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Main authors (in alphabetical order):
Marie Ernestová, Anna Kucharská, Veronika Laufková, Jolana Ronková, Radka Wildová

Contributing authors (in alphabetical order):
Christine Garbe, Dominique Lafontaine, David Mallows, Gerry Shiel, Renate Valtin

Coordinator of the ELINET-Project:
University of Cologne
Prof. Dr. Christine Garbe
Institut für Deutsche Sprache und Literatur
Richard-Strauss-Str. 2
50931 Köln – Cologne
Germany
christine.garbe@uni-koeln.de
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1 Introduction

This report on the state of literacy in the Czech Republic is one of a series produced in 2015 and 2016 by ELINET, the European Literacy Policy Network. ELINET was founded in February 2014 and has 78 partner organisations in 28 European countries. ELINET aims to improve literacy policies in its member countries in order to reduce the number of children, young people and adults with low literacy skills. One major tool to achieve this aim is to produce a set of reliable, up-to-date and comprehensive reports on the state of literacy in each country where ELINET has one or more partners, and to provide guidance towards improving literacy policies in those countries. The reports are based (wherever possible) on available, internationally comparable performance data, as well as reliable national data provided (and translated) by our partners.

ELINET continues the work of the European Union High Level Group of Experts on Literacy (HLG) which was established by the European Commission in January 2011 and reported in September 2012. All country reports produced by ELINET use a common theoretical framework which is described here: “ELINET Country Reports – Frame of Reference”. The Country Reports are organised around the three recommendations of the HLG’s literacy report:

- Creating a literate environment
- Improving the quality of teaching
- Increasing participation, inclusion (and equity).

Within its two-year funding period ELINET has completed Literacy Country Reports for all 30 ELINET member countries. In most cases we published separate Long Reports for specific age groups (Children / Adolescents and Adults), in some cases comprehensive reports covering all age groups. Additionally, for all 30 countries, we published Short Reports covering all age groups, containing the summary of performance data and policy messages of the Long Reports. These reports are accompanied by a collection of good practice examples which cover all age groups and policy areas as well. These examples refer to the European Framework of Good Practice in Raising Literacy Levels; both are to be found in the section “Good Practice”.

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1 For more information about the network and its activities see: www.eli-net.eu.
2 In the following, the final report of the EU High Level Group of Experts on Literacy is referenced as “HLG report”. This report can be downloaded under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf.
3 See: http://www.eli-net.eu/research/country-reports/.
4 “Equity” was added by ELINET.
2 General Information about the Czech Education System

In the Czech Republic, schools are administered as part of the general administration. The responsibility is distributed among the central government, regions and communities. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) preserves and determines the integrated state educational policy. Regions are responsible for education in their territory. There are organising bodies for upper secondary schools and tertiary professional schools. The communities are responsible for pre-primary education and compulsory schooling. All schools have the status of legal entities. Public higher education institutions are established by law.6

Pre-primary education is provided for children aged 3 to 6 in nursery schools (mateřské školy). The attendance is not compulsory, nevertheless, it is very high. Children have a legal entitlement to education in the last year before compulsory education.

Primary and lower secondary education (basic education) is organised mostly within a single-structure system in nine-year-long basic schools (základní školy), which are divided into the first and second stage. Lower secondary education can be provided also by multi-year general secondary schools (víceletá gymnázia) and eight-year-long conservatoires (osmileté konzervatoře). School attendance is compulsory for nine years, usually from the ages of 6 to 15.

Upper secondary education is provided by upper secondary schools (střední školy) in general and vocational fields. School leavers acquire one of three levels of education. Secondary education with a school-leaving examination (střední vzdělání s maturitní zkouškou) is a requirement for entering tertiary education. The other two levels are secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate (střední vzdělání s výučním listem) and secondary education (střední vzdělání). The age of pupils is usually 15 to 18/19. Upper secondary schools provide also a follow-up study period (nástavbové studium), enabling holders of the apprenticeship certificate to acquire secondary education with a school-leaving examination, and a shortened study (zkrácené studium) in which the graduates with school-leaving examination or apprenticeship certificate gain a qualification in a different field.

A specific type of school is the conservatoire (konzervatoř) which provides lower and upper secondary as well as tertiary professional education with an emphasis on art.

Tertiary education is carried out by tertiary professional schools (vyšší odborné školy) and higher education institutions (vysoké školy). Tertiary professional education is usually attained in three-year programmes. Higher education is provided in the first, second and third cycle programmes (Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctoral degree programmes), or possibly in non-structured long Master’s degree programmes.

