

**MAJOR WORK DURING LAST TEN YEARS WHICH BEST  
ILLUSTRATES QUALIFICATIONS**

<b>Project Name:</b> Slovak Training Systems Project		<b>Country:</b> Slovak Republic
<b>Project Location Within Country:</b> Bratislava, Brezno, Piešťany		<b>Professional Staff Provided by ACCC:</b>
<b>Name of Client:</b> Funder: Canadian International Development Agency Partners: Slovak Institute for Vocational Education (SIOV) Pilot Schools: Brezno and Peistany Hotel Academies Hungary Ministry of Education		<b>No. of Staff:</b> 8 <b>No. of Person Months:</b> 19
<b>START DATE:</b> October 2000	<b>COMPLETION DATE:</b> March 2002	<b>Approximate Value of Services:</b> Cdn. \$360,000
<b>Name of Associated Firm(s), if any:</b>		<b>No. of Person-Months of professional staff provided by Associated Firm(s):</b> 0
<b>Name of Staff involved and functions performed:</b> David Harvey, Project Director Carrol Morris, Curricula Innovation Specialist Ken Sauder, Learning Materials Specialist JoAnn Rennick, Administrative Officer Jana Satkova, Field Officer		
<b>Detailed Narrative Description of Project and Services Provided:</b> <p>The project is divided into a number of interdependent components to achieve project goals and objectives.</p> <p>Project Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to assist private sector development and increase employment by strengthening the capacity of the Slovak educational systems to design and deliver vocational training programs that address the current and changing skill needs of employers</li> </ul> <p>Project Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop "demand driven" processes for the design of vocational training curricula</li> <li>to improve instruction of vocational training institutes through improved pedagogy and learning resources development processes</li> <li>increase regional cooperation in vocational training</li> </ul> <p>This project is assisting the development of a more employment focused secondary and post secondary vocational skills training system in the Slovak Republic. While employment within State Owned Enterprises (SOE) wane, the growing private sector is currently underserved by the Slovak training system due to an inability to match curricula to labour market demands – particularly in the small and medium sized enterprise sector.</p> <p>The project is developing nation-wide policy and procedures for liaison between secondary and post secondary training institutions and employers. An employer driven curricula innovation process ensures program graduate competencies match the local labour market demand. Capacity for local labour market analysis at an institutional level is also developed. SIOV oversees this process to ensure matching curricula to local needs and adherence to national standards.</p> <p>Capacity for designing and delivering student centered learning materials is also developed. Learning materials are customized for local relevance, focused on the transfer of specifically identified skills needed in the local labour market, and allowing students to progress at their own rate thus increasing student success rates.</p> <p>Under the former communist regime in the Slovak Republic, there was a strong link between employment and vocational training system. In fact, employers and trainers were often one in the same with State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) training secondary and post-secondary students for life-long employment within the associated SOEs.</p>		

The collapse of the command system initiated, in parallel with other Central and Eastern European countries, extensive structural unemployment within the Slovak economy, as employment options within the SOEs disappeared.

In the transition to a market-based economy, employment has been growing greatest (particularly among young people) within SMEs and large international venture companies. However to accommodate this transition to non-SOE employers, training institutions in Central and Eastern Europe need to undergo a process of radical change in order to establish a "demand-driven" vocational training system with these new employers.

In order to foster improved access to employment opportunities, the vocational training system in the Slovak republic will need to:

- minimize on-the-job training costs for employers at entry level positions through the design and delivery of publicly funded vocational curricula that meets the current and evolving needs of the sector;
- develop and certify employer-driven skill standards that adhere to regional and European integration requirements and will assist employers in identifying and hiring employees with appropriate skills;
- develop assessment strategies that will eliminate unnecessary instructional time, maintain skill standards, and vocational certification modes that will allow for continuous "life long learning"; and
- design and deliver instruction using a variety of media (print, video, internet, etc.) that will increase access to vocational training and facilitate student learning.

The project is to begin in September 2000 and run for eighteen months to March 2002. Through a series of surveys, workshops, a pilot project and study tours, new curricula design tools/methods will be introduced to Slovak education officials and an actual curriculum will be innovated as a pilot for eco-tourism related programs in hotel and gastronomy management in such a manner to target the needs of the SMEs in this sector. The principles learned during the course of this pilot will be transferable to other sectors of the economy.

The project is focused on small and medium sized private sector employers and youth as the ultimate beneficiaries of the project. In order to address the issue of chronic unemployment and distribute widely the benefits of a market driven economy, there must be growth in the small and medium sized enterprises in the Slovak Republic. Training, especially for youth, is seen a key tool in reforming the Slovak economy. This project will help the Slovak Ministry of Education to sustainably reform its secondary education system in order to properly address employment skill needs of small and medium sized enterprises.

The project will train Ministry and education and training institute staff on developing employer-driven curricula models, developing effective learning resources, and evaluating students based on employer-identified learning outcome needs. Developing curricula to serve many different employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, will be the cornerstone output of the project. This is of particular need in the Slovak Republic because, while recognizing the need for employer involvement in the education and training process, many educators have more academic backgrounds and are unsure of how to appropriately incorporate their interests as legitimate stakeholders in the training process.

Tourism related hotel and gastronomy management is identified as the pilot program. This sector was selected because tourism is a rapidly growing sector of the Slovak economy (particularly in the Tatra Mountain region and because this sector is dominated by small and medium sized enterprises – bed and breakfasts, guiding/touring operations, restaurants, etc. The potential for employment and self-employment in this sector is tremendous. Appropriately trained youth will be able to exploit new opportunities for employment and self-employment in this sector.

The project will adopt a practical "train the trainer" approach in project implementation. Trainees will be instructors and management from various training institutions in the Slovak Republic responsible for curricula innovation and the development of learning resources. Training will focus on "learning by doing" – that is innovation in curricula and learning resources will be taught not in an academic sense but through the innovation of real curricula and learning resources in a pilot area. This pilot program will determine the adaptive elements required for implementation in the Slovak context and allow for the transfer of the practical skills required by Slovak counterpart staff for replication of project activities in other subject areas.

The pilot area to be implemented by the project is hotel and gastronomy management by the Hotel Academies in Brezno and Piestany. The State Vocational Education Institute (SIOV) will oversee the pilot project and will be responsible for pilot program replication in other sectors upon the completion of the project. Most critically, the SIOV will be responsible for coordinating the input in the innovation process of all the various vital stakeholders in an employer-driven vocational training system – employers, policy makers, instructional staff, institutional management, students.

