

ENTERING THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN SLOVAKIA


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ABSTRACT

The article studies the current state of the teacher induction process in Slovakia, namely the prerequisites for entering the teaching profession. The focus of the current research is the following: the attractiveness of the teaching profession and its influence on the decision-making of future students of pedagogical major, teacher job satisfaction level, the proportion of education requirements for subject knowledge and teaching practice, availability of the profession, the assistance in the search for open positions and vacancies, probation period as a filter to the teaching occupation.

*The research **aims** to determine the problematic aspects of the transition period from student to teacher that need to be addressed to prevent early maladjustment and drop-out in the teaching profession.*

Methodology. *The research was carried out by applying theoretical and empirical methods. The data were obtained from novice school teachers having conducted an online survey using Google Forms with open and closed questions.*

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*The study's preliminary **results** revealed the social image of the teaching profession and components of its attractiveness for future students, problems with the ratio of academic and practical parts in teacher education, possible ways to enter the profession, and the obstacles of the process.*

*The conducted research allowed us to come to the following **conclusions**. As a result of the low social image of a teacher, Slovakia is facing a shortage in the profession. The substantial misbalance in initial teacher education in favor of academic knowledge and the absence of specific official requirements for practical experience has subsequences in the quality of school education and early teacher maladjustment. Implementing an open system in the teaching profession is a temporary solution that causes many concerns, especially with the introduction of short-term teachers with low standard requirements in teaching abilities.*

Lack of career help for new graduates-teachers throughout their job hunt may cause them to leave the education field. In this situation, adequate support of novice teachers becomes necessary, and the teacher induction program is a subject for future research.

KEYWORDS: Education Requirements, Initial Teacher Education, Job Satisfaction, Profession Attractiveness, Pre-Service Professional Orientation, Slovakia, Teaching Practice.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession undeniably and significantly impacts each person's life, family, and society. PISA ratings for Slovak pupils have decreased since 2009. Over time, their performance in science, and to a lesser extent in reading and mathematics, has shown a steadily declining trend and lag behind those of their peers in other OECD countries. Building a solid teaching workforce has been identified as one of the opportunities to strengthen the skills of the youth in Slovakia (OECD, 2020).

Scientists have studied various issues of becoming a teacher in Slovakia: the attractiveness of the profession (Perignéthová, 2019), teacher training (Bačová, & Popovičová, 2015), theory and practice integration (Rovňanová, 2016), the position of the beginning teacher, induction programs, teaching occupation (Krajčová, Cimermanová, 2013; Cabanová et al., 2022), existing and upcoming problems in the teaching profession

(Pupala, Kaščák, & Rehúš, 2020). The results of their work were used in this study to formulate some theoretical assumptions. Some international comparisons suggest possible improvements in initial teacher training and during the induction stage (OECD, 2020; TALIS, 2018, Davydovskaia et al., 2021).

The present study investigates the process of entering the teaching profession in Slovakia, particularly the requirements for initial teacher education, professional orientation, employment, and the beginning of a career. The empirical part of the study (conducted in the form of a questionnaire) investigated the level of early career support provided to teachers in Slovakia, especially at the employment stage. It presents the partial research results focused on the first step of becoming a teacher in Slovakia.

The research **aims** to identify the challenging components of the student-to-teacher transition period that must be

addressed to stop early maladjustment and drop-outs from the teaching profession. The main aim of the online survey was to verify the validity of the assumptions made during the theoretical analysis phase and provide some updated data to better understand the current processes at the stage of becoming a teacher in Slovakia.

METHODOLOGY

The article provides some preliminary results of the survey carried out as a component of a more extensive research project on the adaptation of beginning teachers in Slovakia. As a part of our four-month research conducted from April through July of 2022, the Google Forms questionnaire was sent to 2155 compulsory

schools (primary and lower secondary schools – ISCED 1, 2), and teachers with up to 5 years of experience were asked to participate.

