

## Special Survey on Teachers and Educators in the Czech Republic

In spring 2019, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports carried out a “*Special Survey of Teaching Staff Provision in Schools*”. Except for conservatoires, participation was mandatory for all kindergartens, basic schools, upper secondary including VET schools and tertiary professional schools. Out of a total of 8,557 establishments, required data and information were submitted by 8,549 schools. Thus, the overall participation rate reached 99.9 %.

The special survey confirmed the assumption that the situation in schools in terms of teaching staff provision is far from ideal. Teachers of retirement age are gradually leaving schools while the education system is facing a dramatic lack of graduates with pedagogical qualifications especially from teaching study programmes. Therefore, most schools have not much choice when selecting their teachers and their main concern is to ensure that the candidates meet at least the qualification requirements<sup>1</sup> set by legislation and they are willing to teach. However, even such teachers are not always available on the labour market and that is reflected, particularly in some regions, by higher share of teachers without qualifications prescribed by relevant legislation. The proportion of teachers who are not qualified in line with the *Act on pedagogical staff* represents the national average of 6.6 % (i.e. approximately 8.9 thousand full-time equivalents, FTEs), the situation varies across regions, in some places it is as high as 12.5 %.

As of the date of the survey, the schools reported almost 150.6 thousand teachers regardless of their employment status, which corresponded to more than 135.3 thousand full-time equivalents. In terms of FTEs, the highest volume showed the upper secondary and VET schools (28.3 %) and the lowest was reported by tertiary professional schools (0.9 %).

Particularly symptomatic is the rather high average age of teachers representing 47.2 years, the average age of upper secondary school teachers is even higher (49.4 years).

A significant gender imbalance accounts for another characteristic feature within the education sector, with only 19.2 % teaching jobs being occupied by men. The highest proportion of male teachers was reported by upper secondary and VET schools (39.7 %). In terms of staffing, some subjects show higher share of male than female teachers, it is the case of IT in higher grades of basic schools or physics in upper secondary and VET schools.

Master study programmes of higher education institutions and tertiary professional education level represent the most frequent educational attainment in teachers (70.9 %). However, in kindergarten teachers prevails upper secondary education with Maturita (65.8 %), which corresponds to the qualification requirements of these jobs. Only 77.7 % of teachers are graduates of tertiary teaching study programmes.

In school year 2018/2019, there were approximately 3.7 % of starting teachers in schools, which in terms of natural renewal, is not enough. Data substantially vary across regions, however, for more than 8.6 thousand full-time equivalents (6.4 %), the schools reported retirements planned for 2019/2020 (the highest proportion in kindergartens - 6.8 %, the lowest proportion in tertiary professional schools – 5.5 %).

The schools of all types that participated in the survey unanimously reported a high demand for teachers. Upper secondary and VET schools are most often seeking for teachers of mathematics, English, Czech language and literature, physics, and subjects in the fields of mechanical engineering

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<sup>1</sup> All teachers must acquire pedagogical qualifications, whose types and forms are specified by the Act on pedagogical staff (Nr. 561/2004 Coll.). Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, the Amendment to the Act on pedagogical staff allows headmasters of upper secondary and VET schools to grant the status of pedagogical staff and employ as teachers the so-called experts in the field even if they do not have required pedagogical qualifications. However, their workload cannot exceed half of their weekly working hours and they need to be still active in their field.

and manufacturing, electrical engineering, telecommunications and IT. The biggest issue, though, remains the lack of (suitable) candidates for these teaching positions in the labour market. A total of 66.4 % of schools view the existing situation as troubling or even critical.