Adult education includes general education, vocational education, special interest education and other education.

Figure 1: Structure of the Czech Republic School System

Source: http://www.virtualschoolsandcolleges.eu/images/e/ef/Czech-Republic_Educational-System.gif
3 Literacy Performance Data

Czech Republic participated in IEA’s PIRLS (4th graders reading comprehension) in 2001 and 2011, in OECD’s PISA (15 year-olds’ reading literacy) since 2000, and in OECD’s PIAAC (adults’ reading literacy) in 2012. This means it is possible to describe the changes over time in average reading proficiency, according to different characteristics of the readers, and to compare relative reading levels of proficiencies for different age groups.

Czech Republic performed above the EU average both in PIRLS 2011 (545 vs 535 EU-average) and very close to the EU’s average in PISA 2012 (493 vs 489). While the performance in PIRLS increased between the first and the third cycles (by 9 points), the Czech students’ overall performance in PISA seems unchanged between 2000 and 2012, but a decrease (by 13 points) was observed in 2009 when reading was the main topic. It then increased back to its initial level in 2012.

A limited proportion of pupils (13% in both studies) can be considered as low-performing readers in PIRLS, they were 16.9% in PISA. This is less than in EU countries on average (20% both in PIRLS and PISA). These students can read simple texts, retrieve explicit information, or make straightforward inferences, but they are not able to deal with longer or more complex texts, and are unable to interpret beyond what is explicitly stated in the text.

The proportion of low-performing readers has decreased in PIRLS between 2001 and 2011 (from 18.8% to 12.7%). In PISA, between 2000 and 2009, this proportion of low-performing readers had slightly increased (by 6.4%), among girls (+ 2.8%) and even more among boys (+ 7.2%). However, in PISA 2012, the proportion of low-performers in the Czech Republic decreased again and was very close to the initial situation in PISA 2000 (around 17%) among both girls and boys.

The proportion of top-performing readers was 8% in PIRLS (vs 9% in EU) and 6% in PISA (vs 7% in EU).

The gap according to the pupils’ socioeconomic background was higher than the EU average in PIRLS (87 vs 76 on average). The percentage of parents whose highest level of education was lower secondary or below was very weak in Czech Republic (2% vs 18% in EU). In PISA, the gap according to parents’ education level was lower than the EU average (84 vs 89 on average). However, the indices of socioeconomic background are not the same in PIRLS and PISA, so the comparison should be taken with caution.

In PISA 2009, the gap between native students and students with a migrant background was lower than in EU countries on average (22 vs 38 EU-average), the equivalent of a half-year of schooling. The proportion of students with an immigrant background was rather small in comparison with EU countries (2.3% vs 8.3%). Similarly, in PIRLS the mean score difference between those who always spoke the test language at home, and those who sometimes or never did so was lower than in EU countries (12 vs 26). In PISA, there was barely any difference in reading performance between students speaking the test language at home and those who do not. This result should be taken with caution, as the proportion of students who do not speak the test language at home was very low (1.3 % of the students).

In Czech Republic, the gender gap (in favor of girls) was lower than the corresponding EU average differences in PIRLS 2011 (7 vs 12 on average) whereas in PISA, it was slightly higher (48 vs 44 on average). The gender difference was somewhat smaller in PIRLS 2011 than in PIRLS 2001 (by 13 points). In PISA, no change was observed in the performance of both boys and girls between 2000 and 2012,
whereas a decrease of performance had been observed in 2009 among boys (-17 points) as well as a decline among girls, to a smaller extent (-6 points).

In conclusion, Czech Republic slightly increased its performance in reading over time among 4th graders. It performed better than EU countries on average on both levels, but very close to in PISA. Among 15-year-olds, if the comparison focuses on the first and third cycles of the study, a great stability is observed both as for the overall reading score and the proportion of low performers. Czech Republic experienced nevertheless a second cycle worse than the previous and following one: a decrease of the overall performance was observed as well as an increase of the proportion of readers in difficulty. The spread of achievement (gap between low and top performing readers) is lower in Czech Republic than in EU on average at both levels. The results regarding equity are going in different directions: the gap according to socioeconomic status is higher than EU in PIRLS, lower in PISA. The gap according to migration or language spoken at home tends to be lower in Czech Republic than in EU on average.