Our current study examines 136 teachers' responses about some aspects of initial education (teaching practice), professional orientation, how they found their present workplace, and their current job satisfaction level. The whole questionnaire contained 32 questions (open and closed ones), 9 of which were used for the analysis in the present study.

Our research methodology included reviewing relevant studies and the empirical part in the form of an online survey. The geographical distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Profiles of the Respondents in Terms of Geographical Distribution (n=number of teachers)

Region (n)	Districts of Slovakia (n)	
Bratislavský (16)	Bratislava I-V (9)	Pezinok (2)
	Malacky (4)	Senec (1)
Trnavský (14)	Dunajská Streda (3)	Piešťany (3)
	Galanta (3)	Senica (1)
	Hlohovec (1)	Trnava (3)
Trenčiansky (10)	Bánovce nad Bebravou (1)	Prievidza (4)
	Ilava (1)	Trenčín (2)
	Partizánske (2)	
Nitriansky (19)	Komárno (1)	Nové Zámky (1)
	Levice (3)	Topoľčany (8)
	Nitra (4)	Zlaté Moravce (2)
Žilinský (11)	Dolný Kubín (1)	Námestovo (2)
	Kysucké Nové Mesto (1)	Tvrdošín (1)
	Liptovský Mikuláš (1)	Žilina (3)
	Martin (2)	
Banskobystrický (17)	Banská Bystrica (1)	Krupina (1)
	Brezno (6)	Lučenec (1)
	Banská Štiavnica (3)	Rimavská Sobota (2)
	Detva (2)	Žiar nad Hronom (1)
Prešovský (20)	Humenné (2)	Sabinov (2)
	Kežmarok (3)	Svidník (1)
	Poprad (4)	Vranov nad Topľou (7)
	Prešov (1)	
Košický (29)	Gelnica (3)	Rožňava (3)
	Košice I-IV (7)	Sobrance (1)
	Košice-okolie (5)	Spišská Nová Ves (7)
	Michalovce (3)	

The survey results covered all eight regions and 58 out of 79 districts in Slovakia (Map of districts of the SR, n.d.).

For better visualizing the research results, circle graphs are provided as screenshots from the summary of our Google Forms responses. Some respondents left comments in the free writing space of the questionnaire. They will also be provided to support the ideas of the research.

RESULTS

The path to teaching typically starts from a conscious choice of a higher education applicant. We believe that the attractiveness of the teaching profession plays an essential part in the decision-making stage and is directly connected to career choice motivation. European Commission defines the attractiveness of the teaching profession as “a set of characteristics of this profession that makes it relatively attractive to skilled candidates with respect to other professions requiring the same level of qualification and that encourage competent teachers to stay in the profession” (European Commission, 2014, p.13).

Main factors defining the attractiveness of the teaching profession are as follows: the quality of information about the teaching profession (career guidance), salaries and other financial stimuli, material working conditions, recruiting methods (conditions and criteria), the quality of initial teacher education, early-career support (induction), continuous professional development, recruiting, image-building campaigns, help for teachers in difficulty, qualitative human resource management (assignment and assessment), and responsibilities of teachers. The following factors mentioned that are more difficult to influence through policy are: social status and

prestige of teachers and pupil/teacher ratio (European Commission, 2014, p. 14-19).

According to a Focus poll, the main reasons why most students decide not to become teachers in Slovakia are low salaries (58%), low social status, the bad image of the teaching profession (31%), and too much stress (26%). The least frequent reasons were the great diversity of students in the class (6%) and insufficient recognition of the efforts by the school – 6% (Perignáthová, 2019, p. 8).

The state of the teaching profession in Slovakia causes concern: “The attractiveness of the teaching profession remains limited, and teacher training lacks quality. Following salary increases in 2018-2020, the Ministry of Education estimates that teachers in public institutions will earn 73% of the average salary of other full-time employees with tertiary education. This is still far below the 2019 EU-23 average for teachers” (European Commission, 2020).

