, proposed by the draft of Education Act, will make it necessary to evaluate the existing educational programmes of higher professional schools generally.

Educational programmes of higher professional schools will represent in the sector of diversified tertiary education an original study opportunity, respected and accepted by social partners and labour market, which will appropriately and flexibly complement educational opportunity presented by Bachelor programmes of higher education institutions. Modular structure of these programmes should allow for study of individual modules also separately and to certify their successful completion and also to accept modules of study obtained elsewhere (for instance in post-*maturita* study).

Owing to the absence of short forms of education for secondary school leavers *re-establishment of post-maturita vocational education is needed and timely*. It will enable to gain basic specialised education with a certificate and will be carried out in a form of short study cycles. Re-introduction of such study in line with the provisions of proposed Education Act will enhance dissemination and flexibility of diversified and coherent study opportunities in the sector of tertiary education.

*Modular structure of study and envisaged introduction of credit system will facilitate the transferability* of the whole tertiary system of education according to aforementioned goals. It is necessary to stress the assumption that modules of post-*maturita* study finished by a certificate will be accepted by higher professional schools and enable their holders to continue in the study leading to a self-contained degree of education and title DiS. The openness of the educational programmes of higher professional schools and post-*maturita* study for students of higher education, who make decision to change their educational path, will contribute to eliminate high percentage of students, who fail to get higher qualifications.

A necessary pre-condition for further development of higher professional schools is their greater involvement in international co-operation and support to the mobility of students and teachers. It is an intention to promote their participation in educational programmes of European Union and gradually include large independent higher professional schools together with higher education institutions in sub-programme SOCRATES/ERASMUS.

## **8.2 The foundation of higher education institutions of non-university type**

Several private higher education institutions of non-university type have been founded without larger technical problems even in such cases when the original higher professional school after the foundation of a higher education institution of non-university type has not ceased to exist and continues in practising its educational programmes, which have not been accredited as Bachelor ones. In case of state higher professional schools the transformation has not yet been carried out as the only way how to establish a public higher education institution of non-university type would be possible by means of adopting a special law. Since the year 2001 the regions will be empowered to found higher professional schools, which on the one hand makes it possible for the region (as a legal entity) to become a founder of “private” higher education institution of non-university type, on the other hand it may cause complications to establish public higher education institution of non-university type when settling the uncertainties about the property questions. At any case the possibility to found a public higher education institution of non-university type from a chosen state higher professional school and more such institutions in the future will be enhanced depending on the development of their study programmes. The option to realise accredited Bachelor programme in co-operation with any of the existing higher education institutions remains, as well as the possibility to be integrated in a higher education institution, which will be especially welcomed by those higher professional schools, which plan to undergo accreditation procedure just for one or a small number of study programmes, and by those schools, the capacity of which is too small to become an independent institution of higher education in the future. Owing to the fact that these potential public higher education institutions of non-university type, or jointly provided higher education study programmes, represent an increase in number of higher education students, it is necessary to declare clearly also the rise in funding process for higher education sector, which would cover the demand for financial support according to the law.

## **8.3 Teachers at higher professional schools**

The quality of higher professional schools representing an important component of the tertiary sector derives from the quality of teachers. The requirements laid on teachers at higher professional schools are different from other secondary schools in the same way as the contents and organisation of study in higher professional school differ from that one at secondary schools:

- the entire teaching staff has the main responsibility for the teaching at higher professional schools, although the involvement of teachers from higher education sector and specialists from the field is very important;
- stressing the need of practical character of education must be reflected in the qualification requirements and career development. Professionally oriented education programmes require from teachers to update their knowledge and follow the development in their branch, which can be achieved by their involvement in a creative activity;
- it is necessary to enable *in-service training and qualification development of teachers* in co-operation with *higher education institutions* and to get *practical training* at firms and enterprises;
- the precondition for this is *a lesser rate of direct teaching load* than it is so at secondary schools.

#### ***8.4 The evaluation of higher professional education***

In the area of higher professional schools there is no such body corresponding to the Accreditation Commission for higher education. The evaluation of higher professional education is done by the Czech School Inspection and on the voluntary basis by non-state programme EVOS (organised by the Association of Schools of Professional Education), which makes advantage of international experience from non-university sector of education and also makes use of self-evaluation of schools. Owing to the voluntary basis and relatively high costs, such evaluation does not cover all higher professional schools.

The position of higher professional schools in the tertiary sector of education requires adoption of such mechanism of quality evaluation of provided education, which would be similar to that one used in higher education institutions. The evaluation of educational programmes of higher professional schools can be done within the discretion of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, which can authorise a group of representatives of the ministry, Czech School Inspection, National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education and other field experts to carry out such activity. *The external specialists should primarily consist of the representatives of employers*, who can contribute with their specific insight in the process of evaluation and can endorse their requirements in relation to higher professional study. In view of the way how higher professional schools are established and managed the commission at the ministry's level could be a suitable body, which can systematically and continuously evaluate educational programmes and have the authority to ask for all needed information, the source of which can be the result of internal evaluation of the school itself. The used evaluation criteria must comply with given level of tertiary education and its sets of goals.

## **Recommendations**

- The extension of research culture and creative activity will become a definition attribute of tertiary education. The linkage of study with concurrent scientific and other creative activity, the type and quantity of which will differentiate diverse types of higher education study programmes and higher professional study and respective institutions.
- The increase in study programmes opportunities will lead to the situation, in which approximately one half of graduates will finish their Bachelor study or higher professional study before they start work. For successful placement of graduates it is necessary to create concrete conditions to this effect and through enlightenment activity increase their social status and recognition.
- Transferable, module structured, system of study will enable to continue gradually in the study immediately or later at the same or different educational institution at home or abroad. It should be under the condition that all requirements of the subsequent study programme (module) could be met subject to mutual agreement between the educational institutions involved.
- In such system the applicants will have chance to choose their own educational path suitable to their interests and abilities, in case of necessity to change it and continue in education in the course of their whole life.
- The Czech Republic will support the building of open European educational area through development of international co-operation and implementation of international agreements and declarations (Lisbon Convention, Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations) alongside with preservation of specific Czech cultural and educational traditions.
- In the system of external evaluation of quality different goals and tasks of individual educational institutions of the tertiary education sector will be taken into account. The results of the quality evaluation will not be used for their mutual comparing. The object of evaluation will be the level of fulfilment their goals. Activities of the internal evaluation will be co-ordinated with external evaluation in such a way to achieve utmost effectiveness of work expended to such purpose. The evaluation results will not have direct correlation to the allocation of financial means. A reasonable time will be devoted to the remedial measures.
- Students will be oriented towards higher level of professional flexibility, creative abilities, cultural and communication competencies and moral values. In the sector of tertiary education it is necessary to develop purposeful education for democratic citizenship, multiculturalism, tolerance and moral values.





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Tertiary Education in the Czech Republic

(White Paper on Education in CR – Part III)

Published by: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Edited by: Centre for Higher Education Studies

Translation: Miloslav Hušek

Printed by: UNITISK Ltd.