



COUNTRY ANALYSIS of KEY COMPETENCIES

Italian – Slovak Chamber of Commerce, SLOVAKIA

April 2015

This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the

Content

1	Introduction	8
2	Analysis of 10 Key Competences.....	8
2.1	<i>Leadership</i>	8
2.1.1	How much is leadership competence valued in society?.....	8
2.1.2	Is the leadership competence strongly embedded in society and culture?	9
2.1.3	Is leadership competence taught in primary/ secondary level education?.....	9
2.1.4	Is leadership competence taught in VET education?	10
2.1.5	Is there a difference regarding leadership competence when assessed in terms of gender?	10
2.1.6	Is the development of leadership competence supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	10
2.1.7	To what extent is the acquisition of leadership competence facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	10
2.1.8	Is leadership competence supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	11
2.1.9	To what extent is leadership competence evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	11
2.1.10	What is the preferred format of the development of leadership competence amongst young entrepreneurs?	11
2.2	<i>Willingness to explore</i>	11
2.2.1	How much is the willingness to explore valued in society?	11
2.2.2	Is the willingness to explore strongly embedded in society and culture?	12
2.2.3	Is the willingness to explore taught in primary/ secondary level?.....	12
2.2.4	Is the willingness to explore taught in VET education?.....	12
2.2.5	Is there a difference regarding the willingness to explore when assessed in terms of gender?	12

2.2.6	Is the development of the willingness to explore supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	12
2.2.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the willingness to explore facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	13
2.2.8	Is the willingness to explore supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?.....	13
2.2.9	To what extent is the willingness to explore evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	13
2.2.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the willingness to explore amongst young entrepreneurs?	14
2.3	<i>Ability to plan</i>	14
2.3.1	How much is the ability to plan valued in society?	14
2.3.2	Is the ability to plan strongly embedded in society and culture?	14
2.3.3	Is the ability to plan taught in primary/ secondary level education?	14
2.3.4	Is the ability to plan taught in VET education?.....	14
2.3.5	Is there a difference regarding the ability to plan when assessed in terms of gender?	15
2.3.6	Is the development of the ability to plan supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	15
2.3.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to plan facilitated by unemployment/ other services?.....	15
2.3.8	Is the ability to plan supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?.....	15
2.3.9	To what extent is the ability to plan evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	16
2.3.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to plan amongst young entrepreneurs?	16
2.4	<i>Ability to take decisions</i>	16
2.4.1	How much is the ability to take decisions valued in society?	16
2.4.2	Is the ability to take decisions strongly embedded in society and culture?	16
2.4.3	Is the ability to take decisions taught in primary/ secondary level education?.....	16
2.4.4	Is the ability to take decisions taught in VET education?.....	17

2.4.5	Is there a difference regarding the ability to take decisions when assessed in terms of gender?	17
2.4.6	Is the development of the ability to take decisions supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	17
2.4.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to take decisions facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	17
2.4.8	Is the ability to take decisions supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	18
2.4.9	To what extent is the ability to take decisions evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	18
2.4.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to take decisions amongst young entrepreneurs?	18
2.5	<i>Ability to prioritize</i>	18
2.5.1	How much is the ability to prioritize valued in society?	18
2.5.2	Is the ability to prioritize strongly embedded in society and culture?	18
2.5.3	Is the ability to prioritize taught in primary/ secondary level education?	19
2.5.4	Is the ability to prioritize taught in VET education?	19
2.5.5	Is there a difference regarding the ability to prioritize when assessed in terms of gender?	19
2.5.6	Is the development of the ability to prioritize supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	19
2.5.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to prioritize facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	19
2.5.8	Is the ability to prioritize supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	19
2.5.9	To what extent is the ability to prioritize evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	20
2.5.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to prioritize amongst young entrepreneurs?	20
2.6	<i>Creativity</i>	20
2.6.1	How much is creativity valued in society?	20
2.6.2	Is creativity strongly embedded in society and culture?	20
2.6.3	Is creativity taught in primary/ secondary level education?	21

2.6.4	Is creativity taught in VET education?	21
2.6.5	Is there a difference regarding creativity when assessed in terms of gender?	21
2.6.6	Is the development of creativity supported via other non-formal educational offerings? ..	22
2.6.7	To what extent is the acquisition of creativity facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	22
2.6.8	Is creativity supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	22
2.6.9	To what extent is creativity evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	23
2.6.10	What is the preferred format of the development of creativity amongst young entrepreneurs?	23
2.7	<i>Taking initiative</i>	23
2.7.1	How much is the competence of taking initiative valued in society?	23
2.7.2	Is the competence of taking initiative strongly embedded in society and culture?	23
2.7.3	Is the competence of taking initiative taught in primary/secondary level education?	24
2.7.4	Is the competence of taking initiative taught in VET education?	24
2.7.5	Is there a difference regarding the competence of taking initiative when assessed in terms of gender?	24
2.7.6	Is the development of the competence of taking initiative supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	25
2.7.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the competence of taking initiative facilitated by unemployment/ other services?	25
2.7.8	Is the competence of taking initiative supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure? ..	26
2.7.9	To what extent is the competence of taking initiative evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	26
2.7.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the competence of taking initiative amongst young entrepreneurs?	26
2.8	<i>Digital competences</i>	27
2.8.1	How much are digital competences valued in society?	27
2.8.2	Are digital competences strongly embedded in society and culture?	29
2.8.3	Are digital competences taught in primary/ secondary level education?	30

2.8.4	Are digital competences taught in VET education?	30
2.8.5	Is there a difference regarding digital competences when assessed in terms of gender? ...	31
2.8.6	Is the development of digital competences supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	31
2.8.7	To what extent is the acquisition of digital competences facilitated by unemployment/ other services?.....	31
2.8.8	Are digital competences supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	31
2.8.9	To what extent are digital competences evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	32
2.8.10	What is the preferred format of the development of digital competences amongst young entrepreneurs?	32
2.9	<i>Competitiveness</i>	32
2.9.1	How much is the competence of competitiveness valued in society?	32
2.9.2	Is the competence of competitiveness strongly embedded in society and culture?.....	33
2.9.3	Is the competence of competitiveness taught in primary/ secondary level education?.....	33
2.9.4	Is the competence of competitiveness taught in VET education?	33
2.9.5	Is there a difference regarding the competence of competitiveness when assessed in terms of gender?	34
2.9.6	Is the development of the competence of competitiveness supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	34
2.9.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the competence of competitiveness facilitated by unemployment/ other services?.....	34
2.9.8	Is the competence of competitiveness supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	35
2.9.9	To what extent is the competence of competitiveness evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	36
2.9.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the competence of competitiveness amongst young entrepreneurs?.....	36
2.10	<i>Ability to think critically</i>	36
2.10.1	How much is the ability to think critically valued in society?	36
2.10.2	Is the ability to think critically strongly embedded in society and culture?.....	36

2.10.3	Is the ability to think critically taught in primary/ secondary level education?.....	37
2.10.4	Is the ability to think critically taught in VET education?.....	37
2.10.5	Is there a difference regarding the ability to think critically when assessed in terms of gender?	37
2.10.6	Is the development of the ability to think critically supported via other non-formal educational offerings?	37
2.10.7	To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to think critically facilitated by unemployment/ other services?.....	38
2.10.8	Is the ability to think critically supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?	38
2.10.9	To what extent is the ability to think critically evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?	38
2.10.10	What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to think critically amongst young entrepreneurs?	39
3	Prioritization of Competencies	39
3.1	<i>Methodology</i>	39
3.2	<i>Results</i>	39
4	Expert Stakeholder Input	40
5	Conclusion.....	41
6	<i>Bibliography</i>	42

1 Introduction

The development of key competencies is a very complex process during which many policies should be adapted in order to improve the quality of education and training. This process takes place at different levels and involves a number of different authority. The introduction of a strategic approach is one of the most important policies as it allows to improve the knowledge, attitudes and skills of the students.

Young people under 30 years of age represent an essential part of the Slovak Republic's population (37.4%). Children and young people have specific needs that need to be taken into account in the process of their preparation for a societal and working life. They belong to the most vulnerable groups in the society and they are also a precious source of its development.