As a result, due to the low social status of the teaching profession and the low pay, fewer students choose to enroll in teaching study programs. As we observe, there are some problems at the stage of entering the Initial Teacher Education (ITE): “The lack of students’ interest and the pressure of competing faculties without entrance examinations is gradually changing the selection of quality candidates by prerequisites for the study into recruitment, and teacher education is getting into serious problems in Slovakia” (Kosová, & Porubský, 2019, p. 249).

As our survey was conducted among professionals who have already chosen teaching as their profession, we wanted to determine their level of well-being. Question 29 of our survey was devoted to the level of job satisfaction by teachers.

The question asked, “Are you satisfied with your job now?”. We received the following responses: completely satisfied – 31.6%, rather yes than not – 51.5%, not satisfied, but I do not plan to quit – 9.6%; not satisfied, I am thinking about moving to

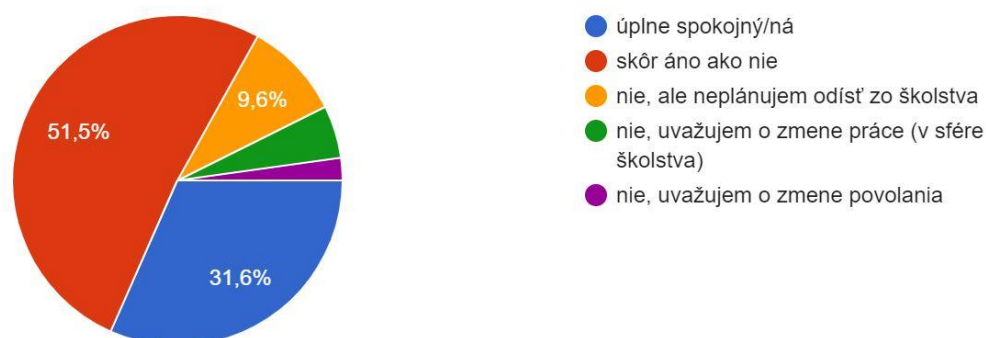
another job (in the education field) – 5.1%; not satisfied, I am thinking of changing my profession – 2.2% (see Fig. 1). In total, there are 83.1% of positive responses, and 16.9% of negative ones.

Figure 1

Job Satisfaction Level

29. Ste teraz spokojný/ná so svojou prácou?

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According to Mariana Cabanová, “the most common positive attributes related to job satisfaction include good relationships among the teaching staff, the creative nature of their work, the possibility of working with children and young people and the feeling of a job well done. Negative attributes leading to job dissatisfaction include low salaries, low social status, students’ unruliness and misbehavior, parents’ reluctance to cooperate in education, a feeling of mental strain, and lack of free time” (Cabanová et al., 2022, p.2527). All the above factors influence teachers’ well-being and, as a result, their retention rate in the profession.

In Slovakia, a university education is required to become a teacher. The universities offer three levels of higher education: Bachelor’s (generally three years), Master’s or Technical Engineer (two years), and Doctorate – PhD (three years).

There are also colleges specialized in pedagogy that train their graduates to teach at the preschool or primary level.

ITE’s minimum qualification level to become a teacher in a lower secondary school in Slovakia is ISCED 7 (Master’s degree). Examining the current state of teacher development, it has become apparent that it has the highest number of teachers with a Master’s degree as the highest level of formal education completed among European Union countries – 96.2% (European Commission, 2021, p. 65).

According to the Act on Teaching Staff and Professional Staff (2009), candidates for the teaching profession at the elementary and secondary school levels must complete a Master’s degree in a teacher preparation program.

As Slovak researchers explain: “Under the influence by political discussions on

whether a bachelor study program is sufficient enough for teachers; in defense of the master's education requirement to the profession, the professional profile development – disciplinary didactics and teaching practice were included only in the two-year master's study program" (Kosová, & Porubský, 2019, p. 249). Thus, graduates with a Bachelor's degree are knowledgeable about their field but are not eligible to work as full-time teachers. To enter the teaching profession, they must continue to the Master's level.