As far as adults are concerned, Czech Republic performed almost at the same level as the EU countries on average (274 vs 271). It should be remembered that only 17 EU countries took part to PIAAC in 2012, so the comparison with other age groups should be taken with caution. The spread of achievement – namely the gap between top and bottom performers - was lower in Czech Republic than the EU-17-Average (102 vs 117 on average). The proportion of adults performing at or below level 1 in Czech Republic was 12%, less than the EU-17 average (16.4%). Females were 12% in that category, males 11%.

Females performed somewhat less well than men (272 vs 276) and the gender gap in favor of males was somewhat higher in Czech Republic (4 score points) than in EU on average (2 score points) which is coherent with what was observed among 15 years-old students. The gap according to parents’ level of education was nearly similar to the EU countries on average (respectively 42 and 41 points), while the difference according to that criterion was higher in PIRLS and close in PISA. The gap according to the language spoken at home was much lower than in European countries but must be taken with caution because only 2% of tested adults reported speaking another language at home.
4  Key Literacy Policy Areas for Development
(age-specific and across age-groups)

4.1  Creating a Literate Environment

4.1.1  Pre-primary years

Providing a supportive home environment: Compared to the European average, the number of pupils in the Czech Republic has parents with positive attitudes towards reading. Contrary to what happens in other countries, in Czech republic the gap in reading performance at grade 4 between children whose parents like to read (average achievement 561) and those who do not (540) is not as huge as expected.

In the Czech Republic, there are less parents (1%) who never or hardly ever engage in the nine activities, compared with the EU 24 (2%). The Early Literacy Activity Scale correlates with later reading performance in grade 4. The average reading score of pupils who were engaged often in these activities was 555, as compared with 542 for those pupils who sometimes were engaged in these activities with their parents before the beginning of primary school.

In the Czech Republic 6% reported having 10 or fewer books at home (ELINET PIRLS Appendix, Table E1). This is below the EU-24 average of 11.3%. In the Czech Republic, 15.2% had 200 or more books, compared with an EU-24 average of 12.3%. The mean score difference in favour of students with 200 books, compared with those who had 10 or fewer books was 92.0 points in the Czech Republic, compared with an average of 81.7 across the EU-24. Hence, the relative association between number of books and reading achievement in the Czech Republic is stronger than on average across the EU-24.

There are many projects, mainly initiated by public libraries and carried out by librarians, to coax preschool children and their parents into libraries – reading aloud, dramatization of fairy tales, playing with books (speaking, reading and drawing), series of lectures on children’s literature, need of reading etc. The examples of concrete projects are “The Week of Reading to Children” in June, “Every Czech Reads to Kids” (the aim is to build strong family ties through reading together), “Reader of the Year” etc. Other project mainly initiated by bookshops to attract preschool children and their parents into bookshops – for example authors’ reading.

4.1.2  Children and adolescents

Providing a literature environment in school: According to PIRLS 2011 only 55.1% of fourth graders in the Czech Republic were in classrooms which had class libraries – well below the corresponding EU-24 average of 73% (ELINET PIRLS 2011 Appendix, Table H2). Just 13.7% were in classrooms with more than 50 books in a class library (ibid), compared with an EU-24 average of 32.2%. Focuses on the development of literacy and motivation of pupils to read, the Czech schools need to be supported in founding of classroom libraries, libraries centres, collections of books etc. The averages of the Czech Republic (in comparison with EU average) is low.

Supporting reading motivation, especially among boys and adolescents: According to PIRLS 2011 Encyclopedia, the Czech Republic is one of the four European countries that reading for pleasure was
given a little or no emphasis (Mullis et al. 2012, Vol.1, exhibit 9, p. 36). This fact can be the reason, why Czech student also in PISA (OECD, 2010) does not reach high score on reading performance. The survey in PISA 2012 show the significant downgrade in the relationship of Czech pupils to the school (Palečková & Tomášek, 2013). More than half of the Czech 15-year-old pupils perceive school as a place where they are often boring. A third of all Czech pupils said that they would prefer not to go to school at all (OECD, 2014). Comparisons showed that the results of the Czech Republic was decreased because of worse results of pupils of basic schools. On the other hand, according to their results pupils of participating secondary schools would have occupied the top positions. Results of pupils attending secondary general schools considerably exceeded the best countries. (CSI, 2011, p. 77). Reading performance varies highly between schools depending on the socio-economic make-up of their student body. Equity indicators show that Czech schools are influenced by their socio-economic intake (OECD, 2010), the main problem is early tracking and streaming into special schools (Straková, 2009).