Despite the absence of a national strategy dedicated to key competences, Slovakia has initiatives, which cover all or most of the key competences and target various dimensions of the education system to ensure their successful implementation. *The Strategy of the Slovak Republic for youth for the years 2014-2020* defines strategic objectives of the policy towards youth, while it reflects youth's needs particularly in the field of young people's education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, their participation, health, wellbeing and relation to nature, social inclusion and volunteering.

During the preparation of this document, we used the information contained in various articles and reports. Moreover, we selected researches provided in order to give a clear image about the problem. Generally, many sociological, economic, political and other studies focus on the actual situation in these fields. As Slovakia has good conditions regarding the entrepreneur activities, the competencies of the local entrepreneurs are in the process of a continuous development. This should be supported by every type of organization. (*EC, Eurydice report*)

2 Analysis of 10 Key Competences

2.1 Leadership

2.1.1 How much is leadership competence valued in society?

When speaking about a leadership competence we may have a look at the results of the *Geert Hofstede Centre*, which explored Slovakia with help of "6-D-Model". This can give us a short overview of the deep drivers of the Slovak culture in comparison with other world cultures. As the research explains, around

50% of Slovaks are individualists. The individualism, in this sense, could be seen as a necessary aspect for a strong leader and a partial proof of the existence of the leadership competence. Slovakia is a strongly masculine society – highly success oriented and driven by competition and achievement. People work hard to achieve a high living standard and being able to “show their achievements”. Long working hours and dedication to work are needed in order to achieve this. The study of Geert Hofstede Centre shows further that Slovakia has a pragmatic culture. In such societies, people show an ability to adapt traditions easily to changed conditions, a strong propensity to save and invest thriftiness and perseverance in achieving results. At the end, we can still mention that restrained societies, as the Slovak one, do not put much emphasis on leisure time and control the gratification of their desires. People with this orientation have the perception that their actions are restrained by social norms and feel that indulging themselves is somewhat wrong. Based on the above, we can say that leadership competence in Slovak culture has solid foundation and a strong recognition.

2.1.2 Is the leadership competence strongly embedded in society and culture?

16.4% of the population in Slovakia had the intention to start a business in the next three years in 2013. However, the international comparison shows that this rate is above the average from V4 countries, Europe and innovative countries. (*GEM Report 2013, Podnikanie na Slovensku*)

2.1.3 Is leadership competence taught in primary/ secondary level education?

Besides incorporating the European reference framework for key competences, Slovakia also includes other general or cross-curricular skills in primary and general secondary education. However, the steering documents (ISCED 1, 2 and 3) do not include leadership and responsibility.

The Slovak Ministry of Education has recently introduced an education programme called “Leadership in the School” which should help to develop the leadership competencies of the school employees (directors, heads of commissions and teachers). At the moment, there is the possibility to participate only for the school employees as the Ministry wants to improve the competencies and, consequently, the quality of teaching. The teaching programme in primary and secondary schools does not support teaching of the leadership competencies to students. (*Ministerstvo školstva Slovenskej republiky*)

2.1.4 Is leadership competence taught in VET education?

The educational programme "Leadership in School" ("*Líderstvo v škole*") is aimed at teaching leadership competencies. The focus group are people working at schools and other educational facilities. The students in VET schools do not have the possibility to work up their leadership competence, as this is not taught within the compulsory subjects. Some schools have introduced elective subjects in order to teach the leadership in VET education (for example: *Súkromná hotelová akadémia HOST*).

2.1.5 Is there a difference regarding leadership competence when assessed in terms of gender?

No, there is probably no difference regarding the leadership competence when talking about gender. The female leadership is positively evaluated in the Slovak society. Women are considered useful, creative and strong leaders. There is not any recent research in this field but the proof of the leadership by women is that they provide successful business activities in Slovakia.

2.1.6 Is the development of leadership competence supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

The improvement of management and leadership skills is essential to enable individual firms to grasp every opportunity available and deliver higher rates of growth successfully. There are organizations that offer training programmes, peer-learning opportunities and work with young entrepreneurs. Moreover, they stress the fact that training and mentoring initiatives, which provide young entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop valuable leadership skills, are crucial.

2.1.7 To what extent is the acquisition of leadership competence facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

The unemployment services do not offer enough possibilities to develop a strong leadership competence basis. The young entrepreneurs have the possibility to gain the leadership competence via training programmes offered by organisations in this field. They can usually collaborate with other young entrepreneurs on a specific project or they can take part in different internships, which are focused on the acquisition of key competencies.

2.1.8 Is leadership competence supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

Slovakia can offer a well-developed enterprise infrastructure. There are many offices, coworking spaces, production and commercial facilities for rent at affordable prices. Since 2002 the number of Slovak business incubators has been growing in order to support the activities of small and medium enterprises. (SBAgency) Moreover, the entrepreneurs have also the possibility to finance their business activities from special funds (FIT fond, NADSME) or taking advantage of favourable conditions for loans for start of business activities. (*Hospodárske noviny*) Beside this, Slovakia has one of the highest Internet penetration rates in the world and the highest penetration rate in Central and Eastern Europe. Slovakia has a large number of full-area ISP's that offer wired broadband Internet connections, including Slovak Telekom, Orange Slovensko, O2 Slovakia, UPC and Swan. They offer a range of connections, from ADSL / ADSL2+ to fiber optic. ADSL or ADSL2+ is available in almost every town in Slovakia.

2.1.9 To what extent is leadership competence evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

Youth (18 to 24 years old) in Slovakia shows high level of overall entrepreneurial potential. The perceptions of societal attitudes towards entrepreneurship are relatively favourable among Slovak young people. Also, in young population, intention to start a business in youth population is exceptionally high, with 30% of individuals not yet involved in business activities declaring the intention to do so. However, despite a high overall entrepreneurial potential (10.0%) and intention to start a business (32.0%), these people rarely start their entrepreneur activities. (*GEM Report 2013, Podnikanie na Slovensku*)

2.1.10 What is the preferred format of the development of leadership competence amongst young entrepreneurs?

Young entrepreneurs take advantage of the possibility to participate in international projects where they can develop many key competencies.

2.2 Willingness to explore

2.2.1 How much is the willingness to explore valued in society?

The fact that Slovaks are used to travel a lot is, in this sense, the proof of their willingness to explore. Every year many students take the opportunity to take part in Erasmus project. According to the statistics

and reports regarding Erasmus students from Slovakia, there are usually more candidates than free places. (*Erasmus na Slovensku v troch grafoch 200-2010, Mladí Info Slovakia*)

2.2.2 Is the willingness to explore strongly embedded in society and culture?

Yes, the willingness to explore is embedded in Slovak society thanks to many international and European projects, foreign investors and new business activities.

Besides this, many inventors from the Slovak history can testify how much is willingness to explore embedded in our society. To mention the most important: Jozef Karol Hell (constructor of mining machinery), Jozef Petzval (inventions in photo camera and optics), Jozef Murgaš (wireless telegraph), Štefan Banič (parachute) or Jan Segner (Segner wheel).

2.2.3 Is the willingness to explore taught in primary/ secondary level?

The willingness to explore is not taught enough in primary and secondary level, the system of Slovak education does not focus enough on individualism and initiative.

2.2.4 Is the willingness to explore taught in VET education?

Technical secondary schools usually support the willingness to explore in their students but it is not taught within compulsory subjects.

2.2.5 Is there a difference regarding the willingness to explore when assessed in terms of gender?

There is probably no difference regarding the willingness to explore in terms of gender. The Slovaks entrepreneurs have a good ability to find solutions, both gender are open to new ideas and they are able to think in a constructive way and to explore the foreign markets.

2.2.6 Is the development of the willingness to explore supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute is a state organization directly managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. The organisation offers educational, methodical and informational activities for various target groups, coordinates and implements activities to promote and

develop research in the field of youth, administrates grant programs of the Ministry (ADAM) and the European Union (Youth in Action) and operates in the sphere of work with talented youth (school subjects' competitions called „Olympiads“).