Currently, 34 faculties in Slovakia provide teaching programs, including faculties of education, arts, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, physics, physical education, theology, technology, and economics. Kosová and Porubský describe the current situation with teacher education programs: "The satisfactory developments of educational-psychological knowledge, didactic competencies, and/or professional practical training have had no proper criteria for evaluating a teaching program. Due to the orientation, it is understandable that the underestimation of the profiling didactic and practical training results in programs that are neither the same character nor level" (Kosová, & Porubský, 2019, p. 250).

The higher education reform has not changed ITE in Slovakia so far. The descriptions of teaching courses serve as the sole "standard" for creating teacher study programs because no standard for the teaching profession has been adopted yet. However, in 2018, the proportion of lower secondary education teachers who have completed a formal education or training program that includes teaching content, pedagogy, and classroom practice was estimated at 76.5%, higher than the EU average – 68.8% (European Commission, 2021, p. 71).

Currently, the entire model of postgraduate teacher education is changing. In line with standard teacher training at universities, graduates from other majors (non-pedagogical Master's degrees) can obtain teaching qualifications. In the latter case, a supplementary pedagogical study (Doplňujúce pedagogické štúdium – DPŠ) is required. DPŠ has 200 hours (usually two years) of study with in-school placements – a minimum of 40 hours.

In 2019, the law on qualifications was changed to allow entities directly under the control of the Ministry of education to offer teacher training programs (Act No. 138/2019 Coll.). Even though this option is less widespread, it causes concerns because this inclusiveness in the profession has pros and cons. As some researchers state, "the issue here is, of course, the de-professionalization of teaching" (Pupala, Kaščák, & Rehúš, 2020, p. 105).

One of the comments received during our survey supports the opinion: "I would appreciate having the opportunity to find out [during pre-service studies] what the 'pitfalls' of the teaching profession are and what you need to think about in advance. Since I only did a supplementary pedagogical study, I would have expected better education in pedagogy and didactics. I had the opportunity to learn the didactics at the department only briefly, and I wish they required continuous practice as in a full-time study. I would also appreciate psychological support for beginning teachers".

In contrast with its high academic level of education requirements, practical training is still considered insufficient at high educational establishments in Slovakia. In order to find out the state of pre-graduate training, we asked the teachers if they had

a teaching practice at school before graduation from an educational institution (Question 7) and how long it continued in total (Question 8 – for those who answered positively to the previous question). According to the results, 88.2% (n=120) of the respondents stated having the teaching practice, and 11.8% (n=16) replied negatively (see Fig. 2). As to the duration of it, 55% (n=66) of teachers stated it lasted up to one month, and 45% (n=54) replied that it continued longer. As

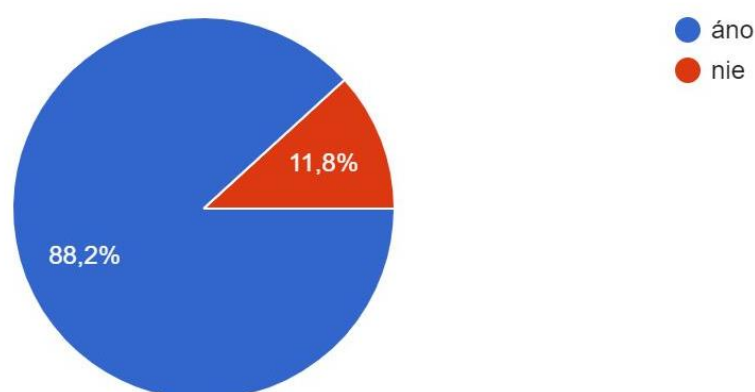
mentioned, the Master level focuses mainly on the methodology of a particular subject and practice. For instance, at the University of Prešov, the teaching practice is carried out in two phases: two weeks (16 lessons of teaching) during the summer term in the 1st year of a Master's degree and five weeks (16 and 32 lessons) of teaching practice divided into winter and summer term in the 2nd year (Bačová, & Popovičová, 2015, p. 14).

