



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Structural and Investment Funds  
Operational Programme Research,  
Development and Education



# 2021

**Evaluation of projects of  
pedagogical faculties and  
faculties educating teachers  
financed from the OP RDE  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Contractor:**

**PROCES – Centrum pro rozvoj obcí a regionů, s.r.o.**

Moravská 958/95, 700 30 Ostrava

IN: 28576217

tel.: +420 595 136 023, web: <http://rozvoj-obce.cz/>, e-mail: [info@rozvoj-obce.cz](mailto:info@rozvoj-obce.cz)

**Authors:**

Doc. Ing. Lubor Hruška, Ph.D.

Ing. Petr Proske

Ing. Ivana Foldynová, Ph.D.

Ing. David Kubáň

PhDr. Andrea Hrušková

Mgr. Martina Melárová

**Final version from 29. 4. 2021**



.....  
Doc. Ing. Lubor Hruška, Ph.D.

*Leader of project team*

## Executive Summary

This evaluation contract was prepared on the basis of an evaluation design defined within the assignment of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, supplemented in accordance with the assignment and the set objectives of the evaluation by the developer and the evaluation team. The created mixed evaluation design is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, through which the available secondary data were analysed and evaluated, as well as the primary data obtained through a field survey with selected beneficiaries. The evaluation design in the mentioned combination reflected the evaluation assignment, which had the ambition to find out and verify the results / impacts of interventions of the Operational Program Research, Development and Education (hereinafter OP RDE) aimed at pedagogical faculties (hereinafter PedF) and faculties educating teachers (hereinafter FVU), aware of the fact that part of the results cannot be verified as the intervention has not been completed at the time of the evaluation. A significant added value of this solution was also to obtain a comprehensive overview of the setting and functioning of the intervention logic, which would be possible to use further, especially in terms of preparation of future interventions and strategic materials and subsequent evaluations.

The support of PedF and FVU within the operational program of the OP RDE and its calls specifically focused on these faculties is supported by a number of national strategic and conceptual documents that define objectives in the field of implementation and development of education in the Czech Republic<sup>1</sup>. From the point of view of the Structural Funds, the most important purpose of the evaluation is to contribute to the setting of future interventions of the Jan Amos Komensky Operational Program (hereinafter OP JAK). In terms of strategic documents, this evaluation contributes as one of the relevant sources to the creation of the Concept of Undergraduate Education.

Based on the analysis of financial data and their validation by the universities themselves, it was found that the interventions in PedF and FVU in the total value of approximately CZK 3.9 billion were financed through OP RDE projects. Of this amount, a total of CZK 1.2 billion falls on PedF, and CZK 1.7 billion on FVU support. Both funds from projects intended exclusively for PedF or FVU, and adequate shares of funds from complex university projects intended for PedF and FVU, are included. Furthermore, PedF and FVU could benefit from approximately CZK 1 billion in project activities of other projects, the impacts of which were not primarily focused on PedF or FVU, but on the area of regional education. Specifically, thanks to the cooperation and participation of university representatives in projects of primary schools, nursery schools and secondary schools, on platforms for sharing experience among pedagogical staff of regional education (community practice, projects supporting IT thinking, etc.) PedF and FVU were also affected in this sense.

The base for the evaluation of the results and impacts of this support was the intervention logic compiled on the basis of a detailed analysis of the OP RDE program, relevant calls and supported projects. Based on the verification of the functioning of the intervention logic, it can be stated that the intervention reflects the problems and needs of PedF and FVU, including their causes, tries to solve them appropriately by implementing specific activities aimed at expected results / impacts, observable in specific target groups.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The implementation of the OP RDE intervention in the area of PedF and FVU reflects the objectives of the following documents: Priorities of the National Reform Program of the Czech Republic 2014 (NPR); Policy-making strategies of the Czech Republic until 2020; International Competitiveness Strategies of the Czech Republic for the years 2012 to 2020 (SMK); The framework for the development of higher education by 2020; Long-term measures of development and knowledge, knowledge, development and innovation, art and further creative activities in the field of higher education for the period 2016-2020; Strategies for digital development until 2020.*

