

The majority of secondary schools (87%) reflected current educational trends in the teaching of social sciences. Changes in education aimed at developing key skills of students were implemented, at an extraordinarily good level, by 23% of SSs and one quarter of schools supported the development of key competences within social science education at an above-average level. Most schools developed, within teaching, the competences of students to learn (94%) as well as civil, social and personal competences (95%). 90% of SSs developed communicative competences and 88% of SSs formed civil competences in the framework of regional and European contexts.

Natural Science Literacy

More than 71% of the 315 secondary schools visited in the school year 2007/2008 included natural science education in their overall teaching strategy. When conceiving strategic objectives the schools were building on the Long-term Policy Objective of Education and the Development of the Educational System in the Czech Republic, while placing emphasis on priorities of the strategy of sustainable development. Almost 88% of SSs included cross-reference of natural science topics, in a functional manner, to their SEPs. Strategies for teaching natural sciences can be considered to be exceptionally well drafted in 34% of SSs. Schools which included natural science education in the school-wide concept planned to implement more projects affecting this area in 2007/2008. A half of SSs prepared several natural science related projects in 2007/2008. 23% of SSs focused specifically on the teaching of natural science subjects and 46% of schools offered students optional subjects concerning natural sciences. Activities pertaining to the field of natural sciences beyond normal teaching were offered in almost 61% of SSs.

65% of SSs used their self-evaluation for quality management in the teaching of natural sciences and three fifths of schools used their self-evaluation in an excellent manner. Almost 79% of SSs have introduced innovation into the content of education in natural sciences. More than half of SSs focused specifically on teaching natural sciences; more than a half of SSs included natural science topics in subjects that have a different focus.

In 2007/2008 more than one quarter of SSs reported above-standard material conditions for the teaching of natural sciences and 30% of SSs ensured above-average material support to the teaching of natural sciences. Through class observations it was found that on average 85% of teachers of natural sciences used good resources to apply experimental methods of teaching, predominantly when teaching physics (92%) and chemistry (84%). There was evidence that students themselves performed more experiments than teachers did. If compared to basic schools, it was surprising that fewer secondary schools (87%) than basic school enabled their students to use ICT when learning natural sciences.

Almost three quarters of secondary schools modernised equipment for teaching natural sciences in 2007/2008. More than one quarter of secondary schools had exceptionally well equipped classrooms and other rooms at their disposal and specially equipped classrooms for teaching natural sciences were available in 60% of SSs. Nearly 82% of SSs could use effective teaching resources. The teaching documents used were excellently exploited in 31% of SSs and the teaching aids and textbooks were very good in 18% of schools.

The composition of the pedagogical staff and the climate was exemplary in 38% of SSs. Almost all SSs (96%) made use of opportunities to improve the school climate and 83% of SSs organised joint events for students and teachers. The quality of mutual relationships was model in just under one quarter of schools. In 89% of SSs teachers of natural science subjects work effectively together. In more than 28% of SSs teachers, when working together, developed the key competences of students in a distinctive way and in almost all schools (98%) teachers cooperated with the school board. In 2007/2008 in 18% of the monitored SSs natural science teachers did not satisfy relevant professional qualifications, which roughly