Figure 2

The State of Pre-Graduate Practical Training

7. Mali ste na univerzite pedagogickú prax pred dokončením vysokoškolského vzdelania?

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Among the comments to our survey, one emphasized the insufficiency of practical training provided in the universities: "The university does not prepare teachers enough. Unless the situation changes, the problems of beginning teachers will never end. Focusing only on theoretical knowledge is not enough. I currently participate in a two-year course abroad where we are given the theory and prepare practice materials".

In her study Lenka Rovňanová supports the abovementioned opinion that practical training in Slovakia is insufficient:

"all the criticism of professional didactic-practical training in various discourses can be considered eligible. Current practical training is too academic, insufficiently focused on key professional competencies, which a teacher can acquire only through practical experience" (Rovňanová, 2016, p. 121).

There is no mention of the requirement to participate in teaching practice or its role in teacher training on the legislative level, even though descriptions of teacher training courses list the practical abilities a graduate must possess. A practical

curriculum component enables students to get real-world experience before becoming instructors. They are trained in didactics and participate in practical activities: observations, demonstrations, mentoring, and teaching practice.

When the middle portion in EU countries is about 30%, Slovakia has 5-8% of the total teacher training time devoted to practice. Depending on the teaching program, it varies from 15% to 5% of the study time (Kosová, & Porubský, 2019, p. 252). Thus, Slovakia is among the countries with less practical training in teacher education.

Almost all EU education systems require professional training to be included in ITE programs. Most education systems also regulate a minimum duration of professional training, while in 11 education systems (including Slovakia), the share of professional training is decided by ITE institutions themselves.

One of the recommendations for enhancing the practical aspects of curricula in initial teacher training in Slovakia is to legislate a minimum portion of practical training for student teachers at higher educational establishments. There should be a minimum requirement for the number of credits or hours of practical experience that pedagogical faculties offering basic teacher education must include in their curricula. It would help future teachers connect theory and practice to improve their readiness concerning necessary teaching competencies (OECD, 2020).

Some researchers are concerned about the open system in obtaining teacher qualifications. Branislav Pupala points out that "in Slovakia, the route to alternative

teacher training qualifications is now more varied than ever. We will be seeing even greater variation in the qualification pathways taken by teaching staff" (Pupala, Kaščák, & Rehúš, 2020, p. 106).

This method's number of qualified teachers is still small among the EU countries. According to the TALIS 2018, only 4.4 % are qualified through fast-track or specialized teacher education programs (European Commission, 2021, p. 74).

Because of upcoming teacher shortages faced by Slovakia, it can be one of the possible solutions that will temporarily help fill vacant workplaces. Nevertheless, it will not change the state of the teaching profession for the better in the long term. Without creating the necessary level of healthy competitiveness, supported by a decent salary and high social status, the quality of teaching will become an issue.

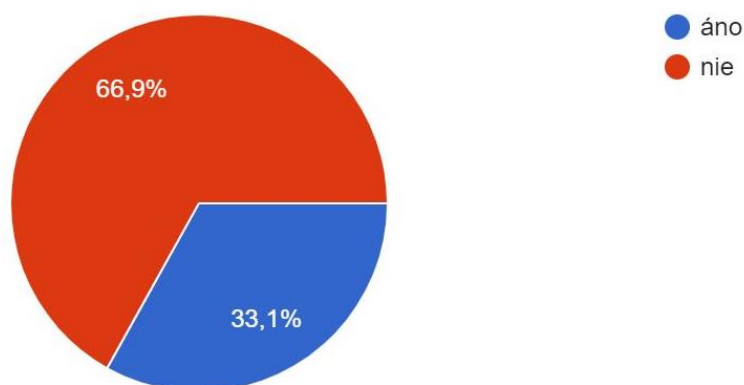
Selection of the job we want to occupy during our professional life is complicated. In the era of a global information society, when the internet has simplified the search for a future job position, many universities put down their role in the process. Professional orientation and career guidance are often neglected by higher educational establishments nowadays. In our survey, we concentrated mainly on the issue of providing information about a possible working place.