2.2.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the willingness to explore facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Some organizations, specialized in doing business in Slovakia, help young entrepreneurs in acquisition of key competencies. Through the possibility to participate in internships, the organizations show young people how the willingness to explore is important in business activities. There are also tools under the existing legislation to support research and development, e.g.: national research and development programmes, agency and incentives for research and development, grants to legal persons and natural persons, grants for scientific and technical services. (*Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic*)

2.2.8 Is the willingness to explore supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

There are organizations, which try to encourage the young generation of entrepreneurs who will represent the future of Slovak business. Young people are usually not suffering from a lack of new ideas, but they are missing know-how, contacts and capital. There is, for example, *Young Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia* that has an ambition to support the willingness to explore and to do activities, which might be helpful to make these conditions better.

2.2.9 To what extent is the willingness to explore evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

Young entrepreneurs want to validate their business ideas and explore new markets. The young and successful entrepreneurs develop new technologies, adopt new business models and drive the rise of new industrial clusters and industries. There are young entrepreneurs (students) who leave academic environments in order to exploit or create entrepreneurial opportunities and build entrepreneurial projects, sometimes with high social impact.

2.2.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the willingness to explore amongst young entrepreneurs?

The young entrepreneurs in Slovakia are interested in new challenges and business activities. This is evident in how they try to build their own business and be successful. Currently, many entrepreneurs try to introduce and apply their original ideas and to work them up in the sector of their competencies. They also search for partners abroad in order to cooperate.

2.3 Ability to plan

2.3.1 How much is the ability to plan valued in society?

The ability to plan is important to the Slovak society. In Slovakia, people are used to plan often and in details. This fact could be seen as a result of a historical process and of the political and economic conditions which have contributed to the development of this ability. In the context of business, this ability gain a necessary role as it is highly important for starting a business activity. On the other hand, the ability to plan should be taught in a systematic way in order to acquire a good command of it.

2.3.2 Is the ability to plan strongly embedded in society and culture?

Five-year plans used to be a part of national economy during Communism. Currently, people do not always trust long-term plans. Slovaks have a good ability to adapt to new market conditions but the ability to plan is not developed enough.

2.3.3 Is the ability to plan taught in primary/ secondary level education?

Education at primary and secondary school is based on partial tasks and exams during whole year, students are supposed to prepare and to plan regularly.

2.3.4 Is the ability to plan taught in VET education?

Education at primary and secondary school is based on partial tasks and exams during whole year, students are supposed to prepare and to plan regularly.

2.3.5 Is there a difference regarding the ability to plan when assessed in terms of gender?

Unfortunately, there are no recent studies about the ability to plan in terms of gender but according to the Slovak public opinion, women are much more competent in terms of planning than men.

2.3.6 Is the development of the ability to plan supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

The ability to plan is one of the key competencies, which are necessary to be applied within many projects supported by non-formal educational offerings. These projects help the young entrepreneurs to work up their ability to plan and to apply their ideas in a systematic way.

2.3.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to plan facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

The organizations specialized in working with young entrepreneurs try to teach them, through different courses, how to plan. This ability has to be developed during the collaboration on many international projects, in which they can participate.

2.3.8 Is the ability to plan supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

One of the most important features connected with planning particular steps of a start-up is a presence of investors. According to the recent studies, the start-up factories in Slovakia have a strong technological base and professional staff. There are also weaknesses such as financial planning and expansion on

foreign markets, which can be improved thanks to mentoring. (*Prieskum slovenského startup ekosystému 2014, KPMG*)

2.3.9 To what extent is the ability to plan evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

The young entrepreneurs in Slovakia plan their business activities in a modern way as they participate in a number of international internships and so they can exchange they start business experience with young entrepreneurs from other countries. There are also many international companies based in Slovakia, which offer interesting internships in order to form young experts in a specific field.

2.3.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to plan amongst young entrepreneurs?

The young entrepreneurs are interested in programmes, which offer the opportunity to develop the ability to plan. Usually, the university students (specialized in management, economic and similar studies) prepare a business plan for a virtual company within a project required by a special subject.

2.4 Ability to take decisions

2.4.1 How much is the ability to take decisions valued in society?

This ability is very important to the Slovak society. The employers usually want their employees to have the ability to take decisions. It must be said that even if it is required a lot, it is not developed enough. The Slovaks often hesitate to take decisions because they are afraid of the responsibility they should take.

2.4.2 Is the ability to take decisions strongly embedded in society and culture?

Due to the collectivist nature of the Slovak culture, decisions are often made collectively. Consequently, decision-making processes may be very long. From this point of view, this feature is one of greatest obstacles to overcome in the Slovak management environment.

2.4.3 Is the ability to take decisions taught in primary/ secondary level education?

The ability to take decisions is not taught enough in primary education but there are perhaps better conditions to develop this competence in secondary education. However, the official steering documents

for primary and general secondary education (ISCED 1, 2 and 3) do not include responsibility among educational objectives. Still, some schools, but very small number, focus on a different way of teaching such as discussing the topic in a class, searching together for a solution through a constructive discussion within the class and so on.

2.4.4 Is the ability to take decisions taught in VET education?

The ability to take decisions is perhaps not taught enough in VET education. The Slovak education system does not support this competence, the students are not often asked to show and work up this ability and unfortunately, they are in a passive position.

2.4.5 Is there a difference regarding the ability to take decisions when assessed in terms of gender?

Generally, in Slovakia, there is a lack of studies regarding the differences in terms of gender in comparison with business activities.

2.4.6 Is the development of the ability to take decisions supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

This competence is, via other non-formal educational offerings, supported in a limited way.

2.4.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to take decisions facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

2.4.8 Is the ability to take decisions supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

There is probably no adequate enterprise infrastructure involved in support of decision taking. However, many single enterprises try to support the development of the business key competencies by young entrepreneurs.

2.4.9 To what extent is the ability to take decisions evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

The start-up survey Slovakia 2014 (by KPMG), provided in order to profile the typical Slovak entrepreneur, found that around 79% of respondents were between 25 and 34. It shows that entrepreneurship has taken hold in Slovak society and that young people are ambitious. People in this age category are much more willing to take risks. (*Prieskum slovenského startup ekosystému 2014, KPMG*)

2.4.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to take decisions amongst young entrepreneurs?

The young entrepreneurs take advantage of the possibility to participate in business training, mentorship events and other programmes, which help to build this competence.

2.5 Ability to prioritize

2.5.1 How much is the ability to prioritize valued in society?

The ability to choose the priorities is a concept, which is present in the Slovak culture. It is evident in how the society support the industry and want to improve the quality and international cooperation of the local industry. On the other hand, the industrial and other research is not supported enough. This is in opposition with an actual situation in other modern developed countries, which invest a lot in research.

2.5.2 Is the ability to prioritize strongly embedded in society and culture?

Unfortunately, the ability to prioritize is not embedded in the Slovak society. The same ways of thinking are still present in the Slovak culture, people are used to reach the same goals, and they are not able to specify their own aims.

2.5.3 Is the ability to prioritize taught in primary/ secondary level education?

This ability is probably taught much more in the secondary level of education.

2.5.4 Is the ability to prioritize taught in VET education?

The students in VET education learn to prioritize during a few compulsory subjects and they have more possibilities to master this key competition within the elective subjects.

2.5.5 Is there a difference regarding the ability to prioritize when assessed in terms of gender?

The ability to prioritize tasks is a measure of all the key competencies. The organizational skills are absolutely necessary to get the highest possible return on the investment. Both gender are good in prioritizing as they try to increase the productivity.

2.5.6 Is the development of the ability to prioritize supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

The ability to prioritize is not supported enough via other non-formal educational offerings.

2.5.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to prioritize facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

It would be good to improve the quality of teaching this ability. When talking about prioritizing, the companies and the young entrepreneurs have to deal with many programmes in order to save and analyse the data. Currently, there are new systems that help the companies to manage the records in a modern way such as: QlikView, KliqPlan, NPrinting.

2.5.8 Is the ability to prioritize supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

This ability is not supported enough even if there are some projects and internships, which focus on it. This competence is highly important especially to managers and experts in field as their work depends also on using this ability in an effective way.

