

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

**THE IMPACT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ON FORMAL
EDUCATION**

BACHELOR THESIS

Terézia Dominika Lukáčová

Bratislava, 2022

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis is a work of my own. I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

In Bratislava, January 31, 2022

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Abstract

Slovakia has been facing the most significant changes in the education system since 1989. One part of the change is the connection between formal and non-formal education. The bachelor thesis aims to prove that non-formal education positively affects formal education. Therefore it makes sense to interconnect these parts to improve the education system in Slovakia. Through specific case studies, this work shows that after completing non-formal education programs during high school, students acquired 21st century skills, have a greater predisposition to succeed in the labor market or placement at a high-quality university than a student who does not have this experience. The work proposes specific improvements that can help formal education by including non-formal education activities. The work describes education development, the current situation of education in Slovakia, the legal issue of non-formal education, case studies of organizations, which are intensely involved in non-formal education programs, and research results. The research results are measured through case studies of non-formal education organizations, qualitative research conducted with experts in the field, and leaders of non-formal education who have experience with non-formal education.

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Abstrakt

Slovensko čakajú najväčšie zmeny vo vzdelávacom systéme od roku 1989. Súčasťou zmien je aj prepojenie formálneho vzdelávania a neformálneho vzdelávania. Cieľom bakalárskej práce je dokázať, že neformálne vzdelávanie má pozitívny vplyv na formálne vzdelávanie, a preto má zmysel prepájať tieto časti za účelom skvalitnenia vzdelávacieho systému na Slovensku. Táto práca na konkrétnych prípadových štúdiách ukazuje, že po absolvovaní programov neformálneho vzdelávania počas strednej školy nadobudli zručnosti 21st storočia, majú študenti väčšie predpoklady uspieť na trhu práce či umiestniť sa na kvalitnej vysokej škole na rozdiel od študentov, ktorí túto skúsenosť nemajú. Práca navrhuje konkrétne zlepšenia, ktoré môžu pomôcť formálnemu vzdelávaniu prostredníctvom začlenenia aktivít neformálneho vzdelávania. Práca popisuje vývoj školstva, súčasnú situáciu školstva na Slovensku, právnu problematiku neformálneho vzdelávania, prípadové štúdie organizácií, ktoré sa intenzívne venujú programom neformálneho vzdelávania a výsledky výskumu. Výsledky výskumu sú merané prostredníctvom prípadových štúdií organizácií neformálneho vzdelávania, kvalitatívneho výskumu realizovaného s

odborníkmi v danej oblasti a lídrami neformálneho vzdelávania, ktorí majú skúsenosti s neformálnym vzdelávaním.

Acknowledgments

This bachelor thesis is not only about a topic that interests me but reflects the meaning of my career life - a job that I enjoy fulfilling, and I find essential for the present and future of education in Slovakia. Five years ago, my friends Veronika and Sof and I decided to start the organization I AMbitious. The organization develops active high school students in individual regions of Slovakia. The aim was to create something extra that we lacked in high school, namely to show young people opportunities for practical skills, connect them with engaged people, and help them find what they want to do in the future. Thanks to I AMbitious, I have found what I want to do – to innovate education in Slovakia. However, the non-formal education organization I AMbitious is not alone. Many non-formal education organizations and programs in Slovakia motivate young people to grow and fulfill their dreams. These organizations do a great job often in their free time, and for the finances they have to find for themselves. They deserve great admiration for developing young people and education in Slovakia.

First of all, I would like to thank my advisor and mentor, Professor Iveta Radičová, for her patience, valuable advice, and, above all, the amount of motivation that this topic makes sense for the educational system in Slovakia. I thank my university, BISLA, for a three-year academic shift and an innovative approach in higher education with many inspirational people such as Dagmar Kusá, Sylvia Tiryaki, and many other professors or students with whom we have spent unforgettable moments. I thank the experts in non-formal education who devoted their time and experience to this bachelor thesis. From academics and experts in the field of non-formal education: Martin Brestovanský, Martin Kuruc, Elena Gallová Kriglerová, Tomáš Feřtek, Juraj Hipš, Daniela Čorbová, Peter Lenčo, Ivan Ježík, Juraj Lizák and lira from non-formal education programs in Slovakia - Branislav Kleskeň, Miloš Ondrášik, Eva Vargová, Andrea Nina Gašparovičová, Ondrej Schütz, Arnold Kiss.

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In conclusion, I would like to thank all teachers, school principals, youth workers, officials at the Ministry of Education, leaders of youth organizations, innovators in education, parents, optimists, and even critics of Slovak education, for your concern for better education. Because only thanks to education will we develop the characteristic, engaged, conscious, creative, collaborative, democratically-minded young people who our country needs. Thanks to you, we can give even more young people in Slovakia the motivation to stay and make our country a more innovative place to live, grow, and impact. Thanks to you – young people, who do not just do what you have to do and you are looking for opportunities to develop further and find what you enjoy. We need you, committed and motivated people. Do not be afraid to create better education because you are a significant part of it.

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1. Introduction

Šimon comes from Orava. He graduated from high school last year and is now studying at a university in Denmark. During high school, he wanted to develop beyond formal education. He enrolled in a non-formal education program I AMbitious Academy, but he had to travel back and forth from Orava for two and a half hours each week. He was frustrated that he didn't have enough opportunities at his high school. He did not know what he enjoyed, what to study and what would be the ideal profession for him in the future. Today he says that thanks to a year in non-formal education with a lot of practical experience, Šimon knows what he wants to do. He overcame the fear of studying abroad and is looking there. He knows he wants to return to Slovakia and is already helping other students from Orava to find out what opportunities they have besides school (Viater, 2021). Anton is from Trnava and is studying at a vocational school, business academy in Trnava. He has always enjoyed computer science but did not have enough experience to program the software to create a company. Anton enrolled in a non-formal education program, where he gained experience from professional instructors and improved the skills needed for practice in the 21st century. He learned how to create his project, lead a team, manage a project, create a creative, or present his idea. Anton also found out what it is like to do a project in an existing company, a non-profit organization, or the private sector. In the end, he founded a company that developed software as his project. Today, with a team of other high school students are applying for an investment for a new, possibly future breakthrough startup in Slovakia (Čípel, 2021). Ema is studying at a bilingual grammar school in Žilina. As a child, she knew she wanted to do science. She won many Olympics or organized a children's science camp. Her goal is clear – to help people overcome serious illnesses more quickly. As an active student, she has enrolled in a non-formal education program and was unsurprisingly chosen. Thanks to the program, she got a mentor who develops science in Slovakia. Through the activities of the program, she broadened her overview. She helped homeless people and created a communication campaign about their stories to help organizations get them off the streets financially. She also found out how.

the self-government of the regional city works and how she can engage in public affairs. She created a project in a regional town that helps transport blind people. In the end, she implemented her project to make science more attractive to young people, which will move her closer to her goal as a scientist (Personal Interview, Emma Čáčková, 2021). These three students have many things in common. One of them is that they knew what they probably enjoyed, but they didn't know what they could do next. Non-formal education, as an equal partner to formal education, showed them how they can achieve their goals, how to acquire the skills they will need in practice, and how to know in high school that there are exciting organizations and inspiring people in Slovakia for whom it is worthwhile to stay or to come back to Slovakia.

Slovakia is regularly placed in the worst places than is the average of the OECD countries in The Programme for International Student Assessment PISA tests (OECD, 2018). Slovak students gained lower than the OECD average in reading and science. Although Slovak students are better in mathematics, they still scored lower than the OECD average (OECD, 2019). Based on the last PISA tests, only 5% of students can think critically in reading texts. As part of the regular measurement of the Human Development Index (HDI), which focuses on access to education, living standards, and a healthy lifestyle, Slovakia was placed below the EU-15 average (UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 2021). One of the problems is the significant differences in education and access to it in individual regions of Slovakia. According to the European Commission, one of the most significant measures in Slovakia is the centralization of educational opportunities concentrated in the capital (European Commission, 2015). According to the Revision of Expenditure on Groups at Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion, less than 1% of children from socially disadvantaged families go to grammar school, and less than 7% attend university (Úrad hodnoty za peniaze, 2020). Low education significantly reduces the likelihood of finding a job and finding better-paid work in the future. Intervention through education is essential to bring about change. Formal education in Slovakia, in general, has many gaps. It does not teach students to think logically, critically, or analytically.

To build their character with the correct values, seek their own opinion through a structured discussion, pursue their vision and goals, or be involved in volunteering or creating projects where the student must have the ability to lead and manage a team. However, the role of formal education should not be to cover all points. Many of them can be seamlessly embedded in non-formal education. There are already several non-formal education programs in Slovakia today that support 21st-century skills.

However, these programs are not scaled in all regions of Slovakia. The range of development opportunities and the quality of schools are interlinked and show the level of education, commitment, and readiness for the labor market. Based on measuring the impact of individual non-formal education programs, we now know that it makes sense for students and moves them forward. But does non-formal education positively impact the quality of the student after leaving school? This bachelor's thesis aims to find an answer to this question and answer the hypothesis that a person who completes non-formal education during high school is more likely to succeed in the labor market or get into a better graduate program.

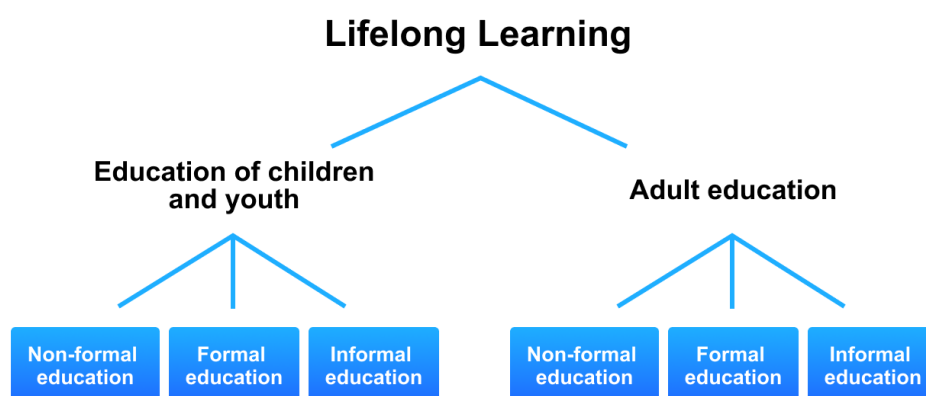
2. What is Non-formal Education?

Non-formal education has been here since prehistoric times, but this term was first used in the last century. Most intensely in the 1960s due to humanitarian and development aid after the Second World War (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 18). The main reason was the stagnation of the formal education system to adapt to the needs of the labor market at the time. Non-formal education has also begun to be used to develop soft skills or focus on taboo topics that have not been taught in schools (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 18). In 1970, The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization officially published the same importance of non-formal education as formal education (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 20). The document points to the need for lifelong learning when traditional formal education in schools is not enough. For personal development, humans need to be educated from birth to death. Authors describe that "The main point of view was the tradition of humanism, the view of man, his holistic development and increasing education and accessibility of education for all without distinction." (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 20). Subsequently, to this day, various concepts have been developed for what non-formal education is. In 1997, UNESCO set the basic definition of non-formal education as, "Organized and continuing educational activities that do not exactly match the definition of formal education [and] may have different durations and may or may not provide a certificate" UNESCO (1997, p. 41). Later in 2003, the Council of Europe noted other essential differences from formal education. It defines non-formal education as voluntary, identifies a range of activities such as youth work, youth clubs, sports associations, voluntary service, training, and many other activities, and last but not least, points to flexibility in the curriculum or the optional completion with certificates (Bois-Reymond, 2003). In 2008, The Education Policy and Data Center stated that non-formal education is an essential complement to formal education (Education policy and data center, 2008, p. 1).

2.1. Differences Between Formal and Non-formal Education

The education system consists of three parts: formal education, non-formal education, and informal education (Brander et al., 2020). Formal education consists, by name, of a structured system from kindergartens, primary and secondary schools to universities. It has a precisely set curriculum, provides a certificate of completion or an academic degree (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 11). Non-formal education is a planned voluntary and unstructured education. The curriculum is flexible and develops the necessary competencies and skills of the individual. In non-formal education, teachers become facilitators and co-learners (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998). The third form of education, the most natural and dependent on a minimal structure or program planning, is informal education. Informal education is everyday education, which we acquire by observing the environment in which we live as a family, media, neighbors, friends, or work. From these environments, we follow and copy what we see and hear. We acquire attitudes, values, and skills that we transfer into our lives (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 11). Informal education is mostly in our hands. We can influence whom we meet or how we spend our free time. In contrast, formal or non-formal education is created by some institution, organization, or group of people.

Figure 1: Lifelong Learning



Source: Langer and Palán, 2008, p. 95

Non-formal education is not intended to replace formal education. However, both forms of education should naturally complement each other. According to the Council of Europe (2000), formal education alone cannot respond to society's challenges (Council of Europe, 2000). However, non-formal education must also be equally accessible to all, not only some groups (Council of Europe, 2020). At the same time, it must be up-to-date, focus on trends and attract people. Non-formal education as a voluntary form of education must engage and motivate people to develop (Bois-Reymond, 1999). According to Bois-Reymond, "young people are beginning to resist massive coercive regimes and are looking for learning opportunities outside compulsory education" (Bois-Reymond, 1999). Although non-formal education includes flexible curricula designed by the organization's creator that covers it, it can still be understood as an organized educational process (Souto-Otero et al., 2012). The main goal of non-formal education is to prevent social exclusion, which means preparing a person for independent economic and social life (Bois-Reymond, 2003).

2.2. Benefits of the Non-formal Education

In Slovakia today, one needs many skills to apply in the labor market. Basic skills such as reading, writing, general overview, and professional skills are often not enough. Today, digital, analytical, and soft skills are also necessary. According to OECD's Skills 2030, these soft-skills are (OECD, 2019, p. 86):

- cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, which include critical thinking, creative thinking, learning-to-learn, and self-regulation
- social and emotional skills, which include empathy, self-efficacy, responsibility, and collaboration
- practical and physical skills, which include using new information and communication technology devices

(OECD, 2019, p. 86)

On the other hand, employers have identified the skills they require from their employees and consider them a key. The most common include teamwork,

problem-solving, communication skills, planning skills, responsibility, and self-confidence. They also think entrepreneurial skills and proactivity to be necessary (Souto-Otero et al., 2012). Both categories of skills defined above are covered in Slovakia by non-formal education as a supplement to formal education, which seeks to prepare young people for the labor market and at the same time educate them to be ethical, responsible, and engaged in society. Latchem (2014) determined that non-formal education contributes to the mobilization and development of the community, solves gender problems and inclusion, develops knowledge and skills needed for practice and entrepreneurial thinking, eliminates differences between people, and helps create a more tolerant society. It also teaches people to be more democratic and to uphold human rights. Last but not least, it teaches people to be more moral and mindful in their surroundings, where people become more active and change things for the better (Latchem, 2014).