To Question 9, "Have you received professional information about future employment opportunities at the place of study?" we received 66.9% (n=91) of negative responses and only 33.1% (n=45) of positive ones (see Fig. 3).

Figure 3*Receiving the Labor Market Information at the Teacher Training Establishments*

9. Mali ste k dispozícii informácie o budúcich pracovných príležitostiach v mieste štúdia? (pre tých, ktorí odpovedali nie - na otázku 11)

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Responses to Question 10 gave us some understanding of the forms of providing information on future job places. Most respondents got the information during lectures 36.2% (n=17), the second in number are various advertisements – 25.5% (n=12), and 19.1% (n=9) got the information through the leaflets. Other variants were mentioned in a free writing space: in the Facebook group of the study department – 6.7% (n=3), from lecturers at the university – 4.4% (n=2), e-mail letters – 2.2% (n=1) and on the bulletin board of the university – 2.2% (n=1).

One-third of the teachers answered that they did not receive the job market information at the place of study and therefore had to look for it independently. Receiving good professional information leads to a conscious decision and benefits not only the beginning teacher but the employer and the quality of education. Moreover, insufficient career support can

create the tension of possible maladjustment in the pre-service stage.

In order to understand the current situation for the job search process, we asked the teachers how they found their present job. The results are shown in Table 2.

Some of the variants given in a free writing space of the questionnaire were further categorized and added to the provided closed-ended ones because they generally described the same mediator. For example, the responses “I addressed the school principal directly” and “I sent my resume to each school” were counted as “Personal application for the desired school”. The response “Via the Internet” was counted as “Responding to the job announcement”, and “The school principal invited me for the interview on my friend’s recommendation” was counted as “On friend’s recommendation”.

Table 2*The Mediators for a Job Search in the Teaching Profession*

Type of mediators (closed-ended variants)	%	n
Personal application for the desired school	43.4%	59
Responding to the job announcement	27.2%	37
On a friend's recommendation	24.3%	33
Teachers' variants of responses (provided in a free writing space)	%	n
Labor Office	0.7%	1
The program "Teach for Slovakia".	0.7%	1
I was invited because of the lack of teachers at the secondary school	0.7%	1
I did an internship at school, where I later got a position	0.7%	1
I received an invitation from the principal of the school	0.7%	1
The representative of the kindergarten where I completed my graduate internship approached me about a job opportunity	0.7%	1
After the termination of my work contract in the kindergarten, one mother invited me to work as an assistant in an elementary school	0.7%	1

Some of the variants given in a free writing space of the questionnaire were further categorized and added to the provided closed-ended ones because they generally described the same mediator. For example, the responses "I addressed the school principal directly" and "I sent my resume to each school" were counted as "Personal application for the desired school". The response "Via the Internet" was counted as "Responding to the job announcement", and "The school principal invited me for the interview on my friend's recommendation" was counted as "On friend's recommendation".

As it became clear from the questionnaire results, future teachers mostly search for the job themselves and find the information online. Many Internet resources are available, which can help them research different job options. Among those mentioned by the respondents were online portals [edujobs.sk](https://www.edujobs.sk) (<https://www.edujobs.sk/>), [profesia.sk](https://www.profesia.sk) and Teach for Slovakia project.

An online portal, [edujobs.sk](https://www.edujobs.sk) (<https://www.edujobs.sk/>), collects information on education vacancies in

Slovakia. The schools are not obliged to advertise on this website, so it does not provide the total number of job openings.