2.5.9 To what extent is the ability to prioritize evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

Young entrepreneurs are very good at prioritize as they are market focused. It is evident in how they take part in training courses, in how they are interested in new experiences and pay attention to the most important aspects of business activities.

2.5.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to prioritize amongst young entrepreneurs?

No answers could be found in the data research.

2.6 Creativity

2.6.1 How much is creativity valued in society?

The share of knowledge-intensive services in Slovak GDP and export, compared to other countries, is very low and the use of innovative processes in the areas of creative industry and social sphere has started only recently. However, the potential of the Slovak creative industry to increase its share in the GDP creation has been recognized in *Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic* approved by the Slovak Government in November 2013.

In the Slovak market was identified almost 4,000 units in the field of business that may be included in the creative industries. If compared to the total number of MPS and large enterprises in Slovakia, the enterprises operating in the creative industries make up 6.2% of the business sector. The largest potential and market share represents the area of software development and computer consulting. According to official statistics, the sector employs more than 45,000 people, representing about 4% of total employment, but this figure does not take account of self-employed people or freelance working in the creative industry, as the Slovak Statistical Office does not implement survey in these groups. (*Basis for the development strategy of the creative industries in the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava, 2014*)

2.6.2 Is creativity strongly embedded in society and culture?

According to the study *Measuring Creativity in the EU Member States*, Slovakia is one of the less creative (rank 20) among 27 EU member states. (*Correia, Silva Costa, 2014*) In the Global Creativity Index of 2011,

Slovakia reached the 41st rank out of 82 countries, second-to-last of consortium partners. (*Creativity and Prosperity: The 2010 Global Creativity Index*).

Nevertheless, after a long period when the creative sector and its potential economic activities were overshadowed by problems connected to the major economic and political transformation of the society, we can now see many new activities in ateliers, creative studios, co-working spaces and similar initiatives. There is suddenly an explicit need within the sector to create spaces and platforms for meetings, collaborative work and development. For a long time, the missing infrastructure for this kind of activities has been the main obstacle of a more structured development of the creative sector. Over the last few years we have seen a significant number of new bottom up initiatives focused on both – incubation and clustering of creative professionals and innovative approach to urban spaces and sites.

2.6.3 Is creativity taught in primary/ secondary level education?

Besides incorporating the European reference framework for key competences, Slovakia also includes other general or cross-curricular skills in primary and general secondary education. The steering documents (ISCED 1, 2 and 3) for compulsory education include creativity, problem solving and communication as desired outcomes of the education process. The training area in the primary level of education focuses on better development of pupil's creative writing skills and expression through selected means of visual art, music, design, architecture, film, electronic media.

However, Slovakia does not include leadership and responsibility. As with the EU key competences, Slovakia, as well as most countries, has introduced these skills during the last decade.

2.6.4 Is creativity taught in VET education?

Creativity is taught in VET education as a part of a project preparation and the students are conducted to bring their creative ideas and to present them in an appropriated way.

2.6.5 Is there a difference regarding creativity when assessed in terms of gender?

We do not have studies that support whether they male or female are more creative. However, it seems that women have more often the opportunity to start to develop their talents from an early age. Out of 157,908 children who attended in September 2013 primary art schools in Slovakia, 108,850 (70%) were

girls. The same ratio repeated also in September 2013 (*Statistical Yearbook of Education, Primary Art School, Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education*)

2.6.6 Is the development of creativity supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

Creativity is considered highly important in many business and non-business activities. A creative employee and a young entrepreneur represent the base for a company's success, economic development and development of the society as a whole. For this reason, there are many non-formal educational offerings in order to support creative ideas.

2.6.7 To what extent is the acquisition of creativity facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

There is, on the other hand, enough space for other educational offerings, as young entrepreneurs are interested in development and presentation of their creative ideas. Besides that, there is often a limited number of free places in courses organized by unemployment and other services.

2.6.8 Is creativity supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

When it comes to the creative sector, for a long time there has been very little understanding of cultural and creative industries on both sides of the society – the entrepreneurial community and economic experts on the one hand and creative community on the other. It is only an issue of last decade that the economic aspect of creative activities has been explored and taken into consideration. However, there is still very little structured understanding of the needs of creative businesses and no policy frameworks have been established for their development so far. An initiative of the Ministry of Culture to draft an analysis of the present conditions of creative industries in Slovakia has been announced in 2013 and it is the first of a kind. However, there are few examples of creative incubators or similar initiatives, which are quite promising, pilots for the upcoming years.

The firms in creative sectors are considerably concentrated in space and create clusters. The Bratislava region is one of prominent EU regions from the point of view of concentration of employment in the creative sector since in this region approximately 5.01 % of the labour force work in these sectors, pointing out at significant specialisation. Moreover, 46 % of all firms in the creative sectors are seated in

the Bratislava region, of that 91 % directly in Bratislava. (*Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic*)

2.6.9 To what extent is creativity evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

Slovak young entrepreneurs form and bring up effective and creative ideas, which they try to execute.

2.6.10 What is the preferred format of the development of creativity amongst young entrepreneurs?

No answers could be found in the data research.

2.7 Taking initiative

2.7.1 How much is the competence of taking initiative valued in society?

According to the *GEM 2014 Global report*, 45,4% of people aged between 18 and 64 in Slovakia think that entrepreneurship is a desirable career choice, however, this is still little if compared to the European average (56,9%).

2.7.2 Is the competence of taking initiative strongly embedded in society and culture?

According to a *NADSME* survey (2010), for 78.2% of respondents the term “entrepreneur” even has negative connotations. A significant number of Slovaks is eager to think that entrepreneurs are thieves, who make money at the expense of their employees. (*TwinEntrepreneurs Vienna-Bratislava, 2013*). Nevertheless, 10.9% of individuals aged 18-64 are in the process of starting a business or are already running a new business, not older than 42 months, and this percentage is higher than the European average 7,8%. (*GEM Report 2014*)

The study and labour migration of educated young people is growing in the European Union. 27% of young people from Slovakia have an experience with working abroad. 10.2% of all Slovak tertiary students studied in another EU-27, EEA or candidate country in 2006/07. (*EC, DG Education and Culture, Erasmus statistics*)

2.7.3 Is the competence of taking initiative taught in primary/secondary level education?

Further on, 45% of the respondents from Slovakia agree with the statement that the school education gave to them skills and know-how necessary to start an enterprise, but only 32% agree that their school education increased their interest in an entrepreneurial career. (*Eurostat, EU-LFS*) The number of young people, who want to start their own business, is increasing more among secondary-school students than among undergraduates. Anyway, they perceive an actual beginning of their business as unrealistic due to shortage of financial and other sources.

The unemployment is at its peak between 15/16 – 24 years of age. The unemployed young people's educational level in comparison with other EU member states is higher, as most of them have completed full secondary-school or university studies. (*Strategy of the Slovak republic for youth for the years 2014 – 2020*) From these facts we can conclude that the competence of taking initiative is not sufficiently supported neither in primary or secondary level education.

2.7.4 Is the competence of taking initiative taught in VET education?

There is a weak integration between research and practice leading to the lower number of innovative companies, which are able to transform the latest knowledge into practice. (*TwinEntrepreneurs Vienna-Bratislava, 2013*)

2.7.5 Is there a difference regarding the competence of taking initiative when assessed in terms of gender?

The latest employment trends suggest that men are more likely to take the initiative than women are. In 2014, women represented 44.1% of the total employment. From the total of 1,055,300 women employed, only 10% (102,500) were self-employed. This ratio is almost two times higher among men, where 19% of all employed men, 19% are self-employed. (*Slovstat*)

According to the *KPMG Start-up Survey*, 76% start-ups in Slovakia does not have a woman as founder. This trend should not be ignored.

Table: Status of employment by gender in 4th quarter of 2014

<i>Employed</i>	Men (thousands)		Women (thousands)	
	<i>of which</i>	1 335.7		1 055.3
<i>Employees</i>	1 077.7	81%	951.1	90%
<i>Self-employed</i>	257.5	19%	102.5	10%

2.7.6 Is the development of the competence of taking initiative supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

The initiatives for supporting the development of a knowledge economy have then been incorporated into various strategic documents and governmental activities such as for example the Innovation Strategy, National Reform Programme of SR and the Modernisation Programme Slovakia 21 and the National Strategic Reference Framework.