The Council of Europe argues that the formal education system and the labor market are still separated because formal education cannot flexibly adapt the curriculum to market needs (Bois-Reymond, 2003). It notes, however, that non-formal education provides an alternative to supplying labor market needs (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Based on information from the Youth Forum, employers perceive people's positive experiences from non-formal education programs. They say that non-formal education has helped them acquire social capital and other skills that they will use at work (Souto-Otero et al., 2012). The Council of Europe also notes that non-formal education and its creator non-governmental organizations play a huge role in helping democratization, developing human rights, citizenship, intercultural education, and developing their interests (Council of Europe, 2010). Graduates of non-formal education programs also tend to be much more active in their neighborhoods and engage in public affairs (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Researchers Hague and Logan (2009) write in their scientific work that the development of the individual must encourage non-formal education, which also includes forms of digital education (Hague & Logan, 2009). They claim to develop people's ability to adapt and acquire economical, social, or technological knowledge (Hague & Logan, 2009). In his two-year study, Cofer (2000) addressed the benefits of non-formal and informal learning. Paradoxically, he found that the ratio of hours a person spends in formal and non-formal or informal learning during their lifetime is 1: 4 (Cofer, 2000). Another

benefit of non-formal education is in the form of conscious and holistic understanding. During the activities, students are aware of the exercise's goal and what they are learning from it through specific examples that they try out in practice. They know how to use what they learn later in an actual situation (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 13). They do not get marks for their results, but constructive feedback, where they find out what they did well and what they should work on. Based on it, they can improve and be confident in their strengths (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 13).

2.3. Potential Use of the Non-formal Education in the Slovak Educational System

In the context of the European Union, many educational reforms involve a degree of flexibility and autonomy of schools in curricula (Dalin, 1998). The degree of freedom of schools, although low, also applies within Slovakia. Within the reserved hours or parts of the flexible curriculum, the school or teacher may include aspects of non-formal education. At the end of the last century, non-formal education, as a valuable and necessary form of education, was also included in the strategic documents of European and international institutions. Since 2000, it has been part of the European Union's strategic documents as part of lifelong learning (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 20). The Council of Europe proposes integrating non-formal education elements into formal education reforms (Bois-Reymond, 2003). This goal is based on many years of practice of the strong impact of non-formal education in the Scandinavian countries and Germany (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Countries with lower levels of education also use non-formal education. Thailand has integrated a strategic non-formal education reform plan to strengthen lifelong learning levels for 2006-2008 (Hoppers, 2007).

Another example is Nepal, which has set up a successful five-year plan to expand non-formal education (Chitrakar, 2007). "Within the country's decentralized education system, the capacity to provide literacy programs has increased, reaching 350,000 learners in 2005, and the target of reducing the illiteracy rate to 5% by 2009 from 10%" (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2007). A

recent example is Indonesia, which strengthened the legal status of non-formal education in 2003 (UNESCO-Bangkok, 2006).

2.4. Threads of the Non-formal Education

Although non-formal education is supported in the European Union and also in countries outside the EU, due to the flawed concept and minimal scalability of non-formal education programs, it isn't easy to clearly define what works in the Slovak context and what could work (Latchem, 2014). Another issue we face is quality. It does not measure the quality of current non-formal education programs and their impact on the future formation of graduates (Latchem, 2014). According to the Youth Forum, NGOs should provide certificates to graduates recognized by schools and employers. They should also describe the complex shift of the student and the description of individual activities and results (Souto-Otero et al., 2012). Although opportunities for non-formal education increase every year in Slovakia, the survey "What do young people think" showed that they are also bothered by insecurity and non-employment in the labor market or personal life (IUVENTA, 2021). Also, Walther (2002) describes in his book that although there are more opportunities, this does not ensure a linear increase in young people's satisfaction with finding a suitable job (Walther & Stauber, 2002). Non-formal education programs are not sufficiently communicated. At the same time, many people in Slovakia do not understand what non-formal education is and whether it is a meaningful part of formal education. Also, there is no comprehensive description of all non-formal learning opportunities in one place and their quality.

On the other hand, due to insufficient scalability, non-formal education in Slovakia is not accessible to all. According to the OECD, this is a mistake, and non-formal education should be accessible equally (OECD, 2011). Naturally, however, people with higher levels of formal education are involved in non-formal education and "receive up to three times more hours of non-formal education than those with lower levels of education" (OECD, 2011). According to Sinclair (2002), an essential and necessary goal of non-formal education programs is scalability, quality, and sustainability (Sinclair, 2002). It is good to develop non-formal learning approaches that have results and a positive impact on the future of their graduates in terms of

employment, satisfaction in personal life, and involvement in public affairs. However, because there are no comprehensive measures of program quality, it is difficult to determine objectively what works and what does not (Latchem, 2014).

3. Thesis Statement and Methodology

3.1. Research Question and Hypothesis

The best countries in education have the highest use of non-formal education. These countries include, for example, the Scandinavian countries. However, non-formal education is still poorly recognized in Slovakia, and most students have not encountered it. The research question that accompanies this work is defined as, "Does non-formal education positively affect a student's quality in the sense of 21st-century skills, professional or academic success after school ends?" On the other hand, the hypothesis as an answer to a research question is defined as "A person who completes non-formal education during high school gains skills of the 21. century, and has a greater predisposition to apply in the labor market or get into quality university practice." Non-formal education contributes to the student's success in the study and career direction by focusing on:

1. The student's personal development;
2. Finding and shifting the student's strengths;
3. Gaining practical experience;
4. Developing soft skills that are needed in practice.

If the hypothesis defined by the bachelor's thesis is confirmed, it will impact several parts of education in Slovakia. In the first instance, it should be provided by the state with more significant support for non-formal education and the recognition of non-formal education programs at universities or in employment. Secondly, parts of non-formal education methods such as peer-to-peer learning, project making, etc., should be implemented into formal education. Access to non-formal education should be ensured for all students in Slovakia, regardless of their democratic activities or socio-economic situation.

If the hypothesis is unsuccessfully confirmed, there is no need for a change in the system at the state level, schools from primary to university level, or organizations that cover non-formal education. In this case, non-formal education should remain separate from formal education, as is in most cases today. Students will participate in

non-formal education if they want to in localities where they have this opportunity. Non-formal education will be accessible in a non-scaled, non-strategic, and only for specific target groups of students based on the definition of target groups of individual non-formal education organizations.

3.2. Research Design and Methodology

To achieve the goal of finding out whether non-formal education helps students to grow, find out what they want to do in the future, find a job in which they are happier, and get to a better university, this bachelor thesis used qualitative research composed from scholars in the field of education, and resilience, in-depth interviews with directors and representatives of non-formal education organizations with programs for youth—finding out their experience with non-formal education, use in practice, and personal shift concerning the impact of non-formal education. The bachelor thesis is based on and includes data from several types of research, such as:

- OECD PISA testing;
- Census 2021 in Slovakia;
- Ministry of Education research of youth in Slovakia “Čo si myslia mladí?”;
- Research from the initiative “To dá rozum”;
- Quantitative analysis of non-formal education in the NGO sector in Slovakia from organization Youth Council of Slovakia.

4. Transcendence Into the History of Education

In order to focus on the impact of non-formal education on formal education, it is necessary to define the historical framework of education as such. Nowadays, we define formal education as education that is enshrined in legislation, everyone has the right to it, has a set curriculum, qualified teachers and at the end, the student receives a diploma or degree. Non-formal education, on the other hand, is voluntary, does not have a precise curriculum, is for a certain number of people, does not need to have qualified trainers, or be completed with a certificate. The paradox, however, is that when we look deeper into the history of education, what we now consider as non-formal education, in history it was essentially formal education. From a historical perspective, non-formal and informal education existed before formal education. It was not until the 16th century that education began to be formalized into the form we know formal education today (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, p. 50). But how did this education come about? Has it been perceived since prehistoric times as a necessary part of life?

4.1. Education in Prehistoric Cultures and Earliest Civilizations

Some form of education was initially defined by the process of socialization and social capital building. It was, and it already is also a process of spreading social values or accumulated experience into society (Nakosteen et al., 2021). In primitive cultures, people did not know what education was. However, tribes taught children as young members how they can behave, what they need to do if they want to be alive. Also, they showed them rituals, myths, and taught them manual skills, which were necessary for life in nature (Shimahara, 2021). Later, in the years 3000-1500 BCE, the old civilizations of the Egyptians and Mesopotamians began to develop formal education as we know it today. Communities taught their children how to behave, how

to profess values, how to take care of themselves, how to take care of others, but for the first time, they began to learn the simple basics of mathematics, geometry, or medicine (Shimahara, 2021). The Egyptians decided to gradually create educational associations for children from higher families. We can say that these were the first schools. In addition to the study of moral values, students learned more about the functioning of civilization, religion, mathematics, geometry, or medicine not in an empirical form but in the form of memorizing knowledge. The form of study in Mesopotamia was more empirical through practical experience. Students acquired skills in reading, writing, and also in religion. Mesopotamians taught their mentees the law, medicine, and also astrology (Shimahara, 2021). For the new civilizations of the Aztecs, Mayans, or Incas, the most important thing was to preserve cultural wealth, to pass it on to future generations, to educate them in accordance with moral values.

4.2. Education in Ancient Civilizations

In ancient civilizations, religion had a strong influence on education. Especially in ancient India, where the influence of Hinduism began the well-known and problematic division of the population into castes. Based on them, only higher castes of the population could be educated. Elementary education was provided in families or smaller communities that taught children basic knowledge and social norms (Mukerji, 2021). Other forms of education began to be formally formalized. A 12-year secondary study program was created. Here we can observe the creation of similar composition of education as we know it today (Mukerji, 2021). In ancient Greece, in addition to the education of officials, a strong component was the education of warriors, which was covered by the state (Homer). In addition, their goal was to educate a wise and good man - kalos kagathos. During this period, several important philosophers, such as Socrates, his student Plato, and Plato's disciple Aristotle, developed their village schools. As Socrates noted in Plato's Republic (Plato et al., 1987). They sought to teach people to be moral, just, and to participate in public affairs. After the public teaching of Socrates, Plato founded his Academy in 387 BC, in which dialectics was taught mainly as part of the trivium, first three studies of the

liberal arts - grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic (Marrou, 2021). Plato's student, Aristotle, adapted Plato's concept of school to an empirical form of education. He wanted to develop as many people as possible because he knew that it was not enough for a just state to have a few scholars whom no one understood, but to have the widest possible part of the population educated (Lawton & Gordon, 2002). Later, however, it again shifted to a model of dividing access to education for wealthy aristocrats and burghers (Bowen, 2021). The towns were responsible for the townspeople and their education, but they did not have enough qualified teachers. Later Hellenistic education framed the education of children aged 7 to 20. In Persian civilization, education began to gradually expand to other areas. Students could be educated in the arts such as music, rhetoric, medicine, geography, law, or mathematics (Nakosteen, 2021).

4.3. Education in the Middle Ages

The Hellenistic approach was gradually adopted by the Roman Empire. However, at the beginning of the Middle Ages, when the Roman Empire fell, the general principles of education stayed (History.com Editors, 2010). In 425 AD Theodosius II. founded the first institute of higher education in Constantinople (Marrou, 2021). During the Middle ages, education was divided into four main stages. An elementary school where children learned basic knowledge such as reading and writing. A secondary school, education of classical literature, and a higher education presented mostly the philosophy of scholars as Plato or Aristotle (Nakosteen, 2021). In Europe, religion had a strong power over education. Many schools were held in monasteries based on the doctrine “pry, work manually and study” (Szyliowicz et al., 2021).

With the strong influence of the Pope, the head of the Church, the world's first universities began to emerge in Italy. In the 9th century, the first monastic university was established in the Italian city of Salerno with a single medical faculty (Britannica, 2020). However, rigid education was not required for the entire population. In the 13th century, St. Thomas Aquinas pushed for a revolution in education. His goal was to connect reason with faith and not separate it (McInerny & O’Callaghan, 2014).

However, like the Aquinas Revolution, it was not enough to eliminate the strong role of faith in society, which was also transformed into education. People in Europe became more and more critical of the church. With the advent of humanism and the renaissance, the church began to leave power to the monarchy. Schools have transformed from church to public (Bowen, 2021).

4.4. Education in Hands of the State With the Name of Humanism

Humanism has eliminated the influence of religion on the development of education. Instead of theology, liberal studies came to the fore. The state took responsibility for educating citizens from the church. First, students go through the study of the seven arts of trivium - grammar, rhetoric, and logic, and quadrivium - geometry, arithmetic, harmonics, and astronomy (Gelpi, 2021). In the end, they learned the basics of philosophy. After completing this study, they were able to continue with a specifically focused type of study such as today's second degree of the university. Education was beginning to be a fundamental pillar of humanity. As the humanist professor, Pietro Paolo Vergerio remarked, "Education should not be used as a means of entering into lucrative professions" (Gelpi, 2021). Every person should have an education for his or her own personal development. With learning methods, games are beginning to be used. These are designed to interact with students. Just like today in non-formal education.

However, the separation of education from religion or the involvement of interactivity was not enough. At the beginning of the Renaissance, Vittorino Ramboldini da Feltrè developed the basics of modern non-formal education. He created the House of Joy in Nature, in which he combined empirical experience with theory (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, p. 50). The authors compare his model to the current school in nature. Also Desiderius Erasmus, a prominent theologian, and professor of the 16th century had a vision of education reform throughout Europe (Erasmus, 1985, p. 311). He felt that the child needed to be educated from birth. It is at a young age that a person can be formable, and therefore he should receive the necessary education under the age of

18. Erasmus' proposals for changes in education were developed by Juan Luis Vives, who sought to provide education in Europe for the poor as well (Bowen, 2021). In addition to the content of the curriculum, psychology was a part of his teacher training. He argued that the teacher must understand his students before he could teach them.

Martin Luther also advocated an open education system for everyone. He considered it necessary to have literate people (Gelpi, 2021). In addition to literacy, Philipp Melanchthon introduced the concept of praxis in schools (Gelpi, 2021). In order for people to be prepared for life, they need practical experience and not just theory. Do we not defend the same words in today's reforms? Combine theory with practical experience?

