



EUROPEAN  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE EDUCATION  
OF ADULTS

# **Country Report on Adult Education in THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

Helsinki, 2011



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## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Overview .....	3
Politics and Law .....	4
Future trends/key concerns/directions.....	5
Key Providers/Main institutions/Sources for Adult Education .....	5
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) .....	6
References.....	7

## Introduction

This Report shall inform you about the situation of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic. It is divided into two sections. The section Policy and Politics gives an overview of the key policy currently in force, and also outlines the main legislation or political situation in the country. Structure and Providers gives a more detailed look at the organizational structures, and also outlines the main adult education providers, mainly looking at non-formal and informal learning.

We want to thank our members for their contributions to this reflection on the adult education situation in the Czech Republic as far as possible as of 2010/2011. Inevitably there will be new things emerging within the ever changing situation of adult education, but we believe the majority of the information provided will be relevant and useful for the foreseeable future. However, to keep the resource accurate and up to date we are open to suggestions to improve the texts. If you feel there is something you can add about your country please contact us via email at [eaea-info\[at\]eaea.org](mailto:eaea-info[at]eaea.org).

## Overview

Czech adult education has a long tradition. The beginning of edification activities dates back to the period of the enlightenment, as during the course of the 19th century, many 'cultural-enlightenment' institutions and associations were founded. Initially, adult education was seen primarily as a matter of individual interest. At the beginning of the 20th century, trade organisations in certain professions such as in medicine, or fields such as agriculture became the main providers of such education, and so in some professions the system is very well developed.

Nowadays, Adult education in Czech Republic is provided in the following areas:

- **General education**, for a small minority who have not reached the desired level of initial education, in preparatory courses for entrance examinations to



secondary schools and to higher educational institutions, and in language education;

- **Further vocational education** and training: concerned with the acquirement, broadening or completing of qualifications, retraining, and obligatory periodical updating of knowledge and skills in specified professions;

-**Civic or special interest** education (which has a long tradition in the Czech Republic), which is generally of a cultural nature and provides courses connected to **political, historical, cultural** interests or similar.

Further education and training is provided by **schools**, including universities (vysoké školy), by **employers**, public administration, self-governing bodies and their educational institutions, and by non-governmental **non-profit organisations** including professional and **commercial** organisations [1].

## Politics and Law

In the Czech Republic adult education issues are covered by **a number of different regulations**. However, one integrated legal regulation does not exist, so it is **somewhat difficult to clarify** how the regulations exactly translate into practice. The current legislation consists of the following acts:

1. The Education Act valid from January 1st 2005 [2].
2. Higher Education Act, which includes a provision on lifelong learning programmes [3].
3. The 2006 Act on the **Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes** from 2006 [4], which makes a provision for the **National Qualifications Framework** as a publicly accessible register of entire and partial qualifications and their standards for qualification and evaluation. Also concerns the rules for **awarding** and withdrawing authorisation for verification of further education outcomes (partial or entire qualifications), and the rules of **assessing** and acquiring a partial qualification, as well as the responsibilities of **state administration bodies** in the verification and recognition of further education.
4. Regulations related to **work performance** include the Labour Code, the Employment Law and related regulations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, (e.g. the Decree on accreditation of training facilities providing retraining). According to the Labour Code, the employer is responsible for the **professional development of their employees** [5]. The employer is also entitled to require an employee to participate in courses, and **employees are obliged to maintain and improve their qualifications** to the standard of work performance agreed between themselves and their employer.



5. There are also regulations specifying qualification requirements for some **non-manual professions**, for example: acts on the **administration** of territorial units, courts and judges, tax advisers, and employees in the health sector. These regulations often define which institutions should organise such training or examinations. One of these regulations is the 2004 Act on Educational Staff and the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on in-service training of educational staff [6].

## Future trends/key concerns/directions

The vision for adult education emphasises the **economic, environmental and social aspects** of the benefits of lifelong learning. Consequently, it emphasises support for personal development, **social cohesion** and **active citizenship** and **employability**. In the current situation one of the main sources of income for several adult education institutions working on further education projects is the income from lifelong learning programmes. **The Lifelong Learning Programme** covers the period **2007-2013**, and is the successor to the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and e-Learning programmes. Its aim is to support projects and activities that **foster interchange, cooperation and mobility** between education and training systems **within the EU** [7].

## Key Providers/Main institutions/Sources for Adult Education

Currently in the Czech Republic adult education is provided by several organisations in the private sector, NGOs, schools, universities, cultural centres or governmental organisations, including:

- Primary schools (**základní školy**) - which mainly organise courses for people who have not yet completed their primary education (základní vzdělání)
- Secondary schools (**střední školy**) and professional schools (**vyšší odborné školy**)
- Language schools
- Universities (**vysoké školy**)
- **Firms and organisations (enterprises, institutions, government departments, etc.), which provide education** primarily for their employees, **either by their own lecturers and institutions or (more commonly) by purchasing this training from specialised lecturers or institutions (schools, not-for-profit or commercial organisations).**



- Not-for-profit **organisations**: sectoral **educational institutions**, foundations, churches, **trade unions**, **professional associations**, **political parties**, cultural institutions (museums, galleries, libraries, houses of culture).
- Commercial educational institutions; which can, similar to schools, also organise educational courses on a profit basis. [8]

### Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Non-governmental associations that participate in the development and co-ordination in field of adult education include:

- **The Association of Adult Education Institutions of the Czech Republic** (Asociace institucí vzdělávání dospělých České republiky) [9] was founded in 1997. This association protects the interests and needs of its members, ensures the **professional quality** of its members and the services they provide, and **collaborates with state bodies** in the preparation and implementation of **legislation** on adult education. It currently has 130 collective members and **publishes a quarterly review** "Andragogika".
- The Association of **Universities of the Third Age** (Asociace univerzit třetího věku [10]) was founded in 1993, and initiates the establishment of Universities of the Third Age and co-ordinates their activities. It currently has more than 40 members (universities or their faculties).
- **The National Centre of Distance Education** (Národní centrum distančního vzdělávání [11]) has existed since 1995 as part of the Centre for Higher Education Studies. Its task is to support the development of distance education and the use of ICT in teaching.
- **The National Training Fund** (Národní vzdělávací fond [12]) was founded in 1994 with the help of the PHARE programme, and also fulfils an important role. Its main objective is to **enhance and upgrade the country's human resources potential**. Its activities include analysing the state of education and its specific elements, with an emphasis on **vocational education**, creating and supporting educational management programmes, education that raises the quality of public administration, creating a complex and well-organised system of human resources development including guidance and the evaluation of various activities.



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