2.7.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the competence of taking initiative facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Linking investors and start-ups was the key role that institutions from public sector and organizations supporting start-ups provided. Private Enterprise Support organisations see a value in Start-ups and are immersed in the existing ecosystem. 85% are supporting more than 6 start-ups, with 29% supporting more than 16. (*KPMG Start-up Survey 2014*) The level of Angel investment activity in the market is increasing according to *GEM 2012* report, 7.2% of Slovaks, are informal investors and have invested, on average, 23,000 EUR. Angel investors usually act as mentors as well as funders.

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain

conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

2.7.8 Is the competence of taking initiative supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

According to the Global Innovation Index 2014 Slovakia achieved 84.2 points (rank 70) when it comes to the question how easy it is to start a business. Among countries present in consortium, Slovakia comes outperforms only two partners countries. Therefore, the enterprise structure in Slovakia does not adequately support the competence of taking initiative.

Table: Global Innovation Index 2014: Ease of starting a business

Country	Ranking	Points
<i>Ireland</i>	21	92.5
<i>Romania</i>	33	90.8
<i>United Kingdom</i>	49	88.5
<i>Italy</i>	58	87.7
Slovakia	70	84.2
<i>Austria</i>	93	79.2
<i>Spain</i>	97	77.8

2.7.9 To what extent is the competence of taking initiative evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

Many young entrepreneurs don't hesitate to take initiative and to present the projects or business plans developed by them.

2.7.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the competence of taking initiative amongst young entrepreneurs?

Accessibility to information and counselling remains a serious problem. More than 75% of young entrepreneurs are interested in meeting with experienced entrepreneurs. The fact remains that the

younger is the novice entrepreneur, the stronger is their interest in these meetings. 73.77% of the respondents believed that high-quality mentoring is more important for a young entrepreneur than the access to advantaged funds. (*Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for the years 2014 – 2020*)

2.8 Digital competences

2.8.1 How much are digital competences valued in society?

In general, information and communications technology skills are regarded as being essential to benefit from and contribute to a knowledge-based economy and society. Young people in Slovakia report, on average, a higher level of computer skills and internet skills than the population as a whole.

According to research results by Eurostat, digital skills of Slovaks in 2014 were slightly above the European level (EU 28) for young people between 16-29 years. For example, in 2014 Slovakia outperformed Belgium, Netherland, Austria, Sweden, France, Italy, Spain and even Norway.

Figure: Proportion of people who used a computer on a daily basis, 2014 (Eurostat)

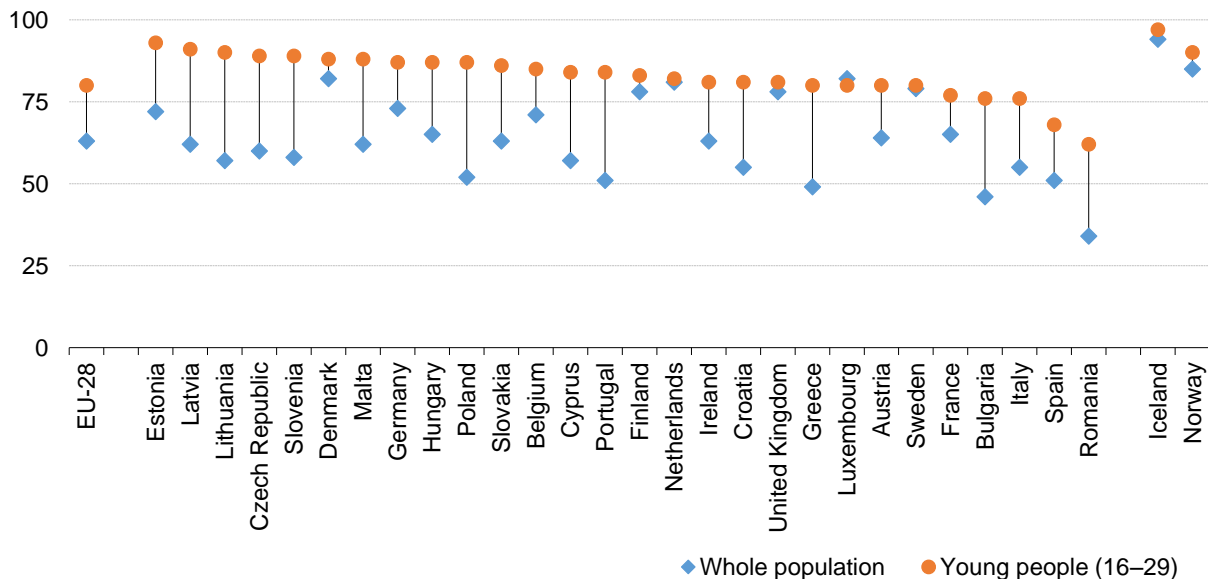


Table: Proportion of people who used a computer on a daily basis, 2014 (Eurostat)

	Whole	Young people
<i>Eu-28</i>	63	80
<i>Estonia</i>	72	93
<i>Latvia</i>	62	91
<i>Lithuania</i>	57	90
<i>Czech republic</i>	60	89
<i>Slovenia</i>	58	89
<i>Denmark</i>	82	88
<i>Malta</i>	62	88
<i>Germany</i>	73	87
<i>Hungary</i>	65	87
<i>Poland</i>	52	87
<i>Slovakia</i>	63	86
<i>Belgium</i>	71	85
<i>Cyprus</i>	57	84
<i>Portugal</i>	51	84
<i>Finland</i>	78	83
<i>Netherlands</i>	81	82
<i>Ireland</i>	63	81
<i>Croatia</i>	55	81
<i>United Kingdom</i>	78	81
<i>Greece</i>	49	80
<i>Luxembourg</i>	82	80
<i>Austria</i>	64	80
<i>Sweden</i>	79	80

<i>France</i>	65	77
<i>Bulgaria</i>	46	76
<i>Italy</i>	55	76
<i>Spain</i>	51	68
<i>Romania</i>	34	62
<i>Iceland</i>	94	97
<i>Norway</i>	85	90

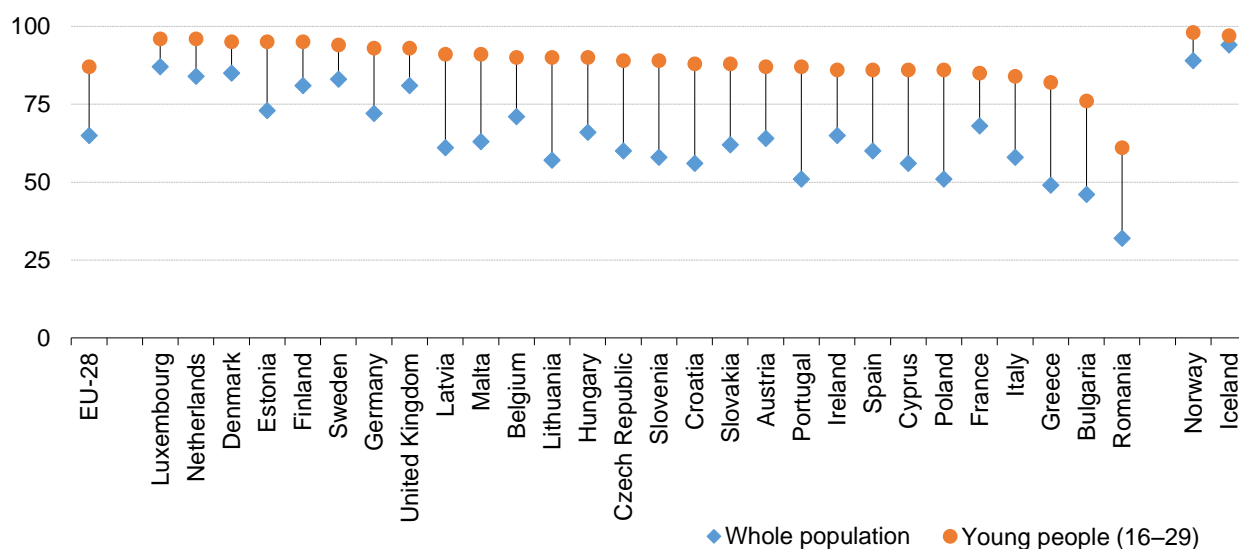
2.8.2 Are digital competences strongly embedded in society and culture?

