

Kompas: Skill needs forecasting system to be finalized

The project implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, seeking to establish and pilot a system for regular monitoring and projections of labour market in the Czech Republic, which has been implemented since 2017, is reaching its final stage. The outputs of the first pilot projection and other related materials will be, on an ongoing basis, processed and prepared for publication on the new website throughout 2020. They are intended for public administration entities from the areas of initial and continuing education, career guidance, employment policies and for companies as well as wide professional community to anticipate more accurately future priorities in human resources.

The system consists of two main pillars. The first is a quantitative system of skills needs forecasting, at the core of which stands a complex econometric model including both national and regional components. The second pillar is the qualitative input evaluating the so-called 'soft' trends and factors and using them to refine the parameters of the quantitative model. The vast project team includes also the so-called regional platforms, teams of experts in each region, ensuring that specific regional circumstances are taken into account. These platforms will also disseminate project outputs on regional level and secure their implementation in regional labour market and education policies.

Within the project, a methodology for regional studies was developed. It summarizes statistical data and qualitative information specific to a region and serves as a material describing the situation of regions in terms of demographic and economic factors in the current labour market development. Upon multiple consultations and wide cooperation of project partners and regional platforms, initial versions of these materials for individual regions were elaborated and will be subsequently updated on annual basis.

Sectoral trend studies constitute another important outcome of the project. They are to identify the main trends and factors that shall affect the situation in the sector over the next few years, particularly in terms of employment and skills needs. The studies are meant to detect qualitative trends, technological and political developments, which are difficult to determine through quantitative methods and yet might be the dominant drivers of development in near future. These studies will serve both as a tool for interpreting and / or fine-tuning the outputs of the statistical model and as an output on its own summarizing the situation in the sector. A total of 15 sectors were selected for the pilot in the framework of the project. The key sources of information used for the studies included opinions of experts from relevant industries, interviews and focus groups, supplemented by research literature reviews and specific statistical data available.

The principal concern for the future is the sustainability of the system, it is supported by the products created and the network of links between the regional and central levels. In terms of organisation and financing, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs strives to make the agenda of labour market projections a stable component of active employment policies.

