

Lifelong learning and Balance of Competences

Jozef Ihnacík

Abstract

The article describes the system of functioning of lifelong learning in the Slovak Republic in relation to the use of this system in reducing long-term unemployment by using new methods of approach such as the Balance of Competences. It describes the Balance of Competences as a tool of professional orientation for long-term unemployed with the possible use of the system of further and lifelong learning.

Keywords:

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1 Introduction

Further education forms part of lifelong learning. This is done through formal and non-formal education and informal learning. It enables everyone to complete, expand and deepen their education, retrain or satisfy their interests. It takes place in in-service training institutions, schools, school and after-school facilities.

Pursuant to Act No. 568/2009 Coll. On lifelong learning, the Information System for Further Education was established for the purpose of accreditation of further education programs. Information system of further education and it serves as an information and counseling tool supporting the development of further education in the Slovak Republic. The ISDV is primarily intended for educational institutions applying for accreditation of in-service training programs of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and for trainees for whom it provides basic information on accredited in-service training programs.

It provides basic information on the proficiency verification process and a list of the institutions to which the proficiency testing has been issued.¹

2 Lifelong learning

In accordance with these conditions, the Labor, Social Affairs and Family Offices currently allow jobseekers to complete these courses and trainings, free of charge under RE-PAS and KOMPAS projects. Thus, RE-PAS allows jobseekers registered at the Labor, Social Affairs and Family Office to extend or completely change their professional focus through retraining, to choose a retraining and retraining provider of their choice, to request the employment, social affairs and family office to pay their contribution. retraining, that is to say the full re-training fee. ²

In parallel with these active labor market measures, a project entitled Balance of Competences within the National Project Support of Individualized Counseling for Long-term Unemployed Job Seekers has been running since December 2018. The methodology of this guidance activity has been developed to date by the European Federation of Career Guidance and Competence Balance Centers (FECBOP) and its members, who, after an audit, could have been licensed to provide it. In 2015, the Balance of Competence was piloted by the Center for Work on a sample of 1000 job seekers. Unfortunately, some output data is not available.

2.1 Balance of competence

Building on the logic of EC resolutions on the principles and objectives of lifelong guidance (2008 / C 319/02) and on the recognition of the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning (2012 / C 398/01), the competence balance is an approach based on the volunteer and activity of the participant competences acquired in a formal, non-formal and informal context, as well as assumptions and motivations with regard to the professional, economic and social environment. Through an individualized process, the competence balance leads to the development of a realistic career goal and action plan. However, it cannot be confined to creating a career goal, but should also lead to a comprehensive development of the person.

The competence balance is built as an educational process that allows the client to:

- better understand your own career path
- to create, establish or supplement their own portfolio of competencies
- to know their own professional qualifications
- identify own values, motivations and interests
- develop a realistic career objective and action plan
- increase self-reliance and develop skills to manage one's own career

The process of balance of competences is completed by the preparation of the final report, which summarizes its basic outputs. A copy of the final report signed by the DN of the job seeker shall be submitted by the counselor to the Labor Office. In addition to this balance of competences, it promotes better use of the various career development programs, in particular lifelong learning and the recognition of learning outcomes.

The aim of the competence balance is not only to find the most suitable solution for the current situation of the client, but also to prepare him for taking advantage of these opportunities and for effective management of his / her own career. Competence balance is an educational process in which each activity contributes to the development of one or more of the following skills for managing one's own career:

- Compare his / her own assumptions with the requirements of the profession - the client understands terms such as competence, professional values, interests to be able to objectively consider the suitability of a particular profession. Skills will be developed mainly by active use of career cards in ISTP.sk.
- Finding information about the labor market and education - more effective than providing information directly is to teach jobseekers to look for information on the different sectors, skills required, opportunities to work in an obvious and hidden labor market. The advisor's role is to help the client analyze and interpret this information. Skills will be developed mainly by active use of the ISTP.sk portal with information on the labor market. Participants will also be familiar with the hidden labor market. These techniques will be practically used at the stage of validation.
- Develop diverse employment alternatives - based on one's own competences, interests and labor market possibilities, the young person himself develops realistic career opportunities. Skills will be developed by developing at least two career options.
- Identify priorities among several alternatives - taking into account personally determined criteria (eg geographical mobility, interests, personality, labor market opportunities ...) when making decisions. Skills will be developed by elaborating the advantages and disadvantages of the individual alternatives in the final phase of the competence balance.
- Name his own experience and justify professional decisions and direction - he can present to others his targeted career ("career goal") as well as the reasons for its suitability. Can "sell" on the labor market. Skills will be developed, inter alia, by presenting these data to the group in the final stage of the competence balance.
- Develop and adapt an "action plan" - it can plan the activity in advance, monitor the achievement of its own objectives and change its plan if necessary. Skills will be developed in particular by developing an action plan for the DN of the job market for employment, but also by planning activities for verifying the career path by contact with the labor market.
- Find the necessary support in your environment - parents, extended family, friends, acquaintances - in difficult times it is necessary to have someone "on hand" who can support and restart. Skills will be developed mainly by mapping the system of social support in the final phase of the balance of competences.
- Use and expand the network of contacts for professional purposes - finding a job often depends on how many right people you know. Maintaining and expanding your own network of contacts (persons, companies,

educational institutions, etc.) is therefore a great advantage. Skills will be developed mainly by activities to verify professional direction by contact with the labor market.³

The balance of competencies has been running since December 2018 on the whole territory of Slovakia. From the position of project manager, consultant and provider of this project, I can say that so far about 7400 participants in the long-term unemployed have participated in this consultancy activity. Regarding the identification of the need for further training in the different fields, it is 20% for these participants. They are mostly low-skilled or non-qualified, but there are also people who want to change their career paths with higher education. Clients identified as having a need to educate themselves in a particular area were then directed to individual providers of education in cooperation with the individual employment, social affairs and family offices, which still assess, approve and subsequently finance the jobseekers. Of course, after completing their education, they continue to work actively in the labor market. We could have complete and comprehensive information in May 2021, when this project should end.

The above information and data show that the Competence Balance sheet in cooperation with the system of lifelong learning is an important element that significantly affects the reduction of long-term unemployment and the development of lifelong learning.

References

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