In Slovakia, 88% of young people aged between 16 and 29 and used the internet on a daily basis in 2014. If we look at the proportion of the whole population, Slovaks with 62% were slightly under the European level (65%, EU 28). (*Eurostat*)

The use of mobile phones for internet connections away from home or work was considerably lower than that of portable computers. For the population as a whole, the proportion of people that used a mobile phone to connect to the internet was 13 percentage points lower (50 %) than the use of a portable computer (63 %). For young people, the difference was smaller, 5 percentage points lower for mobile phones (81 %) than for portable computers (86 %).

The number of active Internet users is dynamically growing in general. The situation in the usage of broadband technologies is also relatively favourable. On the other hand, there are certain identifiable groups, which use the Internet only scarcely, if at all, and can thus hardly benefit from e-Government services or tap on the Internet as a source of information. This applies in particular to those living in geographically disadvantaged regions, but also the low-income groups, including the elderly, are at risk. The growing problem of their digital exclusion results primarily from their low digital literacy and the related lack of motivation to use ICT and electronic services.

Figure: Proportion of young people 16 – 29 who use internet on a daily basis, 2014 (Eurostat)



2.8.3 Are digital competences taught in primary/ secondary level education?

Schools and other educational establishments use ICTs not only to develop ICT skills but also to support the teaching of traditional subjects such as mathematics or foreign languages. The use of ICTs is widespread among children from a very young age as they access technology in the home and at school. By the time, young people in the EU leave compulsory education most of them have regularly made use of computers and the internet for a variety of activities. The steering documents for either primary or secondary education, as well as study curriculum, include development of digital competencies. Specifically, the learning objectives adopted in steering documents are: knowledge of computer hardware and electronics, using a computer, using mobile devices, using office applications, searching for information, using multimedia, developing programming skills (secondary education), using social media (secondary education).

2.8.4 Are digital competences taught in VET education?

There is already a good quality of teaching digital competences in the VET education. Many schools are also involved in the project of CISCO Networking Academy Program.

2.8.5 Is there a difference regarding digital competences when assessed in terms of gender?

The male-female skills gap has been decreasing over time at all skill levels with more and more women acquiring higher levels of computer skills. Slovakia is a country with minimal skills gaps between men and women. Little difference between men and women is also at the level of numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments. Concerning the parity of skills of men and women, Slovakia significantly differs from most OECD countries. (*Survey on adult skills, PIAAC, 2012*)

2.8.6 Is the development of digital competences supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

We can find a number of non-formal educational offerings in order to support the development of digital competences. Digital literacy is also being improved through the promotion of employee education at workplaces (especially small and medium enterprises have the potential for a more intensive and efficient use of ICT equipment).

2.8.7 To what extent is the acquisition of digital competences facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

2.8.8 Are digital competences supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

According to the *Global Innovation Index 2014* Slovakia achieved 43.5 points (rank 56) when it comes to information and communication technologies infrastructure. Among other European countries, Slovakia ranks among 10 countries on the bottom of the classification, the ICT infrastructure in Slovakia does not sufficiently support the development of digital competences.

The disparities in the access of individuals and businesses to ICT and in possibilities for their utilisation are identified specifically in connection with the geographically disadvantaged areas. Apart from disparities in access to the high-speed Internet using broadband connections, the geographical digital disparities are significant mainly in the area of digital literacy and in the area of eGovernment services provision. The availability of broadband services represents one of the crucial elements in the provision of assistance to local communities in terms of supporting the setting up of new business activities, in allowing for telecommuting, in the provision of healthcare, and in improving education and public services.

2.8.9 To what extent are digital competences evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

According to start-up survey carried out by KPMG, 42% Slovak start-up founders have degree in business or computer science/ IT and 40% in business and management. (*KPMG Start-up Survey, 2014*)

In general, young people have a good knowledge of digital competences as they are aware of the fact these skills are essential in all the parts of business and other activities. Some of them also took the possibility to take an ECDL certificate.

2.8.10 What is the preferred format of the development of digital competences amongst young entrepreneurs?

No answers could be found in the data research.

2.9 Competitiveness

2.9.1 How much is the competence of competitiveness valued in society?

The Slovak Republic is a small open economy in which foreign trade plays a key role. Both exports and imports recorded significant growth immediately after the split from the Czech Republic in 1993. Today it is necessary to make good use of existing economic growth and invest in the creation of a modern innovation ecosystem to be competitiveness. Slovakia is a multi-regional state with relatively low national R & D intensity. No comprehensive innovation strategy has been adopted in Slovakia. No comprehensive functioning innovation system that comprises institutions, policies, programmes and creates conditions for the support of innovations increasing competitiveness of Slovak economy is present so far.

2.9.2 Is the competence of competitiveness strongly embedded in society and culture?

Slovakia is currently far behind innovative countries. Slovakia has been placed 21st out of 28 EU countries, scoring far below the EU average (59% of the relative performance to the EU) and even more – it is increasingly lagging behind EU28 according to the Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014 report commissioned by the European Commission. Slovakia was classified as 'Moderate innovator' belonging to the third of four different performance groups based on the average innovation performance. (*EC, Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014*)

Slovakia is a moderate innovator. Innovation performance has increased between 2006 and 2013 but declined in 2010 followed by a steep increase in 2012, in particular due to improvements in new doctorate degrees and product or process innovators. This is followed by a sharp decline in 2013, due to a decline in new doctorate degrees. The performance relative to the EU reached a peak in 2012 at 64% but fell to 59% in 2013. Slovakia performs below the EU average for most indicators. Relative strengths are in sales share of innovations, youth with upper secondary level education and international scientific co-publications. Most indicators are growing in Slovakia. High growth is observed for community trademarks and community designs. Large declines in growth are observed in License and patent revenues from abroad, PCT patent applications in societal challenges and Non-R&D innovation expenditures. (*EC, Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014*)

2.9.3 Is the competence of competitiveness taught in primary/ secondary level education?

The primary objective of the education system shall be to train curious and creative young people capable of teamwork, able to process new information, and willing to undergo certain risks.

2.9.4 Is the competence of competitiveness taught in VET education?

If we consider median of monthly data as indicator, the highest risk of unemployment can be seen in graduates from secondary specialised school (SSS) study branches with extended hours of practical training (25.1%), followed by graduates from SSS training branches (23.6%) and SSS study branches (19.2%). The risk of unemployment of grammar schools graduates is considered similar to those of VET schools, provided the positive effect of so-called 'higher education factor is eliminated'. Higher education undoubtedly leads to easier employment. However, the increase of higher education graduates does not

correspond to labour market demand in Slovakia. (*ÚPSVAR, ÚIPŠ, Herich, J., 2013*) Consequently, brain drain and local over-qualification increase. Furthermore, financing per capita not balanced by quality checking and elimination of low quality providers, results in an increase of easy-to-get higher education diplomas and secondary VET qualifications, which is criticised by employers as not matching required skills in jobs.

There are in total 436 VET programmes approved for the 2013/14 school year and an additional 57 programmes are being tested as experimental. There is no genuine apprenticeship system in Slovakia although ISCED 3C students are often called apprentices. (*Slovakia VET in Europe – Country report 2013, Cedefop*).

2.9.5 Is there a difference regarding the competence of competitiveness when assessed in terms of gender?

No answers could be found in the data research.

2.9.6 Is the development of the competence of competitiveness supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

No answers could be found in the data research.

2.9.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the competence of competitiveness facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

Instead, contributions for self-employment were offered generously, permanently increasing since 2004. Although containing a training component aimed at elaboration of a business plan for starting a new business, this measure also needs a serious revision as it is costly and its efficiency is very questionable. In comparison to the EU27 data, a share of retraining is disproportionately low and a share of contributions for self-employment of individuals is disproportionately high in both total ALMP beneficiaries and total spending on ALMP. In general, ALMP expenditures in Slovakia are very low, heavily depending on EU funds and not responding to the unemployment level. (*Slovakia VET in Europe – Country report 2013, Cedefop*).