Michel de Montaigne was a modernizer who saw the empirical knowledge of foreign cultures as important (Gelpi, 2021). His goal was for people to learn the culture and customs when learning the theory. However, not only your own, but also foreign ones, but not only from books but from your own experience. Thus, education began to deal not only with the content but also with the formation of human attitudes and values. The important reformer of education, Wolfgang Ratke, combined the knowledge of his predecessors and came up with a new pedagogical concept of sensory realism (Turnbull, 1993). Its goal was to provide students with an individual experience in contact with reality. So that students can experience what they are learning.

Jan Amos Komensky continued the reforms. His reforms also consisted of learning from childhood, during school, and after school. He argued that school should not be the only place one learns and should therefore be naturally motivated to learn. He looked for ways to change the subject matter so that students would enjoy it (Sandler, 2021). In his pedagogy, he used almost all human senses - pictures, music. He felt that the learning process had to be diverse and that the individual had to enjoy it in particular. He perceived substantial language learning, specifically Latin. His education in Latin at the time seemed lifeless to him, so he published his book *Janua Linguarum Reserata*, which described words in an interactive way in both Latin and Latin. Today we can consider this a common way of teaching a language. However, in the 17th century, Comenius began to create modern education and the concept of

lifelong learning through his many innovations in education as education of character and personal values (Sandler, 2021).

4.5. Previously the Enlightenment and Today the Frontal Education

The Enlightenment period introduced the introduction of compulsory education. It was also a period of many innovative changes in education that we use to this day. John Locke came up with the familiar concept of empiricism. He wanted people to use reason and have their own views, not just replicate the views of the authorities (John W. Yolton & Jean S. Yolton, 1989). However, the rulers wanted educated citizens, but also obedient ones. They needed educated citizens who had sufficient knowledge to work, which ensured the economic growth of the monarchy.

In 1774, Mária Terézia ordered the General School Regulations (Feřtek, 2015, p. 15). Compulsory school attendance for the then Austria-Hungary was valid only from 1805. Education took place in the frontal form. The teacher was a knowledge-based authority who presented information to his students. The students did not take an active part in the teaching, they just memorized the curriculum. It was a revolutionary turning point during the Enlightenment. The literacy rate of the population has increased considerably. Illiteracy in humans has become more of a rarity. The goal, in addition to increasing people's education, was to educate obedient citizens of the monarchy. Tomáš Feřtek called the educational system of Austria-Hungary the slogan as "Repeat what I told you yesterday and do what I commanded you" (Feřtek, 2015, p. 16). Although Locke wanted citizens who were free and responsible for their own views, the monarchy wanted educated but obedient people. At a time when compulsory school attendance arose and education was not just an opportunity for the prominent, the first youth organizations of non-formal education began to emerge. Scouting was established, which still operates today, but also other Christian associations (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, p. 52).

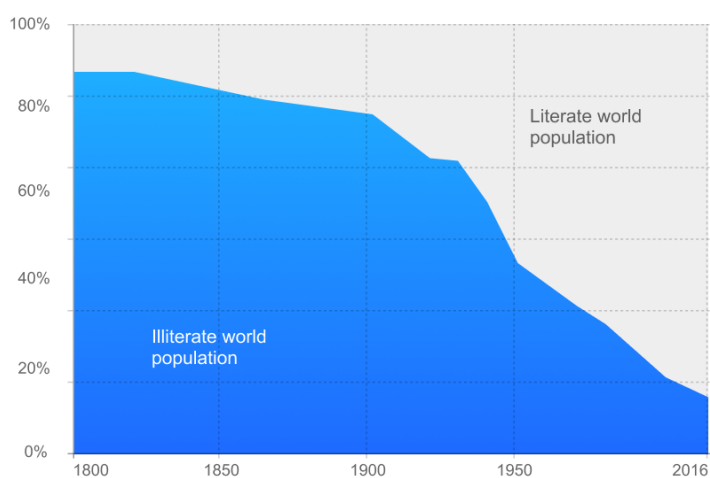
4.6. Decline in Illiteracy due to Education

Although we do not have exact data on the gradual development of literacy in Austria-Hungary, and from today's Slovakia, it can roughly describe it as a rapid increase in literacy in terms of the introduction of compulsory school attendance in the 19th century. At the beginning of the 19th century, only 12,05% of the world's literate people were (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2016). An one hundred years later, people's literacy has risen to more than 20%. In the interwar period, literacy more than doubled to 42%. However, after World War II, it fell to 36%. By the end of the 20th century, it was already more than 80% (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2016). Today, there are a few percent – 14% of illiterate people worldwide.

Figure 2: Literate and illiterate world population

Literate and illiterate world population

Population 15 years and older.



Source: Our World in Data based on OECD and UNESCO, 2016

4.7. Development of Current Education

The 20th century, known as the century of the world's two largest wars, necessarily needed educated people. Society needed to recover from the tragedy of war, and countries needed progress because of economic growth. Education revolved around three interests in childhood, science, and social reconstruction (Ipfling, 2021). Before

the First World War, most of the inhabitants of our territory went through a primary or middle school. However, the burgher, compared to the second grade of primary school, was above standard (Feřtek, 2015, p. 16). As Feřtek notes, in the middle of the 20th century, 83% of the population in our territory had only basic education (Feřtek, 2015, p. 16). Less than 10% of the population attended a grammar school or other type of secondary school and only 1% of university-educated people (Feřtek, 2015, p. 17). From today's perspective, the number may seem small, but compared to previous periods, this is a big step forward for the human population.

Many revolutionary currents of education emerged, where education was focused on the needs of the child and not on the needs of the state or the education of future workers. Francis W. Parker implemented Heinrich Pestalozzi's ideas about the focus on the child and his individuality - on the responsibility of self-education and learning how to teach properly into the American education system (Pestalozzi et al., 1989). John Dewey created the principle of Learning by doing (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, p. 53). It was important for him that education reflected real life, pointing to a broader social context and not just to the context of the individual in which he lives. His form of education was experiential, where one acquires skills through direct experience. Today, the well-known Maria Montessori developed a method of independence in discovering the child - the child should know the world on his own, develop his brain through interactivity and not just listen to what he can and cannot do from a parent or teacher (Montessori, 1969). Another educational innovator was Carl Rogers. He examined one's motivation to grow and create positive change. He found that motivation is strongly connected with the perception of the goal - When I learn something, I take on the role I want to do (Fudaly & Lenčo, 2008). He introduced Person-Centered Education, an educational concept focused on the student's personality. An important role in the concept is played by the teacher who accompanies the student and helps him grow. In its current form, we can call this concept a structured mentoring process. One of the last milestones of the 20th century in modern education was the book *Experiential Learning: Experience As The Source Of Learning And Development* by David A. Kolb (1984). In his theory, he combined experiential learning with work with emotions and subsequent reflection. He argued that if a student is actively involved in the learning process, he has a higher intrinsic

motivation to learn and also better memorizes knowledge and acquires skills (Kolb, 1984).

Although educational reforms cried out for change, totalitarian regimes still preferred obedient citizens who would work on what the state needed. They did not need creative citizens who create innovations and present their own opinions (Feřtek, 2015, p. 16). In addition, the leaders of the past regimes used the education system as an easy way to shape students according to the ideas of their ideologies. From the planned and desirable free education, education has moved backward rather than forward. However, people's literacy was still growing. Reforms of innovators in education were only a rare alternative than a mass change.

Today's form of education celebrates more than 200 years. So many things have changed in those 200 years? From the examples of Scandinavia or Western countries, we can say yes. However, Slovakia is not one of the countries that set trends in education. There are many reasons - still current experience with the communist education regime, fear of the implementation of structural changes, insufficient readiness of teachers, lack of qualified teachers, large differences at the regional level, or insufficient equipment of schools.

5. The Influence of History on Contemporary Non-formal Education in Slovakia

Innovators in education in the 20th century set the trends for current non-formal education. Although their vision was to change formal education, most and in some cases, the aspects they included in their studies in Slovakia today can be seen primarily in non-formal education. However, some schools have adopted these methods as well. These are in particular:

- **Personalizing the curriculum and highlighting the student's strengths that are emphasized,**
- **Component of reflection and feedback** - the student knows why he needs the given knowledge or skill and reflects on himself what could be improved in the process of acquiring knowledge,
- **Experiential education** - the student acquires knowledge and skills through guided experience. In this educational process, he often has to leave his comfort zone and look at things from a bigger perspective,
- **Facilitator instead of a teacher** - the learning process is led by a facilitator who accompanies the student in an interactive form to achieve the goal (i.e., acquiring a given knowledge or skill). This method replaces the frontal way, where the teacher dictates and tests, the form where the student is actively involved and responsible for the learning process,
- **Acquisition of internal motivation** - the student wants to be educated because he considers it suitable for himself and not for external aspects such as fear of failure or failure to enter the labor market. The student enjoys the process of educating, which increases his appetite for lifelong learning,
- **Practice and connection with reality** - in the process, the student encounters simulations of reality in experiential education, but also directly with fact through practical experience such as projects. Through them, the student learns about the real world, finds out what he enjoys, what he wants to do, and engages;

- **Mentoring** - the student is accompanied by a person - a mentor who has more experience and develops the student on an individual basis in the personal and career level,
- **Peer-to-peer learning** - students learn from each other in presentations, projects, or discussions. They can present their knowledge in a form and language that is close to them,
- **Development of attitudes and values** - education is not only based on the development of skills and knowledge. Non-formal education seeks to develop young people's attitudes and values,
- **Development of 21st century skills and competencies** - The OECD defines this century's skills and will be discussed in the next chapter. Non-formal education programs respond to trends in society and develop students in the areas they need today and in the future, such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, or flexibility.

5.1. Development of Non-formal Education in Slovakia

The history of non-formal education in Slovakia dates back to Austria-Hungary in the 19th century (Brozmanová Gregorová et al., 2018). Two forms of non-formal education have emerged, which have taken shape in their current conditions:

1. Leisure organizations for children and youth such as scouting, YMCA, Czechoslovak organizations such as Orol, Saleziáni, Junák or Sokol - educational activities took place in leisure time outside formal education, were voluntary, planned and had a particular goal (such as forming young people and gaining specific competencies for life)
2. Literary associations for strengthening the Slovak language and culture developed intellectual education outside the formal primary education. Participation in the associations was voluntary, the associations were run, and their goal was to educate the intelligent population and develop culture.

During the 20th century after the First World War, the scout units and tramp movements from the Czech Republic had the greatest strength in non-formal education. Subsequently, these movements were stopped and replaced by the Hlinka Guard (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, p. 57). Its mission was to educate young nationalists. After the Second World War, under the influence of the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovak Youth Union was established, which was later renamed the Socialist Youth Union. A new stream of non-formal education in Slovakia was brought about by the Velvet Revolution in 1989. The Youth Council of Slovakia was established, which still unites organizations working with youth in Slovakia. In 1992, the first conception of youth policy was created, entitled "Principles of state policy to youth in Slovakia" (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 21-26). In 1998, the EU Youth program was established, based on which non-formal education and activities in Slovakia began to be discussed much more intensively in Slovakia. IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute was fully operational, and the Junior Achievement organization called Baťa - Young Entrepreneurs (Junior Achievement, 2021) was added to the traditional organizations dedicated to non-formal education. Subsequently, in 1999, the Slovak Debate Association was established (SDA, 2021), which followed on from the Debate Club of the Open Society Foundation. Unlike JA, which aims to develop youth entrepreneurship, SDA focuses on developing critical thinking and argumentation.

At the beginning of this century, other innovative non-formal education organizations were set up, bringing young people a diversity of development choices alongside the school. The CEEV Živica organization, with its educational programs, was established by the Comenius Institute for the Development of Teachers, the Socrates Institute for the Development of University Students and Young Professionals, and the Green School for the Environmental Education of Primary and Secondary School Students. An important project within IUVENTA was the project KomPrax - competencies for practice. It aimed to capture active young people and develop their competencies. (Pešek et al., 2020, p. 21 - 26). The organization Manageria (now Nexteria) was established, the aim of which was to educate the next generation of leaders for Slovakia. Some of the founders of the Management later created the organization Teach for Slovakia to support marginalized groups and the development of future shapers in education.

A comprehensive LEAF organization has been established, which provides non-formal education programs from 14 to 35+ years in various forms to develop an ethical and engaged society. Subsequently, other organizations were formed. Some focus more on creating a narrowly specific skills area, such as AjTyvIT or OpenLab, which develop IT skills. Others focus on a particular age of people or operate regionally, such as the Duke of Edinburgh, I AMbitious, Create & Control, or Show Your Talent, which focuses on the development of high school students in the regions of Slovakia. Some organizations work with a narrower group and some work with quantity. Also, some of the organizations focus on talented young people and others on marginalized groups, such as the "Cesta von" or Your Buddy program.

Today, non-formal education programs are created based on the needs of society in Slovakia. People have the most outstanding choice for their development. However, even today, these possibilities do not meet the community's needs. Although the range of options is vast, it is not sufficiently covered in all regions of Slovakia. These organizations often replace the state's role in providing quality, personalized, accessible, and up-to-date education without any or minimal state support.

5.2. Current Form of Non-formal Education

5.2.1. Forms of Non-formal Education

It has been 200 years since the first organizations officially dedicated to non-formal education. Since then, many non-formal learning opportunities have been shaped, developed, and created in many ways. Although each non-formal learning organization or program targets a different target group or region, the features of the form are similar in all. Sixteen non-formal education experts from academia or direct directors of non-formal education organizations commented on their subjective view of the form, content, and impact of non-formal education on young people (Table 1).

Daniela Čorbová from SKAV - A standing conference of actors in education noted that "Education is about life and for life, about a better future and preparation of young people for life" (Čorbová, personal interview, November 26, 2021). There is a

need to create bridges and links between formal and non-formal education and learn from each other. To the question of differences in form between formal and non-formal education, "How do you think form differs between formal and non-formal education?" experts answered very similarly. However, everyone agreed that despite the progress of non-formal education in Slovakia, we do not have clear terms defined, or they are very vague.

Tomáš Feřtek, an author of the book *What's New in Education* and a Czech innovator of education, perceives the main difference in the form of learning through experience and not the frontal structure of education (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021). Due to his experience with non-formal education of experiential pedagogy in the organization Lipnice, he perceives as an essential aspect the environment in which non-formal education takes place. Most often, it is the outdoor environment, coworking space, youth center, or other according to the program's needs (Table 1).

