

School counsellors in the Czech Republic

1. Need/challenge addressed

Attendance, behaviour, cognition/learning achievements, language/multiculturality, motivation, social, family, transitions.

2. Level of intervention

Universal (addressed to all pupils).

3. Intensity of the intervention

Periodic.

4. Target group and age group

Pupils of primary/lower secondary (6 – 15 years) and upper secondary (16 – 19 years) schools.

5. Conditions and different steps necessary for the implementation of the measure

The school headmaster is obliged to establish the provision of guidance services in the school – this includes, most typically, the services provided via the school counsellor to fulfil the minimum requirement. School counsellors are pedagogical workers with a reduced teaching load (averaging 2-3 hours per week), based on the size of the school (number of students). To perform counselling, the school counsellor must undertake further education, in the range of at least 250 hours.

6. Decision makers on the type of support and possible adaptations

The school counsellor, in cooperation with other school staff (class teacher or school psychologists, prevention methodologist, etc.), determines the appropriate course of action, based on individual needs of the pupil.

7. Delivery of the measure and stakeholders

The school counsellor solves situations, such as absenteeism or student crime, in cooperation with other school staff (e.g., class teacher, headmaster, prevention methodologist, school psychologist) and parents or social workers.

8. Overall responsibility for implementation

Headmaster.

9. Obstacles in introducing the measure

The school counsellor has been part of the school system since the 1950s. The time available to perform the duties represents a certain restriction to their work. It is perceived as inadequate. Currently, career guidance and counselling is to be defined separately, thereby giving counsellors more time to devote to counselling and more time to career counsellors for guidance.

10. Monitoring and assessing the measure

The activities of the school counsellor are assessed by the headmaster.

11. Results of the measure

The nature of the school counsellor activities is long-term and the results are ongoing. Considering that the Czech Republic is among the countries with the lowest level of ESL, counselling in schools can be assessed positively.

12. Resources and funding

Activities of the school counsellor are financed through the school budget.

13. Current status of the measure

Activities of the school counsellor are ongoing. They are based on legal regulations.