2.9.8 Is the competence of competitiveness supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

The idea of incubators as places and spaces for Slovakia entrepreneurs forming new companies is still new even to the Slovak business environment. A suitably equipped and functioning network of incubators providing an entrepreneur with the premises, a complex range of services and necessary starting capital is, in comparison with Europe, at its very beginning. With the help of the PHARE and EU funds, several so-called business incubators have been established all over the country. However, these often host very traditional businesses with no added or innovative value. There is still a long way to go before establishing vivid multilateral partnerships between universities, research and development institutions, and business and venture capital. However, over the past few years we can see a fresh bottom-up movement of young entrepreneurs and innovators attempting to establish self-sustainable places with incubation services.

In Slovakia urban regions, especially capital region or regions situated close to capital, exhibit the highest shares of employment in high-tech sectors. The capital region, Bratislavský kraj, records the highest share of Human Resources in Science and Technology in the economically active population, while none of the remaining regions in any of these Member States recorded a share of core HRST that was above the national average. The region records also the highest share of researchers in total employment (3.81%). (*Eurostat*)

As one of few Central European universities, Slovak Technical University in Bratislava has its own technology business incubator – [InQb](#), focused on supporting small technological enterprises. It was established thanks to the support from the PHARE fund.

2.9.9 To what extent is the competence of competitiveness evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

The competence of competitiveness of young Slovak entrepreneurs is mainly evident in how they defend their business activities. Slovak market is very small. If they want to succeed, they must add a new element, a value-added component, which distinguish their product/ service from the competitors.

2.9.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the competence of competitiveness amongst young entrepreneurs?

The *KMPG Start-up Survey 2014* indicates that a high level of interaction already exists amongst start-ups with 75% already involved in up to 5 other start-ups. Whilst unlikely to be a source of finance, interaction could lead to assistance with other needs indicated e.g. building a team, accessing international markets and mentoring.

2.10 Ability to think critically

2.10.1 How much is the ability to think critically valued in society?

Slovakia, similar to other post-communist countries, has a higher use of authoritarian teaching methods than countries in Western Europe. As the educational system in Slovakia does not promote independent thinking, collaboration and group problem solving, the individual skills by students cannot develop enough.

However, the traditions in authoritarian teaching exist all over the world (Bates, 2007). By this method, the students are passive receivers of information from a teacher who holds all the relevant knowledge on the topic of study. Unfortunately, it does not encourage independent thought or self-guidance on the part of students, it does not employ group or collaborative activities, and most of all, and it does not support the ability to think critically. (*Critical and Higher Order Thinking in Online Threaded Discussions in the Slovak Context, Pisutova-Gerber, Malovicova, 2009*)

2.10.2 Is the ability to think critically strongly embedded in society and culture?

Based on the Slovak historical background people from the older generation do not find themselves able to think critically. Young people are much more open to acquire this ability and they try to think more

critically. Currently, the Slovak Debate Association (SDA) give the young people and students a possibility to improve their individual skills as it promotes free speech and critical thinking through debating.

2.10.3 Is the ability to think critically taught in primary/ secondary level education?

The Slovak Debate Association is already expanding programmes for elementary schools and universities, the association works with schools and provide training programmes for young people and the non-governmental organizations. (SDA)

There is also "School that thinks" project that helps the students to think critically, to analyse information and express opinion. The project operates in 8 primary schools, with 3600 students. Until next year, the number of school should increase on 24. (Orava Association)

2.10.4 Is the ability to think critically taught in VET education?

Usually, the students in VET education have to compare their projects with the projects of their peer. In this way, they can compare the ideas and try to think critically. Generally, the critical thinking is still inadequately promoted.

2.10.5 Is there a difference regarding the ability to think critically when assessed in terms of gender?

No answers could be found in the data research but according to the global opinion and some studies, women are more able to think critically than men are. In fact, women have better analytical and reasoning skills, which are highly important to the critical thinking.

2.10.6 Is the development of the ability to think critically supported via other non-formal educational offerings?

At this moment such initiatives have not been introduced. Currently, the Slovak Debate Association that give the young people and students a possibility to improve their individual skills.

2.10.7 To what extent is the acquisition of the ability to think critically facilitated by unemployment/ other services?

Beside job search assistance and counselling, Public Employment Services (PES) provide jobseekers training programmes. However, training accounted for only 2% of total spending on ALMP in Slovakia in 2010, reaching 0.01% of GDP, among the lowest amounts in the OECD. (*Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia, Klein, 2013*) Not enough stable funds are available for labour offices to finance training measures. Training programmes provided by PES are designed at the central level and do not appropriately reflect specific local needs. In certain cases and under certain conditions, it is possible to receive a grant up to 600.00 EUR to finance a training provided on the own initiative of the jobseekers. (*Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR*)

Private Enterprise Support organisations see a value in Start-ups and are immersed in the existing ecosystem. 85% are supporting more than 6 start-ups, with 29% supporting more than 16. (*KPMG Start-up Survey 2014*) The level of Angel investment activity in the market is increasing according to *GEM 2012* report, 7.2% of Slovaks, are informal investors and have invested, on average, 23,000 EUR. Angel investors usually act as mentors as well as funders.

2.10.8 Is the ability to think critically supported by adequate enterprise infrastructure?

Entrepreneurs are expected to conduct critical evaluation of their projects before applying them in numerous business competitions that take regularly place in Slovakia.

2.10.9 To what extent is the ability to think critically evident amongst young entrepreneurs in the country?

In today's difficult conditions, young entrepreneurs have to consider all aspects of business activities and market in order to be successful. Slovak Start-ups are very clear as to their strengths and priorities, and these are their people. They are perfectly aware of the fact that building of a quality team is critical to the success of a start-up. In fact, many will admit that they often invest in the team as much as the idea. (*Start-up Survey 2014, KPMG*) It would appear that Slovak entrepreneurs have developed a strong ability to think critically.

2.10.10 What is the preferred format of the development of the ability to think critically amongst young entrepreneurs?

Accessibility to information and counselling remains a serious problem. More than 75% of young entrepreneurs are interested in meeting with experienced entrepreneurs. The fact remains that the younger is the novice entrepreneur, the stronger is their interest in these meetings. 73.77% of the respondents believed that high-quality mentoring is more important for a young entrepreneur than the access to advantaged funds. (*Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for the years 2014 – 2020*)

3 Prioritization of Competencies

3.1 Methodology

The development of key competencies is a very complex process during which many policies should be adapted in order to improve the quality of education and training. It takes place at different levels and involves a number of different authority. The introduction of a strategic approach is one of the most important policies as it allows to improve the knowledge, attitudes and skills of the students.

Despite the absence of a national strategy dedicated to key competences, Slovakia has initiatives, which cover all or most of the key competences and target various dimensions of the education system to ensure their successful implementation.

During the preparation of this document, we used the information from various articles and reports. Moreover, we selected researches provided in order to give a clear image about the problem. Generally, many sociological, economic, political and other studies focus on the actual situation in these fields. As Slovakia has good conditions regarding the entrepreneur activities, the competencies of the local entrepreneurs are in the process of a continuous development. This should be supported by every type of organization.

3.2 Results

Rank	Competence
1st	Ability to take decisions
2nd	Ability to think critically
3rd	Leadership

4th	Willingness to explore
5th	Ability to plan
6th	Ability to prioritize
7th	Taking initiative
8th	Competitiveness
9th	Creativity
10th	Digital Competences

4 Expert Stakeholder Input

The purpose of the questionnaire was to discover the ideas about general conditions of youth entrepreneurship in Slovakia. Eleven respondents who have experience in business completed the questionnaire (I SEE YOU Questionnaire). Some of them work in the training for youth entrepreneurs, other are already working as entrepreneurs or they are experts in the field.

Most of the respondents believe the young entrepreneurs are interested in business activities but some of them feel afraid of irregular salary and less stability. In respondent's opinion, there are many opportunities for professional training and many organizations supporting young entrepreneurs.

