

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DUAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SLOVAKIA

Analytical commentary, August 2022

Summary

- In 2015, the implementation of the dual education system (DES) started in Slovakia and the key implementation project (National Project - Dual) was completed in September 2021. **Compared to the school system, DES is associated with lower unemployment rates, higher employment rates, lower rates of economic inactivity, a higher proportion of those working in the field they graduated from and higher wage rates.** However, for some indicators, differences are narrowing over time, which is consistent with findings in the literature.
- The target values of the measurable indicators of the National Project - Dual have been met. However, in terms of employer and school participation, the initial expectations of the project were met at around 70%. Pupil participation reached approximately 80% of the target set by the Government. **Thus, the implementation of the DES has been slow.** The poor results are also related to the barriers in the initial set-up of the project.
- **The cost-benefit analysis of DES shows that the low number of pupils and graduates is one of the reasons for the net cost to the state.** Before the implementation of the system itself, the DES model assumed that DES would save the state millions of euros. A significant positive impact of DES graduates in the cost-benefit assessment is their higher wages compared to the school system, which are reflected in higher tax revenues for the state. There is also a positive impact on the government budget due to higher corporate income tax collection and lower costs for the social system and labour market support.
- The preparation of a map of the distribution of competences and a new proposal for the structure of fields of study should have contributed to reflecting the demand on the labour market. **However, the Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic's view on fulfillment the needs of the labour market indicates certain shortcomings and identifies room for improvement in linking the DES with the needs of the labour market.** During the school years 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, only about 5% of dual-system first-year pupils were educated in the fields with an insufficient number of graduates, and in five out of eight regions DES will contribute less than 5% to fulfillment the labour market needs from the perspective of shortage occupations.
- **Insufficient data, both in terms of quantity and quality, is also a significant problem.** For example, the lack of information on pupils and graduates of dual education and the absence of systematic monitoring of the employment of secondary school graduates threaten the successful implementation of the DES and the improvement of its attractiveness and quality and the optimization of vocational education and training.