A significant added value in non-formal education focuses on practice and authentic experience (Table 1). Students create their projects in non-formal education programs (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021). Other programs solve real tasks with a real impact in specific and well-established organizations (Lizák, personal interview, November 16, 2021). Branislav Kleskeň, co-founder and director of LEAF, says that learning on the job is the most effective form of learning, mastering processes and habits (Kleskeň, personal interview, November 24, 2021). Suppose a young person does not learn only through theoretical knowledge but has the opportunity to try the theory not only on a practical example but on a specific experience, in reality. In that case, he will gain the knowledge much faster and many other experiences needed for the future.

Experts also agreed that non-formal education in Slovakia is voluntary and does not bind to legislation (Brestovanský & Kuruc, personal interview, 2021). This ensures that students who take part in non-formal education are not forced and have an internal motivation to develop beyond formal education (Lenčo, personal interview, December 3, 2021). Organizations are forced to provide an innovative form of teaching to entertain students and make sense of their free time. Students know why they are learning and why they are involved in such an activity (Kleskeň, personal

interview, November 24, 2021). They have set expectations, goals, and the desired output from the beginning. On the other hand, due to non-compliance with legislation, non-formal education is flexible. It adapts quickly to the current needs of young people, applies new development methods, or considers the innovations and skills needed for the 21st century (Gallová Kriglová, personal interview, November 25, 2021).

Based on flexibility, non-formal education programs can consider an individual's needs and develop their strengths (Ježík, personal interview, November 5, 2021). The non-formal education facilitator (teacher in formal education) can flexibly shape the curriculum based on the group's needs - to look deeper into the topic or add another theme, kt. is more current for students. He is not obliged to go through all the teaching plans defined by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the educational curriculum is determined by each organization separately and is easier to shape.

At the same time, due to the personalization of non-formal education, expressing responsibility to the student is necessary (Table 1). Since the student is internally motivated, enjoys the non-formal education program, and wants to develop his strengths, it is essential to show the student how to develop them, but leave a responsibility on him (Kleskeň, personal interview, November 24, 2021). As Andrea Nina Gašparovičová from the Slovak Debate Association says, "Often a student is a creator of education - he or she creates activities and regularly participates in them" (Gašparovičová, personal interview, November 30, 2021). Together with other students, they learn from each other, creating peer-to-peer learning. They provide information in their language and in a way that is close to them (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021). At the same time, facilitators have a more personal approach to students. They also build respect as in formal education, but they treat students as partners from whom they can also learn a lot (Ježík, personal interview, November 5, 2021). Thanks to such an approach, they eliminate the hierarchy between a person who educates and between a person who is educated. It provides a safe and pleasant environment for the student to feel heard and part of the community (Gallová Kriglová, personal interview, November 25, 2021).

The General Director of IUVENTA, a youth institute in Slovakia under the Ministry of Education, Science and Research in sports, states that "Group experiences have been a key aspect of non-formal education in the past. Today, personal development has added to non-formal education to a broader extent." (Lenčo, personal interview, December 3, 2021). Non-formal education is strongly built on young people's soft skills, such as critical thinking, teamwork, time management, project creation, or presentation skills (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021). In addition, the goal of non-formal education is much broader. It does not focus on teaching specific knowledge on how to read, write, count but on building the attitudes and values of the individual (Schütz, personal interview, November 30, 2021). According to Arnold Kiss, founder of Greenpower Slovakia, "Formal education in primary and secondary schools provides basic knowledge, while non-formal education brings development beyond what everyone should know. It leads to a diversity of knowledge, experience, and opinions that builds a whole, rich, diverse society" (Kiss, personal interview, December 10, 2021).

Table 1: Form of non-formal education in Slovakia

Note: Adapted from qualitative research

Form of non-formal education in Slovakia	
Voluntary	Internal motivation of students
Informal environment (The safe community environment)	Outdoor environment
	Coworking
	Youth center; school
Learning through experience	Camps and activities
Practice (connection with reality)	Project creation
	An internship
	Real project in the organisation
Flexibility	Length
	Target group
	Activities
	Facilitators
	Curriculum topics
Peer-to-peer learning and approach	Elimination of hierarchy
	Student as co-creator of education
	Student responsibility
Innovation and timeliness	
Personalization	
Soft-skills development	
Value and attitude-oriented education	

5.2.2. *Methods and Content of Non-Formal Education*

The established and used forms of non-formal education in Slovakia are already apparent. The content largely overlaps and specifies the difference between non-formal and formal education. Although the penetration between formal and non-formal education is still increasing (Hipš, personal interview, November 15, 2022), non-formal education still retains content differentiation. When a person looks at the content of non-formal education from a higher perspective, finds that non-formal education complements missing parts of formal education (Gašparovičová, personal interview, November 30, 2021). The previous chapter presented the development of soft skills - 21st-century skills and value education. But how does such education and development occur, and how is it different? The answer is four crucial components:

- 1. Interactive activities** - Students develop through workshops, specific projects, discussions, debates, experiential exercises, mentoring programs, and others (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021). These activities are full of interactivity with students; students are their actors, they create things themselves, try them in practice and thus gain their own experience and skills (Lenčo, personal interview, December 3, 2021);
- 2. Dynamic content and flexibility** - Skills cannot be acquired in one lesson and can continuously be improved in a given skill. It's not like the multiplier, which when a student learns to memorize, trains enough, he knows. It's different with skills. We cannot say that a given student can think 100% critically. We can compare his level of critical thinking with other students, but we will never come to a final point from which he can no longer grow. With flexible, customizable, and personalized content based on student needs, non-formal education can develop students' skills (Brestovanský, personal interview, December 2, 2021). As the curriculum is not legally bound, it allows facilitators and organizers to tailor content to the needs of students;

- 3. Building trust and personalization of strengths** - Due to the smaller groups led by the organizers or teachers, the content is personalized based on the student's strengths. Emphasis is placed on finding and developing strengths, not weaknesses. Facilitators get to know students more professionally and privately, establishing a relationship between them. As a result, both parties feel safer, more relaxed, and trust each other. This environment allows students to develop in areas that are important to them and to enjoy learning (Ježík, personal interview, November 5, 2021);
- 4. Involving a more comprehensive range of professionals** - In non-formal education programs, students work with several levels of people who develop them:
 - a. Internal facilitators:** On the one hand, they are internal facilitators, project organizers with whom students often have a peer-to-peer relationship, know them more deeply, know what they live and what they need help with;
 - b. External experts (lecturers and guest speakers):** Educational activities often take place with the help of external experts from the field, who specialize in a specific topic and have a lot of theoretical but especially practical experience in it (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021);
 - c. Individual facilitators (mentors, coaches, and consultants):** They develop students individually in terms of personality and career (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021). They know the student closest and help him move on. They focus their attention on only one student, and they do not work with the whole group;
 - d. Organizations:** External organizations and their people are often involved in the development process. Students thus have the opportunity to learn directly on real examples and find out how the non-profit, public or private sector works in the form of an internship and a real project.

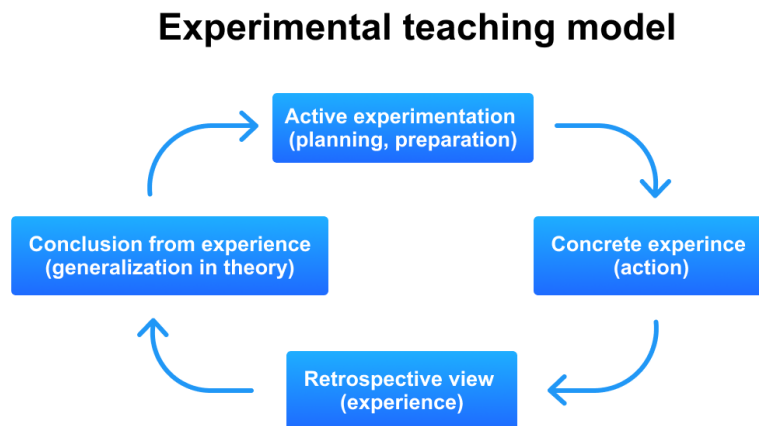
5.2.3. *Learning Process of Activities*

In non-formal education, there is a different learning process. The facilitator leads the student to knowledge and does not give him answers, but he must find them himself (Kuruc, personal interview, November 16, 2021). The facilitator is more in a peer role than in formal education. He tries to lead the student, but he has to reach the goal alone. Because it is a more demanding process of knowledge that requires more time, the process is more important than the result itself. During the process, the student learns, gains experience, forms his opinions, and acquires skills (Schütz, personal interview, November 30, 2021). There are several examples of targeted methods and strategies of non-formal education (Mužik, 2012):

- Participatory education;
- Learning by experience;
- Problem-solving learning;
- Learning through group interaction;
- Learning is aimed at connecting the learned with real situations of everyday life.

Once the facilitator has chosen the activity and the learning process strategy, he will start planning the whole course of the activity - workshop, experiential experience, etc. (Figure 3). Subsequently, it creates an activity for students in practice with various forms of student involvement - students act themselves, the facilitator accompanies them through the training, or the facilitator explains. Students are regularly involved in the activity. At the end of the activity or after the end, they reflect on what they experienced. They answer questions about what the activity has brought them, what they take away from it and implement in the future, and what they would do differently. In cooperation with the facilitator, they will clarify their goals and take away from the activity and learn. If the activities follow each other, in the next exercise, they should have clear skills from the initial activity, avoid previous mistakes, and incorporate parts from the last reflection.

Figure 3: Experimental teaching model



Source: Brozmanová Gregorová et al., 2014

Non-formal education has a variety of motivations. Of course, formal education also wants to prepare young people for the labor market and educate good citizens (Mojzeš, personal interview, November 25, 2021). Non-formal education seeks to develop young people beyond formal education. Also, to strengthen a person's values, to pursue his vision so that he not only has a job but has a job that he enjoys and fulfills, making him a good person who helps others and cares about public affairs.

Developing a young person on so many levels and directions is not easy. Although non-formal education in Slovakia is still not inclusive and not provided to all (Hipš, personal interview, November 15, 2021) - many quality programs are not scaled or focus only on a narrower target group, independence from the state creates a more competitive environment and thus a content-innovative and wide selection (Kiss, personal interview, December 10, 2021) fitting to the age of the student, place of study, program length, form, activities, facilitators or focus of individual non-formal education programs.

6. Educational differences in Slovakia

6.1. Population Development Cover in Slovakia

Slovakia has experienced significant demographic changes in recent decades. The results of the 2021 census indicate a continuing increase in the elderly and a decline in the population in the lower age groups (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022).

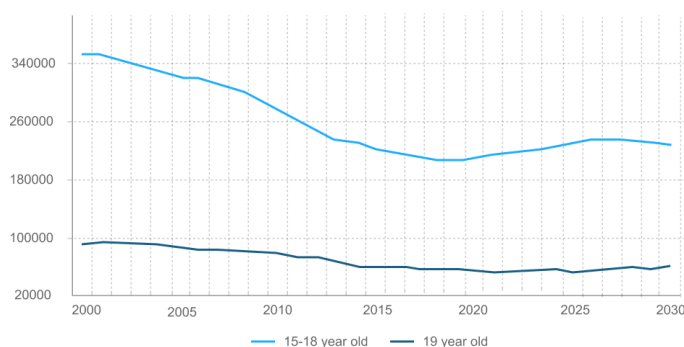
While in 2011, the pre-productive age population (0-14 years) had a higher share than the post-productive age population (65+ years), in 2021, it is the opposite.

In 2021, compared to 2011, there was a slight increase of the pre-productive age population (0-14 years) from 15.3% to 15.9%. Still, at the same time, we can observe a significant increase in the population in the post-productive age (65+ years), which amounted to 12.7% in 2011 and increased to 17.1% in 2021 (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). It is impossible to think about the problems and changes in our education without taking into account demographic trends within the population development of children at individual levels of education. The trend analysis has shown that the student population will decline rather than increase. According to the research "To dá rozum," the trend of the development curve in students aged 15-19 we see a slight increase, which in 2030 will begin to decline even more (Hall et al., 2019). It will affect school management processes as well as classroom teaching.

Figure 4: Development of the reference population of secondary school students with forecast until 2030

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Development of the reference population of secondary school students with forecast until 2030



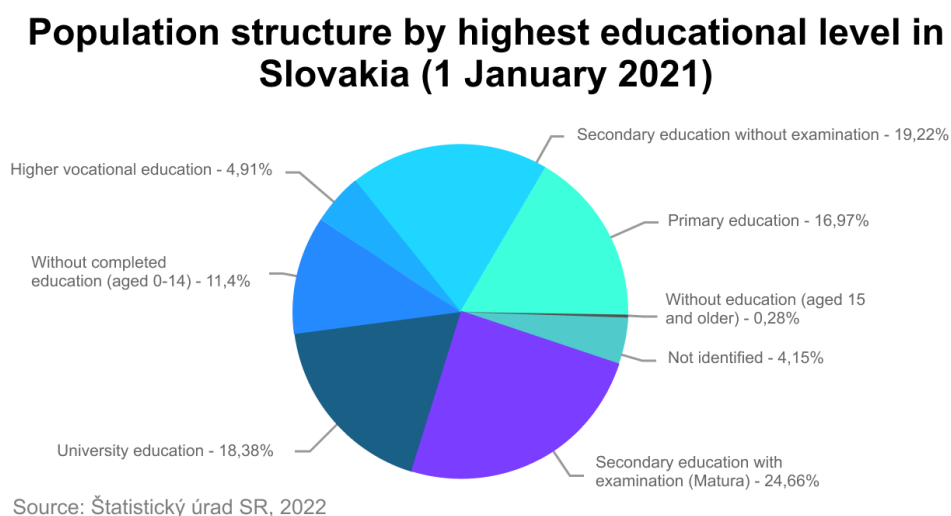
Source: Hall et al., 2019

The lower growth of the generation in the pre-productive age brings several negatives. From the point of view of education development, we can also look at this trend optimistically. According to an expert from the demographic center Branislav Šproch, this is an opportunity to improve education (Hall et al., 2019). Possibly change the way of teaching for smaller groups, introduce more interactive and innovative teaching strategies, personalize the approach to students, or build a partnership between teacher and student.