The gender gap (in favour of girls) was lower in the Czech Republic than the corresponding EU average differences in PIRLS 2011 (7 vs 12 on average) whereas in PISA, it was slightly higher (48 vs 44 on average). The gender difference was somewhat smaller in PIRLS 2011 than in PIRLS 2001 (by 13 points). In PISA, no change was observed in the performance of both boys and girls between 2000 and 2012, whereas a decrease of performance had been observed in 2009 among boys (-17 points) as well as a decline among girls, to a smaller extent (-6 points). In 2012, girls perform better than boys with a statistically significant difference of 39 points7 (PISA 2012). The gap between girls and boys is caused by a lack of acceptable male archetypes in contemporary literature (Ernestová, 2004) and it is caused also by a fact that Czech teachers don’t respect the special needs of texts for boys (shorter texts, a lot of illustrations, facts) (Ronková & Wildová, 2014).

The Czech Republic needs to build a stronger focus on giving some emphasis to reading for pleasure (free choice of a book topic, more spare time activities, usage of efficacious opinion makers, good practice, wide supply etc.) and to motivating pupils for reading, especially boys. More research and project (where male archetypes are represented) oriented on support of reading of boys are needed.

**The role of public libraries:** There are no national and municipal library regulations in the Czech Republic. The research (Quick et al. 2013) estimates that there are 5,408 public libraries in the Czech Republic, which equates to 5.1 libraries per 10,000 population, significantly higher than the average of 1.3 libraries per 10,000 population across the EU. Public libraries users in the Czech Republic were more likely than the EU average to be women and to have left full time education aged 19 or under. They were also more to live in a city or large town. Apart from the core service of ‘books to read or borrow’, users in the Czech Republic were much less likely than users across the EU to rate services as 4 or 5 on the scale. The core service of ‘books to read or borrow’ was considered the most important, rated as important by 92% of users in the Czech Republic (and 94% across the EU).

SKIP (Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic) is the profession’s largest association in the Czech Republic; it counts about 1400 individual and institutional members and 11 regional organizations. SKIP e.g. organizes social events for libraries and information professionals, promotes and supports reading / readership, book culture and libraries etc. – A Night with Andersen; A Week of Reading (an event promoting reading), Biblioweb (a competition for the best library pages); Library Workshop (meetings focusing on the current problems of public libraries); Children’s Book Day; Library Week and other events in regions of the Czech Republic.

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7 OECD average: 38 points higher for girls.
Digital literacy learning opportunities in schools (and other public spaces, e.g. libraries):
According to PIRLS 2011 one-third of fourth graders in the Czech Republic (33%) used a computer at least monthly to look up information. The corresponding EU-24 average is 39.9% (Mullis et al. 2012). ICT infrastructure in Czech schools is good. Access to computers and broadband internet are above EU mean. Connectedness of schools is relatively high as well (i.e. schools have a website or homepage). Fourth graders use of computers and personal mobile phone is high. Also, there are more interactive whiteboards in the Czech Republic than there are in average in the EU. The number of data projectors available is close to the EU average at all grades.

At secondary level, ICT is part of the curriculum as a separate subject and also as a tool for tasks in other subjects. Media education in the Czech Republic must be present at the secondary level. It is a compulsory, interdisciplinary, cross-curricular subject. The authority to decide how to treat media education in class lies with the schools. In the Framework Education Program For Secondary General Education (2007), media education has a guaranteed place. It claims that media education is a necessary prerequisite for media communication and for media related work. The Czech government conducts various programs to support ICT in schools.

4.2 Improving the Quality of Teaching

4.2.1 Pre-primary years

Improving the quality of staff and a need to become more attractive to males: In Czech kindergartens, children are taught by teachers of nursery schools, who mainly have completed secondary education with a school-leaving examination specialised in preschool pedagogy (graduates of secondary pedagogical schools, ISCED 3). They can also gain education at higher vocational schools or higher education institutions in a bachelor’s or master’s study programme. The education must always be specialised in preschool pedagogy.

According to Pordata (2014), 0.4% of the pre-primary teachers in the Czech Republic are males. The range is from 0.2% in Bulgaria and Hungary to 17.7% in France. The non-governmental organisation LOM (The League of Open Men) has initiated a programme called “Men to School”. In 2008 the share of male teachers in kindergartens was 0.1% (and they were mainly in alternative military services) or this organisation has also initiated a programme called “Fathers read to children”.