As we can see, there are three key competences, which were marked as highly important for an entrepreneur. The respondents decided in this case for the following competences: ability to take decisions, ability to think critically and leadership. Ability to think critically and Initiative are seen as the most frequently lacked by young Slovak people. The lack of the key competences and the main barriers such as: bureaucracy, insufficient training can cause negative impact on business.

Almost all respondents suppose that the Slovak educational system does not support enough the creative thinking and inhibits the development of entrepreneurial skills of students.

Regarding the role of social media, this is considered as important but according to the respondent's answers, the personal contact should be always preferred. There are also partners and influencers such as NGOs, regional bodies, Chambers of Commerce and universities that should be involved in the strategy

in order to gain attention of young entrepreneurs and migrant/minority groups' entrepreneurs and in order to explain the key topics the young entrepreneurs may be worry about.

Regarding the young migrants/minority groups, the respondents believe there are generally no special barriers for migrant or minority groups but in some cases prejudices and cultural barriers can occur.

If any conclusion may be drawn, they are, perhaps, as follows. There are presumably good conditions for young entrepreneurs in Slovakia who at the beginning of their business activities should be helped by organisations and experts in field in order to simplify the integration process.

5 Conclusion

As the analysis shows the young entrepreneurs in Slovakia are interested in starting their business activities. Generally, becoming an entrepreneur is a long process. Fortunately, based on the analysis results, the Slovak young entrepreneurs are involved in many training programmes in order to gain the necessary knowledge and overview regarding the important aspects of the entrepreneurship. As many studies show, the key competencies such as ability to plan, ability to think critically, are essential for a growing business and for its continuous development. In Slovakia, the acquisition of the key competencies is not supported enough. Currently, the Slovak society, the education system and various organizations do not support their development in a satisfactory way. In fact, the Slovak education system does not support enough the creative thinking and inhibits the development of entrepreneurial skills of students. The ability to think critically and initiative are also seen as the most frequently lacked by young Slovak people. This situation should be absolutely reevaluated in order to improve the general conditions of the young entrepreneurs in Slovakia, which could take advantage of the I SEE YOU project founded to help the young migrant entrepreneurs.

6 Bibliography

PUBLICATIONS:

Cedefop ReferNet Slovakia (2014), Slovakia VET in Europe – Country Report 2014, State Institute of Vocational Education, Slovak National Observatory of VET.

Cedefop ReferNet Slovakia (2013), Slovakia VET in Europe – Country Report 2013, State Institute of Vocational Education, Slovak National Observatory of VET.

Cedefop ReferNet Slovakia (2014), *Innovation in vocational education and training Slovakia*, State Institute of Vocational Education.

Correia C. M., Silva Costa J. (2014), *Measuring Creativity in the EU Member States*, Investigaciones Regionales, 30 (2014), Sección Artículos.

Cornell University, INSEAD, and WIPO (2014): *The Global Innovation Index 2014: The Human Factor In innovation*, Fontainebleau, Ithaca, and Geneva.

Dömötör R., Fandl U., Funke T., Smorada M., Šrenkel L. (2013), *Regional study: Analysis of start-ups and young companies in the region SK-AT (support and environment)*, Vienna Business Agency/Young Entrepreneurs Association Slovakia, Vienna and Bratislava.

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2012), *Developing Key Competences at School in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities for Policy*, Eurydice Report, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission/ Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (2014), *Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014*, European Union, Belgium.

Herich J. (2013), *Uplatnenie absolventov stredných škôl v praxi*, Ústav informácií a prognóz školstva, Bratislava.

IUVENTA (2011), *Step by step towards recognition...or behind the scenes of recognition of non-formal education in the youth work in Slovakia*, Youth in Action Programme, Bratislava.

Jaurova Z., Kristina J., Inkei P, Hentz J., Rolnik J., Mixova M., Žakova E., Etmanowicz A. (2014), *V4 – Creative Incubators: Guide to places and spaces of creative incubation in Central Europe*.

Klein C. (2013), *Investing Efficiently in Education and Active Labour Market Policies in Slovakia*, OECD Economics Department Working Papers, No. 1017, OECD Publishing.

KPMG (2014), *Prieskum slovenského startup ekosystému*, KPMG Slovensko spol. s.r.o.

KPMG (2013), *Start-Up Survey: Summary of the findings of KPMG's 2013 Start-Up Survey*, KPMG Slovensko spol. s.r.o.

Martin Prosperity Institute (2011), *Creativity and Prosperity: The 2010 Global Creativity Index*, Toronto.

Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (2014), *Basis for the development strategy of the creative industries in the Slovak Republic*, Bratislava.

Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic (2013), *Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of the Slovak Republic*, Bratislava.

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (2014), *The Strategy of the Slovak republic for youth for the years 2014-2020*.

Neulogy (2013), *Správa o stave a potenciáli kreatívneho priemyslu na Slovensku*.

Pilková A., Holienka M., Kovačičová Z., Reháč J. (2014), *Podnikanie na Slovensku: aktivita, inkluzivita, prostredie*, GEM Slovensko 2013.

Pilková A., Holienka M., Kovačičová Z., Reháč J., Pešout I. (2014), *Podnikanie na Slovensku: nadpriemerná podnikateľská aktivita v podpriemernom podnikateľskom prostredí*, GEM Slovensko 2012.

Singer S., Amoros E., Moska D. (2015) *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2014 Global Report*, Global Entrepreneurship Research Association.

Schwab K. (2015), *The Global Competitiveness Report 2014–2015*, World Economic Forum, Geneva.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR, consulted on 28th April 2015 from <http://www.upsvar.sk/>,

Greenpages Spectator, *Business Incubators*, consulted on 20th April 2015 from <http://greenpages.spectator.sme.sk/sk/c/podnikatelske-inkubatory.html>;

Hofstede Centre, *Strategy-Culture-Change, Slovakia*, consulted on 27th April 2015 from <http://geert-hofstede.com/slovakia.html>;

Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, *Líderstvo v škole učiteľov oslovilo*, consulted on 1st April 2015 from <https://www.minedu.sk/liderstvo-v-skole-ucitelov-oslovilo/>;

Mladiinfo.sk, *Erasmus na Slovensku v troch grafoch 2000-2010*, consulted on 19th March 2015 from <http://www.mladiinfo.sk/01/05/2012/erasmus-na-slovensku-v-troch-grafoch-2000-2010/>;

National Institute for Education, *The national education program, ISCED 1, 2 and 3*, consulted on 15th April 2015 from <http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/Statny-vzdelavaci-program.alej>

Pisutova-Gerber K., Malovicova J. (2009), *Critical and Higher Order Thinking in Online Threaded Discussions in the Slovak Context*, The international review of research in open and distributed learning, Vol 10, No 1 (2009), Athabasca University, consulted from <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/589/1174>;

Orava Association, *Kritické myslenie cez projekt "škola, ktorej to myslí" začína konkurovať učeníu*, consulted on 28th April 2015 from http://www.zdruzenieorava.sk/projekty/kriticke-myslenie-cez-projekt-skola-ktorej-to-mysli-zacina-konkurovat-bif-ovaniu_sk;

Slovak Business Agency. *The History of the Business Incubators*, consulted on 27th April 2015 from <http://www.sbagency.sk/historia-inkubatorov>;

Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency, *Science and Technology Parks*, consulted on 27th April 2015 from <http://www.sario.sk/en/invest/real-estate-and-industrial-parks/science-and-technology-parks>;

Slovak National Agency of the Lifelong Learning, *Erasmus Statistics*, consulted on 27th April 2015 from http://web.saaic.sk/lp/sk/_main.cfm?obsah=m_statistiky.cfm&sw_prog=3;

The Slovak Spectator. *Learning the art and skill of debating*. consulted on 29th April 2015 from <http://spectator.sme.sk/c/20052502/learning-the-art-and-skill-of-debating.html>;

STATISTIC DATABASES/ METADATA:

European Commission, DG Education and Culture (2014), Erasmus programme statistics, consulted from http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/statistics_en.htm;

Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education, *Statistical Yearbook of Education, Primary Art School*, consulted on 20th April 2015 from <http://www.uips.sk/statistiky/statisticka-rocenska>;

Eurostat;

Slovstat.