6.2. The Current State of Education of the Population in Slovakia

Based on the World Population Review measurements from 2021, Slovakia ranked 45th in the Education Ranking. Therefore, we can say that the Slovak education system is in the first half of the countries with the best results. The Scandinavian countries, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland, are among the best education systems in the world (Educational Rankings by Countries, 2021). Thanks to the latest data from the census 2021 in Slovakia, we know the nation's level of education (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). These data reflect the degree of completion of the study and not the quality of the completed research. Of the total number of 5,449,270 involved in the census, 18.38% have a first-, second-, or third-level university degree. 24.66% have a complete secondary education with a high school diploma – university graduates are not included in this number (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). It follows that most people do not go to college after graduating from high school. Secondary vocational education without a high school diploma has up to 19.22%. 16.97% have basic education (primary school) – however, students who have not yet completed secondary school are also included. However, 0.28% of the population is without any schooling and is over 15 years old (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). These are primarily marginalized children who have not completed primary school during ten years of compulsory schooling.

Figure 5: Population structure by highest educational level in Slovakia (1 January 2021)



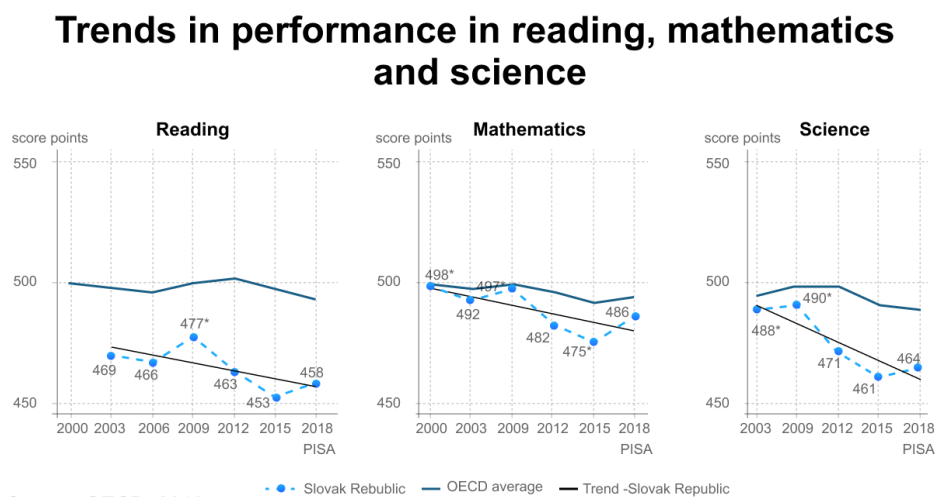
When comparing data from individual regions of Slovakia, the most significant number in the range of 17.14% – 31.74% of university-educated inhabitants has the Bratislava and Žilina regions (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). Trenčiansky and Košický follow them. The Trnava and Nitra regions have only 15.80% – 16.37% university-educated citizens. The worst are the Banská Bystrica and Prešov regions, with more than 15.75% but less than 15.80%. On the other hand, most people over the age of 15 who have no education are in the Košice (0.37%), Prešov (0.36%), and Banská Bystrica regions (0.32%) (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022).

6.3. Student Results in National and World Measurements

Based on the findings of the "To dá rozum" survey, the education system in Slovakia cannot sufficiently respond to the diversity of children's educational needs. It negatively impacts some groups of children from marginalized groups, socially weaker families, or children with disabilities (Hall et al., 2019). The level of education in Slovakia is the easiest to compare with the international PISA tests. In the last measurement from 2018, Slovakia decreased the percentage of the best groups in testing (OECD, 2018) - only 5% in reading (OECD average is 9%), 11% in

mathematics (OECD average is also 11%), and 4% in science (OECD average is 7%). It means that we have fewer and fewer of the best brains, and in addition to mathematics results, we are well below the OECD average (OECD, 2018).

Figure 6: Trends in performance in reading, mathematics and science



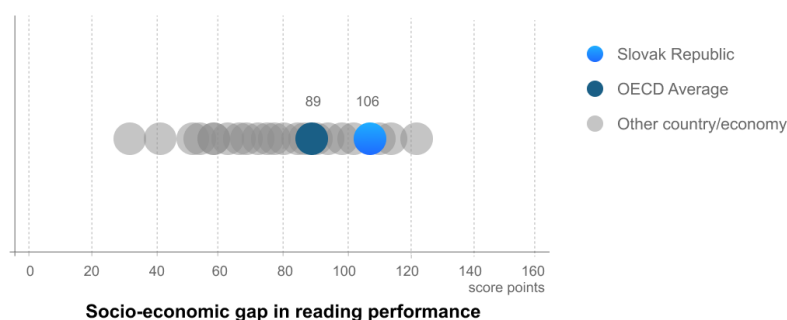
In reading literacy, 69% of students reached the level of identifying the main idea of a text in a medium text or finding predefined information (the OECD average is 77%). Our mathematics students had slightly smaller but very comparable results. As many as 75% of students have two or more levels of mathematics, which means that they can interpret a representation of a mathematical situation (OECD average is 76%). Unlike mathematics, Slovak students are again below the OECD average in science. About 71% of pupils (OECD average is 77%) can correctly explain basic scientific phenomena in science measurement at level 2 and above (OECD, 2018). The line of average performance in the measured areas of PISA tests is still decreasing. However, it should be noted that in 2018, Slovakia corrected the worst result from 2015 and thus stabilized again (Figure 6).

Although in 2018, Slovakia may have boasted an improvement in results compared to the previous measurement, other factors are unfortunately not optimistic. Given students' socio-economic status who passed the PISA tests, the disadvantaged students outperformed the privileged students in reading by up to 106 points (Figure 7). The OECD average is 89 points. Paradoxically, in 2009 the difference between

disadvantaged and privileged groups of students in Slovakia was only 86 points (OECD, 2018).

Figure 7: Differences in performance related to personal characteristics

Differences in performance related to personal characteristics



Source: OECD, 2018

The climate in schools in Slovakia is also below the OECD average. As many as 28% of students reported being bullied at least several times a month (OECD, 2018). According to the survey "What do young people think," which was covered by IUVENTA (Educational Institute under the Ministry of Education, Science and Research of the Slovak Republic), up to 62% of young people feel unhappy or very unhappy (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021).

When measuring collaboration, only 50% said they work on things in groups and know how to work in a team. 44% of students, on the other hand, chose the possibility of competing among classmates. On the other hand, up to 59% of students "agreed or strongly agreed that their teacher showed joy in teaching" (OECD, 2018). This figure is not higher than the OECD average, but it is clear. Students who perceived the enthusiastic teacher, for example, from the language, achieved a higher score in the measurement of reading literacy. Despite the quality and passionate teachers, only 6.8% of students in Slovakia have an internal motivation to learn (Kuruc, personal interview, November 16, 2021). This percentage came from a survey of internal motivation on a qualitative sample of 1,500 students. As Kuruc wrote, "The questionnaire we used in the research included questions about the desire of children to do their homework or interact with teachers during class, or to solve more

demanding tasks in class. According to the research, children's motivation was external, i.e., external, up to 73%" (Hipš, 2018). It means that only a tiny percentage of today's children have a natural desire to learn. They have resulted in school because parents or the society requires it and not because they want it and enjoy it.

Suppose we look at the Slovak education system from the opposite perspective of young people; 60% rate the Slovak education System on average. They perceive reserves that need to be addressed. One tenth of students perceive it as very good (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). They perceive the most significant negatives in the minimal involvement of young people and insufficient, outdated preparation for the real world. As many as 80% of them think that they are not heard from adults and do not have the right to make decisions. They perceive a strong hierarchy at school. Teachers do not treat them as partners and do not allow them to express their views. It is precisely those students who feel unheard that the education system in Slovakia evaluates worse. Those who think that they can get involved, have a responsibility, are involved in the learning process and have a partnership with teachers, assess the education system more positively (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021).

6.4. Level of Preparing Students For the Future

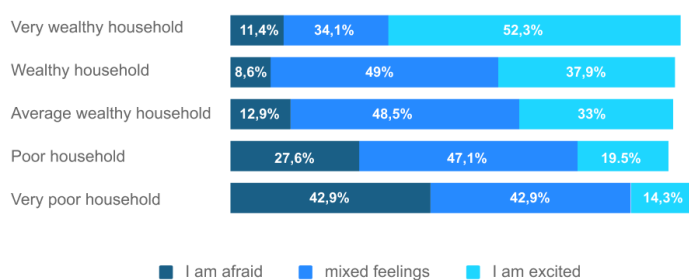
Education aims to acquire knowledge and skills and prepare for a diverse society. Therefore, it should help to eliminate inequalities, meet needs, develop the potential of every learner as much as possible, and prepare him for future employment, personal and civic life (Hall et al., 2019). This goal can only be met if the school can respond to the diverse educational needs of students. According to the research agency Trexima, the Slovak education system does not prepare people for the future labor market (Trexima, 2021). The demand for graduates with the necessary qualifications for the changing labor market exceeds the supply. "As many as 57% of Slovak employers cannot find long-term graduates sufficiently prepared to meet the demands of transforming companies" (Trexima, 2021). Educational programs update very slowly and therefore do not have time to develop students in the skills that

employers expect. The education system plays a crucial role in the readiness of the next generation and the competitiveness of Slovakia.

Just as the most significant negative of schools in Slovakia, young people stated that the school does not prepare them for life in the 21st century skills, employment, and conflict resolution (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). More than half of the 1009 young people (50.2%) doubt that their education system has prepared them for the labor market. Those who felt that their school had prepared them well looked forward to their future work to a much greater extent, believed they would do well, and did not feel apprehensive. The same was true of the relationship between the evaluation of various aspects of the education system – e.g., preparation for the labor market and life in the 21st century (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). Young people are aware of a rapidly changing world. In a survey "What young people think," up to 80% of young people defined that it is much more difficult today to adapt to change than ever before and that they feel insecure about the future (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). As a more detailed analysis showed (Figure 8), the worse the socio-economic situation of the household is, the more often young people express concerns about their future work situation and vice versa - the better the household is financial, the more they look forward to their future employment (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). These findings speak to young people's prospects, depending on their socio-economic situation and how they perceive their opportunities.

Figure 8: Feeling that the future work situation evokes in young people according their socio-economic background

Feeling that the future work situation evokes in young people according their socio-economic background



Source: Gallová Kriglerová and Holka Chudžíková, 2021

Despite fears for the future, up to half of the young people plan to continue their studies at university after graduating from high school. It mainly affected high school students—however, young people from financially secure households in particular plan to go to universities. In the case of families with low socioeconomic status, supporting a child in higher education is a severe problem, which means, however, that these young people lose their chances of social mobility (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). When planning the future of young people, up to 63.7% expressed doubts that they would find an excellent job in their place of residence (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). They, therefore, considered moving for work to be a necessary step soon. However, this did not apply to young people from big cities. However, this phenomenon may change with the growing trend of home-officers. Two key findings emerge from this data:

1. The education system in Slovakia does not respond quickly enough to the needs of labor market transformation and the integration of skills needed for the 21st century (from the perspective of young people and employers);
2. Differences in young people's study and career opportunities from socio-economically weaker families and financially secure families are still marked. The same is true for young people from big cities and towns.

Although the differences in opportunities between the layers are still sensitive, it is essential to note that if we do not act, they will be even more significant due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Center for Educational Analysis, 52,000 (7.5%) primary and secondary school pupils were not involved in distance learning during the first wave of the pandemic, and almost 128,000 (18.5%) pupils did not learn online (Vitáloš, 2021). However, these data are inaccurate, and it is essential to note that primary and secondary school students are learning on a limited basis for the second year in a row.

7. Impact of Non-formal Education in Slovakia

7.1. Skills for 21st Century

Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD's Directorate for Education and Skills in 2019, said, "Education is no longer about teaching students something on their own; more importantly, teach them to develop reliable compasses and navigation tools to find their own way in a world that is increasingly complex, volatile and uncertain. Our imagination, awareness, knowledge, skills and, most importantly, our common values, intellectual and moral maturity and sense of responsibility are what will lead us to make the world a better place" (Schleicher, 2019). At present, the task of education is not just theoretical and basic knowledge, but it is the skills needed for the 21st century. We live in a time when digitization has taken command. Job opportunities are more flexible, more transparent. In school and society, teamwork is taken into account more than hierarchy. Innovation brings us many benefits - saving time, more accessible communication, shared economy, etc., and many ethical and moral issues - conspiracies, misinformation, addictions, or threats of artificial intelligence (OECD, 2019). Today, we can choose what we want to do in life, what we enjoy, and, ideally, what makes sense for us.

OECD launched the Future of Education and Skills 2030 project in 2015 (OECD, 2019). The aim of the Education Policy Committee, which led this project, was to set systematic change in education and prepare it for the current needs of the market and society. The OECD has created the Learning Compass. Its goal is to achieve indicative and collective well-being through developing opportunities in education and employment, improving the quality of life – work-life balance, health, environment, the development of a committed society, and community building (OECD, 2019). The goal of the compass is to develop young people's skills for a better life – to teach students to be responsible, independent, and find their meaning in life without the instruction of a teacher or other authorities (OECD, 2019).

Since we know what young people we want to educate, what are the specific competencies we need to bring to the learning process? The European Commission (2019) defined the key competencies and essential skills that everyone needs in the 21st century in terms of personal development, labor market participation, and active citizenship. Eight Key Competences for Lifelong Learning have been defined (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2019):

- Competence in the field of reading literacy;
- Multilingual competence, mother tongue, and foreign language;
- Mathematical competence and competence in the field of science, technology, engineering, natural sciences;
- Digital competence,
- Personal, social, and educational ability to learn;
- Citizenship competence;
- Entrepreneurship competence;
- Cultural awareness and expression competence.

The third and most detailed definition of critical skills for the 21st century is defined by the Applied Educational System. It identified twelve skills people need in today's world, and education systems should develop them (Stauffer, 2021). These skills are divided into three categories:

1. Learning skills - develop mental resilience, creativity, and the ability to adapt to the challenges of the digital world;
2. Literacy skills - focus on developing the distinction between facts and conspiracies, reading comprehension and the impact of technology;
3. Life experiences - help a person be efficient and shared in a career or private life.

The Learning skills include (Stauffer, 2021):

- Critical thinking - critical thinking is defined in this context as problem-solving through the search for specific solutions to environmental issues;

- Creativity - thinking out of the box learning you see things from a different perspective and bring in the process of creating innovation;
- Collaboration - individuality is replaced in the 21st century by teamwork. It is essential to understand individual people, their needs, and their strengths or weaknesses to achieve the best possible results.