Introducing comprehension literacy curricula in pre-primary schools: In kindergarten, children could be prepared for formal instruction in school. Kindergarten teachers should provide a literacy environment where children learn and engage in the communication, in the motivation to learn and write in school, in building relationships with books, in pre-reading strategies. Comprehensive literacy curriculum in pre-primary schools could be created.
4.2.2 Children and adolescents

Ensuring adequate time for language and literacy instruction in primary and secondary schools: In 2011, pupils in the Czech Republic spent fewer instructional hours in schools (782 hours per year) compared with students on average across EU-24 countries (850 hours), though allocation of time to teaching the language of the PIRLS test in the Czech Republic (283 hours) is greater than the average across EU-24 countries (241 hours). The time to be allocated to language/reading is not specified in the Czech Republic curriculum. The average number of hours allocated to teaching reading each year in the Czech Republic as part of language instruction (72 hours) is also above the EU-24 average (68), though the EU average is itself low relative to, for example, the United States and New Zealand (both 131 hours). Teachers in the Czech Republic report allocating about the same amount of time to teaching reading across the curriculum and in reading classes as on average across EU countries (Mullis et al., 2012, p. 214, Exhibit 8.4).

Improving Literacy Curricula and Reading instruction in schools: The Czech Republic does not have a special curriculum on reading (Mullis et al. 2012, Vol.1, exhibit 5, p. 31). The content of the Czech Language and Literature field is complex but, for the sake of clarity, has been separated into three parts: Communication and Composition, Language, and Literature. However, the educational content of these individual parts is interconnected through instruction (Mullis et al. 2012, Vol.1, p. 173). The Czech Republic needs to build systematically support to development of reading literacy in national document, especially in FEPs or through the National Strategy for Development of Reading Literacy that does not exist.

The results of surveys (PIRLS 2011) showed that Czech teachers did not aim their attention to development of reading strategies, high-level strategies were less frequently in the Czech Republic. Czech teachers traditionally tend to concentrate mainly on the technical aspects of teaching reading, giving the functional aspects less attention (Najvarová, Najvar, 2007). Czech teachers have to tend to be taught frequently reading strategies, especially higher-level strategies, to develop students’ reading comprehension skills. The new textbooks that will be also focused on reading literacy and development of higher-level reading strategies are needed.

Early identification of and support for struggling literacy learners is appropriately defined: In Czech Republic we are able to deal with with children developmental difficulties at the very beginning in the pre-school age from which might be develop some specific learning disabilities. Professional intervention for of pupils with reading difficulties includes the development of reading skills and overcoming barriers to reading. But it also covers the sub-functions (perceptual function, speech and language skills and abilities, attention, memory), that are the basis of specific learning disabilities. The intervention program based on diagnosis depending on the severity and duration of solving difficulties. Its preparation is under leadership of education specialist, psychologist or special education teacher in the School Advisory Centre. It can be implemented individually or in a group, also trained teachers may be involved. It is therefore an individual program or a group program. Recently it started to be involved global development programs, for example: Feuersteins Instrumental Enrichment, Elkonins method. From the perspective of diagnosis there is a large dynamic development of diagnostics that mingles with intervention.

Improving the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher training: According to PIRLS 2011, fourth-grade students are typically taught reading by general-purpose primary teachers who are responsible for teaching all basic subjects. The Master’s level to upper and lower secondary teachers
takes five years. (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2013). 93% of fourth grade pupils have teachers who completed a Postgraduate University Degree, 1% had teachers who completed a Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent but not a Postgraduate Degree; 3% had teachers with no further than upper secondary education. The EU-24 average for the last category is 6% (indicating that level of qualification of teachers of reading in the Czech Republic is quite high).

Introduce and maintain systematic support of novice teachers after their graduation is needed. The appointed mentors should also be trained for their role. Due to missing a clear link to professional development opportunities, the impact of performance review processes on teacher performance has been relatively limited. Professional development is predominantly a choice by individual teachers and is not systematically associated with school development needs (Santiago et al., 2012).

The Czech Republic need a systematic approach in continuous professional development of teachers and the induction support for new teachers also needs to improved and extended. This issue is widely discussed within the design of a quality standard for the teaching profession and currently also within the national project Carrier System.

More time spent on professional development related to literacy: In the Czech Republic, 9% pupils in grade 4 have teachers who spent 16 hours or more (EU-24 average: 18%) engaged in professional development related to reading in the previous two years, 52% had teachers who spent some time but less than 16 hours (EU-24 average 53%), and 40% had teachers who spent no time in professional development related to reading in the previous two years (EU-24 average 29%) (Mullis at al., 2012, p. 196, Exhibit 7.4) These figures show a low engagement of Czech teachers. According to Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS, 2013): a smaller proportion of teachers report having a mentor assigned compared to most other TALIS countries (only 3.8 %); a smaller proportion of teachers report having undertaken professional development in the 12 months prior to the survey than in most other TALIS countries (82.5 %).