Another online platform, "Teach for Slovakia", is somewhat debatable because it caused the legitimization of temporary teachers. Teach for Slovakia has been a part of the Teach for All worldwide network since 2014. It is a different way to fill teaching positions and address the scarcity of competent instructors in areas where finding teachers with the necessary credentials is challenging. A skeptical attitude to the platform can be seen in the article "Teach for Slovakia, or how to further degrade Slovak education" (Burkert, 2019).

The program provided by this platform is an alternative to the standard teacher education pathway in Slovakia. It differs from a traditional university teacher education and a pathway for graduates of other majors (the supplementary pedagogical study). The law stipulates that unqualified teaching personnel who want to become qualified have four years from accepting a position to finish their study (Act No. 138/2019 Coll.). Program

participants are expected to stop teaching after two years, so they are not required to do that.

Having the probationary period is considered one of the filters into a teaching profession that helps to support

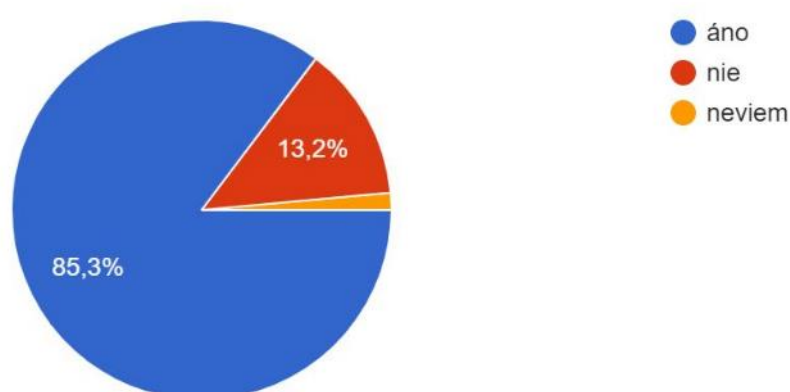
the quality of education and does not allow incompetent candidates to remain in schools. According to the responses to Question 12 of the survey, 85.3% of teachers stated having a probationary period, 13.2% replied negatively, and 1.5% stated they were unaware of that (see Fig. 4).

Figure 4

Having the Probation Period

12. Mali ste skúšobnú dobu po prijatí do zamestnania?

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The European Commission emphasizes the importance of providing specific support to teachers during the early stage of their careers. In 2020, the Council's conclusions on European teachers and trainers for the future reaffirmed that novice teachers should be provided with additional guidance and mentoring. Induction has important formative and supportive components; it usually includes additional training and personalized help and advice (European Commission, 2021, p. 74).

In Slovakia, a teacher induction program is compulsory, and besides other functions, it acts as a probation period before confirming the recruitment. The second part of our research project will be devoted to the induction period into the teaching profession.

DISCUSSION

Teacher education in Slovakia generally follows a traditional university pathway. The directive division of teacher training into the bachelor and the master level had a long-lasting negative influence. Because of its predominately academic nature, inadequate teacher preparation has become increasingly criticized in recent years. One of the reasons is its inability to respond to the demands of school system reform, requiring flexibility from teachers to adapt to students' needs.

Low social status and inadequate salary, the decreasing attractiveness of the teaching profession, and as a result, the upcoming teacher shortage that inevitably results in poor education quality will require policymakers to find possible ways to solve the current situation.

When political parties announce education reforms, including changes to teacher training, criticism of traditional university teacher training programs is on the rise. Universities try to incorporate some of the components of new initiatives. As a result, less attention is paid to academics, and more is placed on the practical side of teaching. A part of the scientific community defending the prevailing academic orientation of teacher education prevents the Ministry of Education from adopting the minimum requirements for teacher practice in the first place.