Unlike teamwork and creating innovative solutions, literacy skills focus on working with information. They are including (Stauffer, 2021):

- Information literacy - This is the skill of understanding data, facts, numbers. Recognition of the causality of information and the ability to interpret it;
- Media literacy - Evaluating the credibility of information concerning the source in which it was published;
- Technological literacy - Understanding how digital innovations work. Also, avoid Internet threats.

The last group focused on practical skills of work or personal life - Life experiences defines key skills (Stauffer, 2021):

- Flexibility - Resilience to change and rapid adaptability to new challenges;
- Leadership - The ability not only to be part of a team but to lead a team, motivate people and achieve the expected goal;
- Initiative - Demonstrating self-responsibility and proactivity to change things for the better;
- Productivity - Efficiency to prosecute things on time and be active in private and professional life;
- Social skills - Connecting with people, building relationships and communities through ethical and decent behavior.

According to the OECD, the European Commission, and the Applied Educational System, 21st-century skills are designed to help young people be prepared for the needs of this century on a personal or professional level. The education system should therefore refer to these skills and develop them intensively.

7.2. Programs of Non-formal Education in Slovakia

In 2001, before defining the key competencies of the 21st century, Belz and Siegrist identified the skills that non-formal education develops. They argue that non-formal education programs develop primary skills such as communication, collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, creativity, independence, responsibility, productivity, the ability to learn, think and reflect (Belz & Siegrist, 2001). More than 20 years later, after years of shaping non-formal education, we can say that competencies do not differ much. New competencies were added which, due to the transformation of the world, non-formal education had to be able to cover to respond to the current situation. Many organizations and programs in Slovakia dealing with non-formal youth education. This bachelor thesis describes some of them. Selected organizations and programs deal with the long-term development of young people through pre-planned curriculum and activities. Upon completion of these programs, students receive a certificate and become graduates. As these are complex programs with diversified content and activities included in their curriculum, some focus on personal development, others on developing a specific skill. We define their actions, and through them, we determine the competencies they develop students.

7.2.1. The Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Prize (DofE) is a comprehensive development program that gives young people aged 14 to 24 a chance to develop their real-life skills and characteristics, fulfill their potential and help them succeed in life (DofE, 2022). The student can complete up to three levels of DofE: Bronze - duration six months, Silver - duration 12 months, Gold - duration 18 months. DofE participants set their individual goals in the areas of (DofE, 2022):

- Talent development - Individual determination of talent development according to the preference of each student in what he enjoys;
- Sports activity - Each participant defines a goal in sports that he enjoys or that he wants to pursue and improve his condition and health;

- Volunteering - Assistance where necessary according to the student's choice of volunteering. Volunteering should teach participants to be empathetic, tolerant, patient, and helpful to others;
- Adventure expedition - Multi-day team activity in an unfamiliar environment, where the student learns to work in a team and deal with crises in nature outside the modern world;
- Residential project - A long-term project for participants in the gold level who complete an exchange stay, camp, or volunteer project in Slovakia or abroad.

During the development in particular areas, the participants are accompanied by mentors - DofE coordinators at schools or leisure centers throughout Slovakia. Through regular and long-term work on goal development, students learn to be more responsible, persistent, and overcome themselves (DofE, 2022). Because they set their own goals, it motivates them to overcome them, and at the same time, they develop personally in what they enjoy and where they see their strengths. During the expedition, they learn to work in a team, communicate, lead a team and solve crises together.

7.2.2. *I AMbitious Academy (IA)*

I AMbitious Academy is an annual, comprehensive development program for high school students in various regions of Slovakia. The program outside the school is selective (30 students per year are selected in each region) and intensive. The vision of the program is to strengthen all regions of Slovakia through the development of active high school students, community building, and the creation of meaningful projects (I AMbitious, 2022). Therefore, the program will focus on a smaller number of selected students who are developing in an intensive form of program content to become future shapers. The program consists of eight main parts, which are (I AMbitious, 2022):

- Professional workshops - Experts teach students to move in the areas they need for their personality development (for example - Gallup definition of strengths, personality typology, critical thinking, vision setting, moral values , and others) and career growth (for example - team leadership, design thinking,

project management, time management, presentation skills, communication, and others);

- Project in practice with the non-profit sector - Students in the program create four real projects. The first is a project in an NGO that works with a separate group of people. Students will learn how the non-profit sector works and create an actual project to help the target group. They learn the first skills to work in a team, develop their moral values and break down prejudices;
- Project in practice with the public sector - Students work with a regional city or county in the second project. They develop the area there, create a strategy, or implement the institution's project. Students will see how the public sector works, show commitment and initiative in their surroundings;
- Project in practice with a company - After a project with a non-profit organization and the public sector, a project with a company awaits students. They get to know how they work, and all three sectors differ. In the company, they get the assignment on which they operate and then introduce it to the company. During all projects, they will gain actual practice and experience from experts in the given organizations;
- Own project - After students learn to create projects with the help of other organizations, they will create their projects in their area of interest. The project is a challenge for the student and changes the environment for the better - the project has a positive impact on the region and Slovakia;
- Mentoring program - Each student will receive a mentor according to their preferences in the area of interest. The mentor individually develops the student's skills, helps to find future directions, and defines the student's individual goals;
- Discussions and debates - Discussions inspire and motivate the student through the stories of people who have gained courage and fulfilled their dreams. Through discussions and debates, the program opens taboo topics to students through the eyes of experts;
- Community activities - The program seeks to create a community that gives students a sense of security where they belong and feel heard. At the beginning of the program, they will experience a 3-day self-development camp of experiential pedagogy. In the middle of the program, a community event

with mentors and lecturers. They will end the program at the Final Ceremony, where they will become graduates of the program.

The annual program aims to show examples of good practice in Slovakia by connecting to several interesting people and organizations already in high school, thus contributing to the elimination of brains. At the same time, developing committed people who know what they want to do in the future, desire to help, and innovate things where necessary. The goal is to move dozens of people who will influence hundreds more with their projects within or outside the program (Kotláríková, 2021).

7.2.3. Junior Achievement Slovakia - Applied Economics Program (JA)

The educational program Applied Economics offers business, economic and financial education for students aged 17 to 19 (JA Slovensko, 2022). The program takes place directly at schools during classes or after classes in the form of a circle. The program aims to develop students' work, social and communication competencies. This learning-by-doing program consists of three fundamental pillars (junior achievement):

- Theory - The teacher of applied economics introduces students to the basic principles of economics and the free market system through practical examples;
- Student company - Students test theoretical knowledge directly in practice to create an annual student company. They create their own company - they sell shares, create a product, marketing, partnerships, sales. They try the whole process from founding the company to its liquidation. They will find out how to run a company and manage individual parts such as marketing, product, or finance. At the same time, they learn to cooperate, communicate, think creatively, sell their ideas, solve crises;
- Consultant - During the creation of students' own company, students are assisted by an expert in the role of a consultant who is an expert from the business and management environment. The consultant advises students, gives them his experience, and shows them practical examples of company management.

Students will learn to cooperate, create and fulfill a business plan, manage finances, communicate and present correctly, think creatively, solve problems, or have entrepreneurial thinking during the applied economics program within the organization Junior Achievement Slovakia. Students learn through experience in their own company. Students don't just sit on the bench and learn business theory, but they know how to do business themselves (Vargová, personal interview, 2021).

7.2.4. *Slovak Debate Association (SDA)*

The Slovak Debate Association teaches young people to think critically and to argue correctly through a progressive competition designed for high school students (SDA, 2022). The program takes place directly in schools through debate clubs. The clubs function like other clubs throughout schools throughout Slovakia. Students involved in the debate club meet regularly and prepare for debate tournaments. Tournaments take place at the regional and national levels. Students in three-member teams debate against other teams during three regional rounds in western, central, and eastern Slovakia. At the end of the season, the most successful teams advance from the regions to the final tournament, culminating in the final debate of the two most successful teams in the premises of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (SDA, 2022). Students who are part of the Slovak Debate Association develop their skills in critical thinking and argumentation, reading literacy, analytical thinking, active listening, teamwork, presentation communication skills or public speaking (SDA, 2022). In addition to the acquired skills, students develop their knowledge in various topics such as politics, economics, morality and ecology. During the tournament, they will gain a thesis from multiple areas, where they have to practice arguments for or against the given thesis according to the assignment. The team that has stronger arguments wins the tournament.

7.2.5. *OpenLab (OL)*

It is a program that focuses on creating IT projects through which students acquire soft and hard skills (OpenLab, 2022). The high school students in the program develop applications, websites, or games, thus practically learning how to create 21st-century innovations. The program takes place directly at schools and connects students with innovative companies. Students are accompanied by a Lab Master, a mentor, and an expert in innovation, who helps students achieve their goals. The work between the mentor and the students is a partnership. Mentors teach students to be persistent, independent, responsible, creative, work in a team, develop innovative solutions, and create the best possible solution for the client. During the project, students develop their talent, do what they enjoy, work on an actual project, communicate with the client, and find out how it works in practice.

7.2.6. Create & Govern (C&G)

Create & Govern is a competition for high school students that aims to empower young people (Create & Govern, 2022). The project promotes dialogue between young people and political science, sociology, and economics experts. Students create a fictitious political party in the program and learn to run it. They get a professional mentor who helps them form their political party. The whole program consists of five main steps (Create & Govern, 2022):

- Preparatory workshops and mentoring - Students prepare with practitioners to prepare for political party formation, campaigns, and possible governance in parliament;
- Establishment of a fictitious political party - Defining its line of thought, values, structure, program goals, and vision;
- Creating a real campaign - Voters from the real world decide on the success of fictitious parties. Students form a comprehensive political campaign with pre-election debates, where they defend the program goals of their political party;
- Elections - The resulting polls will decide the number of seats a political party has in a fictitious parliament. Based on the strength of political parties, the teams will form a coalition, opposition, or government breakdown;

- Election period - After the division of positions, the policy-making process begins, and both the coalition and the opposition are working on their policy proposals. These policy proposals are solutions to economic, social, and political problems. Proposals are created during several events - meetings organized every two weeks. Once created, the proposals will enter the simulated legislative process and negotiations.

The Create & Govern program introduces the government system and public policy to young people in secondary schools. They also teach them the skills of proper communication, presentation, argumentation, commitment, decision making, responsibility, problem-solving, and much more that politicians have to face.

7.2.7. *Show Your Talent (SYT)*

The Show Your Talent self-development program is intended for high school students directly at their high schools. Sixteen selected students complete the program at each school. Teachers are involved in the program as coordinators, who work with students on projects and participate in activities to build a partnership between teacher and student. Students will experience during the program (Show Your Talent, 2022):

- Two weekend trainings of experiential pedagogy;
- Four practical workshops;
- Mentoring program - Each student will receive a mentor who will help them in their life journey;
- Team project - Students in the team come up with different ideas, and the best one gets a chance to implement them. Each team gets an opportunity to organize their own project/event and help someone;
- Conference - At the end of the student program, there is a gala conference to show their achievements.

During the program, students engage in practical skills. They will learn to communicate and present, work in a team, gain organizational skills, experience in marketing, and learn how to develop their potential and gain opportunities in their area of interest.

7.2.8. “Akadémia veľkých diel” (AVD)

The Academy of Great Works is a leisure program for high school students. The program is implemented as a circle next to the school and led by teachers (Akadémia veľkých diel, 2022). The program develops young people through major literary, cinematographic, and artistic works. Students discuss the given works and form their opinions on topics of ethics, love, friendship, or moral dilemmas. The program teaches students to think critically, read with understanding, develop character, focus more efficiently, think about things in context, and build skills that will help students make life decisions, relationships, approaches to work, and their future. The program takes place during the school year in regular seminars. 7-15 students at the symposium discuss specific works and essential topics. The seminar consists of three main parts (Akadémia veľkých diel, 2022):

- Preparatory phase for the seminar - Reading, watching, or listening to the work in the online library;
- Independent reflection on the work and the issues it opens up - relationships, moral dilemmas, and more;
- Facilitated discussion with other students at the seminar.

7.2.9. Greenpower Slovakia (GP)

The Greenpower project is originally a British non-formal education project. A team of pupils/students faces a competitive challenge: Build your own, pilotable electric formula, and participate in the race (Greenpower Slovakia, 2022). The project develops students' soft skills (teamwork, complex problem solving, inclusion) and hard skills (technical), leads teachers to engage in project teaching, and connects schools through a network of mentors. The project is not just a competition. It can create a comprehensive educational ecosystem that organically complements education in schools and gives learning to mean (Greenpower Slovakia, 2022). Another benefit of the project is that it links the needs of employers and educators in terms of their ideas about the critical skills that students should acquire. The project

also brings together various other focuses on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics) skills. The Greenpower project focuses on preparing students for the labor market in the knowledge economy. It prepares them for an uncertain and rapidly changing world. It supports the tools of thinking that help to cope with the times.

7.2.10. Nexteria Leadership Academy (NLA)

Nexteria Leadership Academy is a 3-year development program for active young people in Bratislava and the surrounding area. It is an intensive leadership program for people who want to develop and be part of a committed community in Slovakia. In the program, students discover their strengths, clarify their future, and move forward and their surroundings. The program consists of three main modules over three years (Nexteria, 2022):

- Real projects in practice - Students work in top companies, non-profit organizations, and the public sector. Students work on real projects with professionals and gain practice;
- Experienced personal guide - Each student will receive a guide/mentor from the area in which they want to improve, get valuable advice, and learn from experience;
- Friendly community - A community of 300+ inspiring people who care about Slovakia. The community meets regularly on events, camp or kick-off;
- Professional courses and workshops - Students take classes and workshops with the best lecturers and practitioners. During the activities, the lecturers intensively develop soft skills and hard skills as project and time management, together with critical thinking and values;
- Tie-free discussions - Students learn about inspiring life and career stories of people in the discussions.

Nexteria Leadership Academy consists of three years of study (Nexteria, 2022): The first level is focused on self-knowledge and self-confidence. During this level, students discover their strengths, develop emotional agility, define priorities and break

down prejudices. The second level is focused on management and leadership. Students at this level learn how to work with others, communicate with different people, lead a team of people and be a natural leader, manage a project, present it, and be enterprising in what students enjoy. The third level focuses on students' own contribution through creating their projects. This level teaches students how to help others, be beneficial to society, pass on knowledge, overcome obstacles and create a project with a social impact.