The Czech Republic needs to improve the quality and participation rates of professional development related to reading. It needs to target at building literacy expertise of teachers and mentors which are specified in development related to literacy.

Support for children and adolescents whose home language is not the language of school: The Czech immigrant population has extremely diverse integration needs. The Curriculum Framework for Romani was piloted in the Czech Republic. A crucial policy goal will be to define a vision for integration policy in the Czech Republic and formulate a clear and systematic action plan to put the integration strategy and support for children and adolescents whose home language is not the language of school in force.
4.3 Increasing Participation, Inclusion and Equity

4.3.1 Pre-primary years

There is a positive relationship between the length of preschool education attendance in the Czech Republic and the average reading score in grade 4, as PIRLS 2011 data show (Mullis et al. 2012, Exhibit 4.7, p. 128. More than 90% of 5-year-old children are enrolled in nursery schools. However the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports plans to introduce compulsory nursery school attendance for 5-year-old children from September 2017. No child should be excluded from preschool because parents cannot afford to send their children to preschool/kindergarten institutions if they have to pay. Czech Republic belongs to the half of the European countries where the entire period of ECEC is free.

Children with special educational needs, such as those facing language development delays, can be educated in kindergartens for children with speech and language disorders. Preparatory classes (přípravné třídy) for socially disadvantaged children in the year prior to compulsory schooling can be set up in basic schools (základní školy, ISCED 1+2) corresponding to the pre-primary level of education.\(^8\)

Provisions for preschool children with language problems: In the Czech Republic there is no particular description of how teachers should assess their learners, there is no systematic assessment of children in order to identify language development problems (Eurydice, 2013). General assessment responsibilities are assigned to teachers. The Czech Republic could create a systematic assessment of children in order to identify language development problems.

4.3.2 Children and adolescents

Supporting struggling literacy learners: The proportion of low-performing readers has decreased in PIRLS between 2001 and 2011 (from 18.8% to 12.7%). In PISA, between 2000 and 2009, this proportion of low-performing readers had slightly increased (by 6.4%), among girls (+ 2.8%) and even more among boys (+ 7.2%). However, in PISA 2012, the proportion of low-performers in the Czech Republic decreased again and was very close to the initial situation in PISA 2000 (around 17%) among both girls and boys. Boys are over-represented in the lowest proficiency levels. Schools should provide support systems (e.g. additional reading experts) for pupils falling behind in reading.

Support for migrant children and adolescents whose home language is not the language of school: In the Czech Republic, the percentage of students with an immigrant background is low (2.3%), much lower than in the EU countries on average. The gap between native students and those with an immigrant background is lower than EU countries on average. According to PIRLS 2011 (Mullis et al. 2012, exhibit 4.3 - Students Spoke the Language of the Test Before Starting School, p. 118), the proportion of children speaking a different language at home from the one used at school is the lowest in Czech Republic, at 1.0%.

Preventing early school leaving: According to Eurostat (2014), in the Czech Republic, the rate of early school leavers was 5.4% in 2013, down from 5.5% a year before. The target value of the early school leaving (ESL) rate set for 2020 is 5.5%. The percentage of 18-year olds in education was 90.3% in 2011.

which situated the Czech Republic above the EU-27 average (80.7%). By 2012, this indicator dropped to 89.9%. Since 2001, the Czech Republic has consistently exceeded the EU average value for this indicator.

However, there is no complex strategy for early ending of school attendance in the Czech Republic. This conceptual strategy should consist of a wide variety of pre-emptive measures as well as a targeted identification of pupils at risk along with a solution to specific individual problems. The Czech Republic needs to strengthen systematic approach inside schools, cooperation with parents, counselling institutions, psychologists, non-profit organizations and other institutions. The state needs to implement a measure which would pressure parents into being more rigorous about regular school attendance of their children (including a requirement of children’s school attendance in order to be eligible for social security benefits) and to develop a career counselling so that pupils can opt for a suitable field of study and an appropriate level of education (Trhlíková, 2015).

The Czech Republic needs to build the complex strategy for early ending of school attendance and to strengthen not only a systematic approach inside schools but also a cooperation with parents, counselling institutions, psychologists, non-profit organizations and other institutions as well.
5 References