The introduction of alternative routes supplements a traditional university pathway into the teaching qualification: DPŠ and Teach for Slovakia. However, they cannot entirely solve the problems of school education quality and teacher shortage as the former lacks teaching practice while the latter considers teaching a temporary step in their career.

In order to employ and retain qualified teaching staff, early career support comes to the fore. The survey results showed that future teachers mostly look for vacancies on their own and do not receive necessary and relevant information during university career guidance.

Studying the strengths and weaknesses of the existing teacher training system and development is a prerequisite for strengthening and improving the quality of teaching. Reaching for international comparisons of existing positive

experiences can help find appropriate recommendations for education policymakers.

CONCLUSIONS

Our study's results revealed several problematic aspects of the student-to-teacher transition period in Slovakia. The teaching profession has a limited appeal, and there is a declining interest in teaching due to poor remuneration, the quality of initial teacher education, recruiting methods, unfavorable image, and low social status. Some problems can be found at the stage of entering ITE because the lack of students causes low competitiveness and, therefore, low criteria for selecting candidates.

There are no legislative standards or criteria for evaluating teaching programs regarding the minimum share of practical training. High qualification requirements in academic knowledge are stated for becoming a teacher but having practical teaching experience is not stipulated precisely. Alternative pathways or an open system for entering the teaching profession (especially the introduction of temporary staff who do not consider teaching as their life career) can lead to de-professionalization. Insufficiency of career support for graduates during the job search can lead to early drop-out of the profession. Because of upcoming teacher shortages, all the factors mentioned can be crucial for the quality of school education.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ВХОДЖЕННЯ У ПРОФЕСІЮ ВЧИТЕЛЯ В СЛОВАЧЧИНІ**

У статті досліджується сучасний стан процесу входження вчителів у професію в Словаччині, а саме передумови вступу до вчительської професії. У центрі уваги даного дослідження: привабливість професії вчителя та її вплив на прийняття рішення майбутніми студентами педагогічної спеціальності, рівень задоволеності вчителя роботою, співвідношення освітніх вимог до предметних знань і педагогічної практики, доступність професії, допомога в пошуку відкритих вакансій, випробувальний термін як фільтр до вчительської діяльності.

Мета дослідження – визначити проблемні аспекти перехідного періоду від студента до вчителя, на які необхідно звернути увагу, щоб запобігти ранній дезадаптації та втратам кваліфікованих кадрів у професії.

Методологія. Дослідження проводилось із застосуванням теоретичних та емпіричних методів. Дані були отримані від вчителів-початківців, завдяки онлайн-опитуванню за допомогою Google Forms з відкритими та закритими питаннями.

Попередні **результати** дослідження виявили соціальний імідж професії вчителя та складові її привабливості для майбутніх студентів, проблеми зі співвідношенням навчальної та практичної частин у педагогічній освіті, можливі шляхи входження в професію та перешкоди даного процесу.

Проведене дослідження дозволило дійти наступних **висновків**. Через низький соціальний імідж вчителя у Словаччині очікується нестача кадрів у професії. Суттєвий дисбаланс у початковій педагогічній освіті на користь академічних знань і відсутність конкретних вимог до практичного досвіду має свої наслідки у якості шкільної освіти та ранньої дезадаптації вчителя. Запровадження відкритої системи в професії вчителя є тимчасовим рішенням, яке викликає багато занепокоєнь, особливо із запровадженням діяльності вчителів на короткий термін із низькими стандартами вимог до педагогічних вмінь. Відсутність кар'єрної підтримки випускників – майбутніх вчителів – під час пошуку роботи може призвести до того, що вони покинуть освітню галузь. У цій ситуації адекватна допомога у працевлаштуванні вчителів-початківців стає необхідною, а програма введення вчителів у професію в Словаччині є предметом наступного дослідження.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: вимоги до освіти, початкова педагогічна освіта, задоволеність роботою, привабливість професії, професійна орієнтація, Словаччина, педагогічна практика.

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