7.2.11. *Socrates Institute (SI)*

The Socrates Institute educates young people through an annual educational program (Sokratov inštitút, 2022). The program arose from the belief that it is possible to educate practically and for real life. Educated, outlooked, and enthusiastic people can change their villages and towns (Sokratov inštitút, 2022). The activities take place in the Zaježová Educational Center surrounded by nature. The lecturers are experts in art, literature, law, ecology, political science, and other fields. The program is based on four main pillars (Sokratov inštitút, 2022):

- Social Leadership - The program guides students to the values of service, courage, humility, respect, dialogue, innovation, and passion;
- Socrates project - Each student implements their project to learn practical skills and make fundamental changes in their community/municipality/city without the right to financial reward;
- Workshops - Students are educated in topics such as project logic, civic engagement, working with the media, alternative economic systems, public participation in the Slovak legal system, global education, or intercultural facilitation;
- Critical thinking - The Institute is named after the ancient philosopher Socrates. The aim is to cultivate dialogue and critical thinking in students.

7.3. How These Programs Develop Skills of the 21st Century?

These eleven non-formal education programs do not cover all development opportunities in this type of education. The programs were selected on the basis of complexity (focused on an intensive curriculum), duration (duration of six months to three years) and target group of programs (programs primarily intended for high school students or also for high school students). Based on the previous 21st century (OECD, 2019; Stauffer, 2021) skills definition, all of the above non-formal learning programs are developing these skills intensively. Some programs cover a wider range of 21st century skills and others focus in depth on the development of specific skills. According to qualitative interviews with the directors of these programs, from their websites and impact measurement materials, all eleven non-formal education programs have a high rate of development in the areas of flexibility, independence, responsibility and effectiveness (Table 2).

Programs that focus on project creation - I AMbitious Academy, Junior Achievement (Applied Economics Program), Open Lab, Green Power, Nexteria Leadership Academy or Socrates Institute highly develop skills such as creativity, problem-solving, teamwork or leadership (Table 2). Other programs focus on developing specific skills. The development of critical thinking is a key part of the program of the Slovak Debate Association, the “Akadémia veľkých diel” and the Socrates Institute (Table 2). The shift in digital skills is created by programs where technologies are the main part, such as creating applications in program Open Lab or building a technological tool in program Green Power (Table 2).

Programs such as DofE, I AMbitious Academy, Show Your Talent, Nexteria Leadership Academy and the Socrates Institute, which point to the need for volunteering and take the initiative in public affairs, strongly support the development of an engagement skill (Table 2). In addition to the skills of the 21st century, it is necessary to add the ability to ethics - defining differences in corruption and transparency and taking into account the ethical side of things. Because even though it

will have a society of capable young people with the necessary skills of this century, they need to think and act morally and ethically (Table 2). All of these organizations are placing increasing emphasis on the development of ethics. The Academy of Great Works has this skill most embedded in the curriculum (Table 2). The non-formal education programs presented strongly support the development of skills needed for today's personal and career life. They regularly innovate their curriculum according to the requirements of students or external stakeholders, which are schools, the private sector or the public sector.

Table 2: Development of the 21st century skills by non-formal educational programs in Slovakia

Note: Adapted from qualitative research, websites and impact measurement materials

	DofE	IA	JA	SDA	OL	C&G	SYT	AVD	GP	NLA	SI
Problem-solving	x	xxx	xxx	x	xxx	xx	xx	x	xxx	xxx	xxx
Creativity	x	xxx	xxx	x	xx	xxx	xxx	x	xxx	xxx	xxx
Collaboration	x	xxx	xxx	xxx	xx	xxx	xx	x	xxx	xxx	xx
Critical thinking	x	xx	x	xxx	x	xx	x	xxx	x	xx	xxx
Digital literacy	x	x	x	x	xxx	x	x	x	xxx	x	x
Flexibility	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Independence	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Responsibility	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Leadership	xx	xxx	xxx	xx	xx	xxx	xx	x	xx	xxx	xx
Engagement	xxx	xxx	xx	x	x	x	xxx	x	x	xxx	xxx
Effectiveness	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
Ethics	x	xx	x	x	x	x	x	xxx	x	xx	xx
Social skills	xx	xxx	xxx	xxx	xx	xxx	xx	xx	xx	xxx	xxx
Well-being	xx	xx	x	x	x	x	x	xxx	x	xx	xxx

xxx - High rate of development; xx - Average rate of development; x - Low rate of development

8. How Can Traditional Formal Education Learn From Non-formal Education?

Non-formal education programs in Slovakia positively impact the development of young people in personal and career growth. The OECD recognizes that non-formal education is an alternative to formal education. Both forms of education should complement each other to meet the needs of 21st-century knowledge economies and open societies (OECD, 2022). In 2019, IUVENTA conducted a survey that mapped views on the benefits of non-formal education for young people. The survey found that up to 47% of young people helped to take part in non-formal education to get a job, and up to 49% of employers were interested in the non - formal education at the job interview (RMS, 2019). Participation in non-formal education programs alone gives young people confidence in future careers and employment (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021).

The Youth Council of Slovakia and the Czech Republic found that non-formal education programs still develop young people in the areas of 1. self-confidence – belief that "I can achieve goals," 2. interpersonal trust, 3. democratic and civic thinking – orientation in social events, functioning of institutions, state, and democracy as such or in 4. building social and cultural capital – greater involvement in cultural events or out-of-school education (Rada mládeže Slovenska, 2021). The survey also found that non-formal education programs and youth organizations significantly impact the development of moral values among young people (Rada mládeže Slovenska, 2021). For example, program participants perceive the importance of ambition to gain success or respect, not power or wealth. They also emphasize complying with laws and regulations; they care more about helping others, reliability, and loyalty. They also consider tolerance and ecology more important (Rada mládeže Slovenska, 2021).

Nemcová & Šolcová (2020) emphasize that children and young people acquire much knowledge in formal education but often have much less room to develop the skills, abilities, competencies, and attitudes necessary for successful employment and life, which allows non-formal education. However, much of the form and content of non-formal education can be taken over by formal education. Martin Mojzeš, program leader of the 3-year Nexteria Leadership Academy program, and Miloš Ondrášik, director of The Duke of Edinburgh, say that there is no need to divide formal and non-formal education at all (Mojzeš & Ondrášik, personal interview, 2021). "The only difference is in the certificate. Everything else could be identical and not create artificial barriers" (Mojzeš, personal interview, November 25, 2021). Even today, there are many successful formal education schools in Slovakia, which have understood that the more they include non-formal education into formal education, the more they will develop the necessary competencies of young people and increase their internal motivation to learn (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021).

Classical formal education in Slovakia should take over from non-formal education:

- Autonomy and timeliness - The school should make more independent decisions about the learning process of its students the faster it can respond to the needs of real-life and the labor market (Kuruc, personal interview, November 16, 2021);
- Linking with practice - One option is to include real examples from practice (Lenčo, personal interview, December 3, 2021), and the other is to create specific projects in which students memorize the curriculum, not only learn the theory but in addition to practice also acquire other skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, project management or leadership (Kiss, personal interview, December 10, 2021);
- Personalization & strengths development - It is necessary to develop the potential and specific strengths of the individual (Brestovanský, personal interview, December 2, 2021). "A child cannot be excellent in everything and should not be criticized for not being good, but supported by being good" (Hipš, personal interview, November 15, 2021);
- Informal environment - Just as the workspace changes to coworking space, so does the school. From a classical session created for frontal teaching, where

the teacher is the center of teaching, the class layout should now focus more on the student by creating a more flexible and creative space where the student feels good and motivated (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021);

- Feedback culture - As in non-formal education, a feedback culture should be set up in formal education, where students and teachers receive constant positive, negative, but most importantly constructive feedback (Kiss, personal interview, December 10, 2021). It is also related to building trust and creating a safe environment for students and teachers.
- Peer-to-peer learning - The teacher and the student have a partnership, not a hierarchical-superior relationship. The teacher (in non-formal education, lecturer, facilitator, or youth worker) accompanies the students and explains the theory to them, but the students themselves are interactively involved in the educational process. In a peer-to-peer relationship, they build trust and a secure environment (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021);
- Student participation - Students enter the culture and process of school organization (Lizák, personal interview, November 16, 2021). They have the space to express their opinions and get involved. Their relevant ideas are heard and implemented – they can create an active 21st century school for their development (Gallová Kriglová, personal interview, November 25, 2021);
- Interactivity & experiential learning - Teachers teach interactively and use the model of experiential learning. During the class, students try out theory through activities where they are actors (Vargová, personal interview, November 18, 2021);
- Value education - The school not only develops knowledge and skills but also develops the character, future direction (life goals and personal vision), and values of students (Kleskeň, personal interview, November 24, 2021);
- Start with why - Students know why they are learning the subject, what it will be powered on, and what it will bring them in the future before they start learning it. Thanks to this, they are motivated from the beginning and see meaning in demanding subjects (Kleskeň, personal interview, November 24, 2021);
- School is not a competition - The learning process is more focused on teamwork, feedback, learning from mistakes than on competition rivalry, who

has how many units and who got a five (Gallová Kriglová, personal interview, November 25, 2021);

- Internal motivation - Allow learning at own pace and what students are interested in. In school, students find motivation and joy (Ježík, personal interview, November 5, 2021);
- The need to make decisions - The school leads students to independence and responsibility by not giving students orders but giving them opportunities and leaving some decision-making to them (Feřtek, personal interview, December 16, 2021).

There are many quality examples of formal and non-formal education in Slovakia. Many innovative formal education schools use the methodology of the above examples, which are now part of primarily non-formal education. Non-formal education has a positive impact on formal education, and both forms can learn a lot from each other. According to the teacher and innovator in education, Martin Kuruc (2018), a good school means teachers with an open mind. Schools should have more autonomy, free-thinking principals who want to carry free-thinking deputies and teachers. Every school should have its own story. Our students are just a reflection of the environment in which they try to exist (Hipš, 2018).

9. Conclusion

Does non-formal education positively affect a student's quality in the sense of 21st-century skills, professional or academic success after school ends? Yes, a person who completes non-formal education during high school gains skills of the 21. century, and has a greater predisposition to apply in the labor market or get into a quality university. The bachelor thesis's primary research question and hypothesis were defined. The bachelor thesis verified the hypothesis with a positive result.

Non-formal education programs in Slovakia significantly develop young people in the areas of:

- 21st-century skills - Graduates of non-formal education programs have better-acquired skills that are needed in practice, such as problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, digital literacy, flexibility, independence, responsibility, leadership, engagement, effectiveness, social skills, and well-being;
- Gaining practice - Selected non-formal education programs that develop primarily high school students (or even high school students at Nexteria Leadership Academy and Socrates Institute) through a comprehensive program that develops students through real hands-on experience as:
 - Creating own project/organization;
 - Creating a project in another organization - real experience as it works in a well-established environment;
 - Internship;
 - Shadowing program;
 - Experiential education through simulated activities from practice;
- Personal development - Through non-formal learning, young people are better able to define clear goals, vision, and direction through curriculum personalization, program opportunities, a broad and engaged community, and personal development learning activities such as defining strengths, personal vision, and others;

- Character development - Non-formal education programs do not develop students only theoretically or practically. They also focus on developing the young person's values, character, and ethics. They educate committed people who want to do something extra beyond formal education and develop their character traits.

Non-formal education in Slovakia has a long way to go before its components - form and content- are incorporated into general formal education and thus make it more innovative, up-to-date, motivating, more autonomous, more creative, personalized, resilient, and more practical. Quality non-formal education programs (not only those defined in detail in the bachelor's thesis) are already in Slovakia today. They develop young people, help them get to better schools, find a good job or have the skills that their future careers and personal lives require. However, the problem is that these programs are not scaled throughout Slovakia or aimed at all groups of young people. They often accept only a specific target group, a limited number of students. They are deployed in schools interested in such opportunities and therefore not accessible to all. One of the goals in the future of education in Slovakia should be scaling these programs and non-profit organizations throughout Slovakia so that every student can grow and develop. On the other hand, formal education (apart from schools that already have such access today) should incorporate certain parts of non-formal education nationwide, making it immediately available to all children in Slovakia.

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Resumé

Bakalárska práca približuje vplyv programov neformálneho vzdelávania na Slovensku. Výskumná otázka práce definuje či neformálne vzdelávanie má pozitívny dopad na kvalitu študentov v pohľadu rozvoja zručností 21. storočia a prípravy na akademický či profesijný život po strednej škole. Overenie hypotézy potvrdilo, že študent, ktorý absolvuje program neformálneho vzdelávania popri strednej škole nadobudne viac zručností 21. storočia a má lepšie predispozície dostať sa na kvalitnejšiu vysokú školu, či nájsť si lepšie pracovné uplatnenie.

Prvá kapitola bakalárskej práce vysvetľuje čo je to neformálne vzdelávanie cez medzinárodne ustálené termíny a porovnáva ho s formálnym či informálnym vzdelávaním. Podľa Steinberga a Kincheloe (1998) je neformálne vzdelávanie plánované dobrovoľné a neštruktúrované vzdelávanie. Učebné osnovy sú flexibilné a rozvíjajú potrebné kompetencie a zručnosti jednotlivca. V neformálnom vzdelávaní sa učitelia stávajú facilitátormi a spoluúčiacimi sa (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998). Rada Európy definuje neformálne vzdelávanie ako dobrovoľné, identifikuje celý rad aktivít ako je práca s mládežou, mládežnícke kluby, športové zväzy, dobrovoľnícka služba, školenia a mnohé ďalšie aktivity a v neposlednom rade poukazuje na flexibilitu v učebných osnovách či voliteľné absolvovanie s certifikátmi (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Od roku 2000 je neformálne vzdelávanie súčasťou strategických dokumentov Európskej únie v rámci celoživotného vzdelávania (Pešek et al., 2020, s. 20). Rada Európy navrhuje integráciu prvkov neformálneho vzdelávania do reforiem formálneho vzdelávania (Bois-Reymond, 2003). Tento cieľ je založený na dlhoročnej praxi silného vplyvu neformálneho vzdelávania v škandinávskych krajinách a Nemecku (Bois-Reymond, 2003). V roku 2008 The Education Policy and Data Center uviedlo, že neformálne vzdelávanie je nevyhnutným doplnkom formálneho vzdelávania (Education policy and data center, 2008, s. 1).

Neformálne vzdelávanie má množstvo benefitov pre rozvoj ľudí. V prvom rade rozvíja zručnosti 21. storočia ako kreativitu, spoluprácu, kritické myslenie,

zodpovednosť, samostatnosť, angažovanosť, riešenie problémov, komunikáciu, prácu s emóciami, líderstvo či well-being. V druhom rade pripravuje mladých ľudí na prax cez skúsenosti na reálnych projektoch či v reálnych organizáciách – tvorba vlastných projektov, práca na projektoch v organizáciách (študenti môžu spoznať ako funguje etablovaná organizácia), možnosť stáže, programy tieňovania (shadowing programs) v organizáciách či cez zážitkové aktivity, ktoré simulujú realitu. Vďaka skúsenostiam a zručnostiam 21. storočia sú mladí ľudia lepšie pripravení na ich budúcu kariéru a trh práce. V treťom rade programy neformálneho vzdelávania rozvíjajú charakter a hodnoty mladých ľudí s cieľom vychovávať angažovaných a etickú generáciu ľudí. Zároveň intenzívne smerujú študenta a pomáhajú mu nájsť svoje budúce uplatnenie v akademickom a profesijnom aspekte cez aktivity zamerané na osobnostný rozvoj, príležitosti, komunitu angažovaných ľudí a reálne skúsenosti. Hoci neformálne vzdelávanie má množstvo benefitov, jeho najväčšia slabosť je škálovateľnosť a dostupnosť pre všetkých. Na Slovensku väčšinu kvalitných programov neformálneho vzdelávania pokrýva neziskový sektor, ktorí nemá finančnú ani ľudskú kapacitu na okamžitý rozvoj programov pre všetkých mladých ľudí na Slovensku. Podľa OECD by prístup k neformálnemu vzdelávaniu mali mať všetci bez ohľadu na demografické a sociálno-ekonomické pomery (OECD, 2011).

Ďalšia kapitola sa zameriava na historický vývoj vzdelávania v Európe a následne špecificky na dnešnom území Slovenska. Formálne vzdelávanie dnes definujeme ako vzdelanie, ktoré je legislatívne zakotvené, každý má naň právo, má stanovený učebný plán, kvalifikovaných učiteľov a na konci študent získa diplom alebo titul. Neformálne vzdelávanie je na druhej strane dobrovoľné, nemá presne stanovené osnovy, je určené pre určitý počet ľudí, nemusí mať kvalifikovaných trénerov, ani byť ukončené certifikátom. Paradoxom však je, že keď sa pozrieme hlbšie do histórie vzdelávania, čo dnes považujeme za neformálne vzdelávanie, v histórii to bolo v podstate formálne vzdelávanie. Z historického hľadiska neformálne a informálne vzdelávanie existovalo pred formálnym vzdelávaním. Až v 16. storočí sa vzdelávanie začalo formalizovať do podoby, akú poznáme formálne vzdelávanie dnes (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, s. 50). Obdobie osvietenstva zaviedlo povinnú školskú dochádzku. Bolo to aj obdobie mnohých inovatívnych zmien v školstve, ktoré využívame dodnes. John Locke prišiel so známym konceptom empirizmu. Chcel, aby ľudia používali rozum a mali svoje vlastné názory, nielen replikovali názory autorít (John W. Yolton

& Jean S. Yolton, 1989). Panovníci však chceli vzdelaných občanov, ale aj poslušných.

V roku 1774 nariadila Mária Terézia Všeobecný školský poriadok (Feřtek, 2015, s. 15). Povinná školská dochádzka pre vtedajšie Rakúsko-Uhorsko platila až od roku 1805. Vzdelávanie prebiehalo frontálnou formou. Učiteľ bol vedomostnou autoritou, ktorá poskytovala informácie svojim študentom. Žiaci sa aktívne nezapájali do vyučovania, využívalo sa primárne memorovanie. Miera gramotnosti obyvateľstva sa výrazne zvýšila. Negramotnosť u ľudí sa stala skôr vzácnosťou. V čase, keď vznikla povinná školská dochádzka a vzdelávanie nebolo len príležitosťou pre prominentov, začali vznikať prvé mládežnícke organizácie neformálneho vzdelávania. Vznikol skauting, ktorý funguje dodnes, ale aj ďalšie kresťanské združenia (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, s. 52). 20. storočie, známe ako storočie dvoch najväčších vojen sveta, nevyhnutne potrebovalo vzdelaných ľudí. Spoločnosť sa potrebovala spamätať z tragédie vojny a krajiny potrebovali pokrok kvôli hospodárskemu rastu. Ako poznamenáva Feřtek, v polovici 20. storočia malo na našom území 83 % obyvateľov len základné vzdelanie (Feřtek, 2015, s. 16). Z dnešného pohľadu sa počet môže zdať malý, no v porovnaní s predchádzajúcimi obdobiami je to pre ľudskú populáciu veľký krok vpred.

Vznikli mnohé revolučné prúdy školstva, kde vzdelávanie bolo zamerané na potreby dieťaťa a nie na potreby štátu či výchovu budúcich pracujúcich. Francis W. Parker implementoval myšlienky Heinricha Pestalozziho o zameraní sa na dieťa a jeho individualitu (Pestalozzi a spol., 1989). John Dewey vytvoril princíp Learning by doing (Nemcová & Šolcová, 2020, s. 53). Dnes už známa Maria Montessori vyvinula metódu samostatnosti pri objavovaní dieťaťa – dieťa by malo samo spoznávať svet, rozvíjať svoj mozog prostredníctvom interaktivity a nielen počúvať, čo môže a čo nie od rodiča či učiteľa (Montessori, 1969). Jedným z posledných míľnikov 20. storočia v modernom vzdelávaní bola kniha *Experiential Learning: Experience As The Source Of Learning And Development* od Davida A. Kolba (1984). Vo svojej teórii spojil zážitkové učenie s prácou s emóciami a následnou reflexiou. Tvrdil, že ak je študent aktívne zapojený do procesu učenia, má väčšiu vnútornú motiváciu učiť sa a tiež si lepšie zapamätá vedomosti a získa zručnosti (Kolb, 1984).

Tretia kapitola definuje vývoj neformálneho vzdelávania na Slovensku, jeho aktuálnu formu a obsah. Inovátori vo vzdelávaní v 20. storočí udali trendy súčasného neformálneho vzdelávania. Hoci ich víziou bolo zmeniť formálne vzdelávanie, väčšinu aspektov, ktoré zahrnuli do štúdia na Slovensku, možno vidieť predovšetkým v neformálnom vzdelávaní. Ide najmä o personalizáciu curricula, zahrnutie konštruktívnej spätnej väzby, experimentálne vzdelávanie, zmena hierarchickej role učiteľa na partnera, rozvoj vnútornej motivácie, prepájanie štúdia s praxou, mentoring, vzájomné generačné vzdelávanie (peer-to-peer learning), budovanie postojov a hodnôt či rozvoj zručností 21. storočia.

Od prvých organizácií, ktoré sa venujú neformálnemu vzdelávaniu na Slovensku, ubehlo už 200 rokov. Hoci každá organizácia alebo program neformálneho vzdelávania sa zameriava na inú cieľovú skupinu alebo región, vlastnosti formy a obsahu sú vo všetkých podobné. V práci je uvádzaný pohľad 16 odborníkov na neformálne vzdelávanie z akademickej obce a riaditeľov organizácií neformálneho vzdelávania. Podľa nich je dnešná forma programov neformálneho vzdelávania postavená najmä na dobrovoľnosti, neformálnom prostredí, v ktorom aktivity prebiehajú, vzdelávaní sa cez skúsenosti/ zážitok, praxi, flexibilitu, peer-to-peer rozvoju a postojov, inovatívnosti a aktuálnosti aktivít, personalizácii, rozvoji mäkkých zručností a hodnovom vzdelávaní. Obsah programov neformálneho vzdelávania je zameraný najmä na zapájanie interakcie, dynamiky, rozvíjanie silných stránok študenta, personalizácii obsahu. Zároveň sa prihliada na zapájanie expertov z rôznych oblastí do formátov ako individuálny mentoring, lektoring, diskusie, konzultovanie projektov či v rámci spolupráce s konkrétnymi organizáciami zo súkromného, verejného a neziskového sektora.

Nasledujúca časť práce poukazuje na rozdiely vo vzdelávaní na Slovensku. Slovensko zažilo v posledných desaťročiach výrazné demografické zmeny. Výsledky sčítania v roku 2021 naznačujú pokračujúci nárast starších ľudí a pokles populácie v nižších vekových skupinách (Štatistický úrad SR, 2022). Tento faktor ovplyvňuje procesy riadenia škôl a vyučovania v triedach. Na základe meraní World Population Review z roku 2021 sa Slovensko v rebríčku Education Ranking umiestnilo na 45. mieste.

Na základe zistení prieskumu „To dá rozum“ školstvo na Slovensku nedokáže dostatočne reagovať na rôznorodosť vzdelávacích potrieb detí. Negatívne vplyva na

niektoré skupiny detí z marginalizovaných skupín, sociálne slabších rodín či detí so zdravotným znevýhodnením (Hall a spol., 2019). Úroveň vzdelania na Slovensku sa dá najľahšie porovnať s medzinárodnými testami PISA. V poslednom meraní z roku 2018 Slovensko znížilo percento najlepších skupín v testovaní (OECD, 2018) - iba 5% v čítaní (priemer OECD je 9%), 11% v matematike (priemer OECD je tiež 11%) a 4 % vo vede (priemer OECD je 7 %). Znamená to, že tých najlepších mozgov máme stále menej a okrem výsledkov z matematiky sme hlboko pod priemerom OECD (OECD, 2018). Aj klíma na slovenských školách je pod priemerom OECD. Až 28 % študentov uviedlo, že boli šikanovaní aspoň niekoľkokrát do mesiaca (OECD, 2018). Napriek množstvu kvalitných a zanietých učiteľov má na Slovensku vnútornú motiváciu učiť sa len 6,8 % žiakov (Kuruc, osobný pohovor, 16.11.2021). Na základe prieskumu agentúry Trexima, vzdelávací systém na Slovensku nepripravuje ľudí na pracovný trh (Trexima, 2021). Ako najvýraznejšie negatívum škôl na Slovensku uvádzali mladí ľudia, že škola ich nepripraví na život v 21. storočí zručnosti, zamestnanie a riešenie konfliktov (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). Z dát vyplýva, že vzdelávací systém na Slovensku nereaguje dostatočne rýchlo na potreby transformácie trhu práce a integrácie zručností potrebných pre 21. storočie (z pohľadu mladých ľudí a zamestnávateľov). Taktiež z dát vychádza, že rozdiely v možnostiach štúdia a kariéry mladých ľudí od socioekonomicky slabších rodín a finančne zabezpečených rodín sú stále výrazné.

Predposledná kapitola sa pohráva detailne s definíciou zručností 21. storočia, ktoré neskôr skúma a porovnáva s jednotlivými programami neformálneho vzdelávania na Slovensku. V súčasnosti nie sú úlohou vzdelávania len teoretické a základné vedomosti, ale sú to zručnosti potrebné pre 21. storočie. OECD a Európska komisia (2019) definovali zručnosti 21. storočia podľa nosných bodov rozvoja krajín. Stauffer vytvorila detailnú analýzu týchto zručností: problem-solving, kreativita, spolupráca, kritické myslenie, digitálna gramotnosť, flexibilita, samostatnosť, zodpovednosť, líderstvo, angažovanosť, efektívnosť, sociálne zručnosti ako komunikácia a well-being (OECD, 2019; Stauffer, 2021).

Ďalšia časť popisuje prípadové štúdie jedenástich programov neformálneho vzdelávania na Slovensku. Na základe predchádzajúcej definície zručností 21. storočia (OECD, 2019; Stauffer, 2021) všetky uvedené programy neformálneho

vzdelávania tieto zručnosti intenzívne rozvíjajú. Podľa kvalitatívnych rozhovorov s riaditeľmi týchto programov, z ich webových stránok a materiálov na meranie dopadu má všetkých jedenásť programov neformálneho vzdelávania vysokú mieru rozvoja v oblastiach flexibility, nezávislosti, zodpovednosti a efektívnosti.

Programy, ktoré sa zameriavajú na tvorbu projektov – I AMbitious Academy, Junior Achievement (Program aplikovanej ekonómie), Open Lab, Green Power, Nexteria Leadership Academy alebo Sokratov Inštitút vysoko rozvíjajú zručnosti ako kreativita, riešenie problémov, tímová práca či líderstvo. Ďalšie programy sa zameriavajú na rozvoj špecifických zručností. Rozvoj kritického myslenia je kľúčovou súčasťou programu Slovenskej debatnej asociácie, Akadémie veľkých diel a Sokratovho inštitútu. Posun v digitálnych zručnostiach vytvárajú programy, v ktorých sú hlavnou súčasťou technológie, ako je vytváranie aplikácií v programe Open Lab alebo budovanie technologického nástroja v programe Green Power. Programy ako DoFE, I AMbitious Academy, Show Your Talent, Nexteria Leadership Academy a Socrates Institute, ktoré poukazujú na potrebu dobrovoľníctva a preberajú iniciatívu vo veciach verejných, výrazne podporujú rozvoj schopnosti angažovať sa. Programy neformálneho vzdelávania na Slovensku pozitívne ovplyvňujú rozvoj mladých ľudí v osobnostnom a kariérom raste. Samotná účasť v programoch neformálneho vzdelávania dáva mladým ľuďom dôveru v budúcu kariéru a zamestnanie (Gallová Kriglerová & Holka Chudžíková, 2021). Kvalitné programy neformálneho vzdelávania (nielen tie podrobne definované v bakalárskej práci) sú už dnes na Slovensku. Rozvíjajú mladých ľudí, pomáhajú im dostať sa na lepšie školy, nájsť si dobrú prácu alebo majú zručnosti, ktoré si ich budúca kariéra a osobný život vyžaduje. Problémom však je, že tieto programy nie sú škálované na celom území Slovenska a nie sú zamerané na všetky skupiny mladých ľudí. Často akceptujú len špecifickú cieľovú skupinu, obmedzený počet študentov. Sú rozmiestnené v školách, ktoré majú o takéto príležitosti záujem, a preto nie sú dostupné pre všetkých. Jedným z cieľov v budúcnosti vzdelávania na Slovensku by malo byť škálovanie týchto programov a neziskových organizácií po celom Slovensku tak, aby každý študent mohol rásť a rozvíjať sa. Na druhej strane, formálne vzdelávanie (okrem škôl, ktoré už dnes takýto prístup majú) by malo zahŕňať určité časti neformálneho vzdelávania na celoštátnej úrovni, aby bolo okamžite dostupné všetkým deťom na Slovensku.