To verify the intervention logic and implement the evaluation, it was necessary to use an extensive field survey to collect primary data, as the mere use of secondary sources and expert materials for evaluating interventions in the OP RDE has its limits, which must be taken into account for effective evaluation. A number of secondary sources (e.g. statistical yearbooks of the Ministry of Education, the CZSO data, the Graduate survey, the EUROSTUDENT survey, the TALIS survey) contain data that can be used to obtain an overview of the state of undergraduate training at PedF / FVU. However, all these data, with the exception of the TALIS survey, are focused on higher education in a more general level, and therefore it is possible to use these standardized surveys for evaluation of OP RDE projects only to a limited extent, as their focus does not allow full focus on the intervention specifics of OP RDE in the area of PedF and FVU. Another limitation to the use of secondary data to evaluate interventions is their availability over time. The above data obtained from the surveys Graduate, EUROSTUDENT and TALIS can be used as a base line for follow-up evaluations carried out in the future. For this evaluation and evaluation of results, they can be used only in addition, as these researches took place at a time when it was not possible to measure the impacts of the OP RDE due to the early phase of project implementation. More precisely, the above-mentioned investigations took place at a time when the results of the project were not significant and the impacts could not occur yet.

At the beginning of the evaluation activities, an analysis of the situation and condition of PedF / FVU before the implementation of interventions was performed on the basis of secondary data. From the processed quantitative data, it is possible to observe a trend of declining number of students of both PedF and FVU in the period before interventions from the OP RDE. However, this does not only apply to these faculties, the number of students is declining at universities in general. Between 2010 and 2019 there was a decrease by more than 107 thousand students within universities in the Czech Republic. These changes were caused mainly by demographic development. Since 2020, the trend in the number of students has begun to reverse due to the emergence of numerically stronger years at universities. In the case of PedF, the number of students has been growing since 2017 (PedF students accounted for 19.2 % of all students of relevant universities in 2017, in 2020 this share is 20.0 %; in terms of absolute values, in 2017 there were a total of 27,669 students at PedF, in 2020 already 30,003 students). The increase in the number of students, together with the persistent shortage of teachers in regional education, represents the need for continued support for PedF / FVU in undergraduate teacher training. It can be assumed that the currently growing number of newly enrolled students at PedF / FVU (e.g. 5,225 students were newly enrolled at PedF in 2020, compared to 4,315 students in 2015; in the case of FVU, the increasing trend of this indicator can also be observed since 2018) will also begin to be reflected in the growing number of graduates of these faculties in the coming years. There have been significant differences in the success of students between PedF / FVU at individual universities for a long period of time. A possible increase in the success of PedF / FVU students supported by the interventions of the OP RDE represents the potential both for increasing the number of graduates, and for the quality of their undergraduate training reflecting the needs of regional education.

A significant added value of secondary data in this evaluation was the validation of the conclusions based on the field survey. The triangulation of methods and specific conclusions contributed to a more accurate interpretation of the results of this evaluation, respectively of their informative value. In this context, the survey "Graduate 2018" and survey with the recipients of the call 02\_16\_038 "Pregradual" contributed the most to the verification of the conclusions of the survey.

Based on the analysis of supported projects, it is possible to assume the results of interventions in the form of increasing the quality of undergraduate teacher training through activities aimed at developing the competencies of students and teachers of PedF / FVU, technological and infrastructural provision of these faculties (specialized classrooms) and university-wide workplaces (libraries, study rooms, etc.), and improving the content of study programs, including innovations in student internships.

In connection with the above mentioned, there should be a gradual increase in the quality of teaching in nursery schools, primary and secondary schools as a result of the entry of better prepared teachers into practice. At the same time, the analysis of projects shows that the environment will also be improved through activities aimed directly at current teachers in practice, specifically, for example, the creation of educational resources for schools or the introduction of the principles of inclusive education.

Based on the field survey of the evaluation, it was found that the following results of OP RDE interventions in PedF / FVU were achieved<sup>2</sup>:

- Development of PedF and FVU infrastructure (specialized classrooms, ICT equipment, university-wide workplaces with an impact on PedF / FVU - study rooms, libraries, etc.). Introduction of strategic management systems and internal quality assurance systems of universities.
- Innovation of the system of internships in undergraduate teacher training. Increasing the scope of practices and their improvement. Development of competencies of university teachers and accompanying teachers in nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools for the implementation of effective, high-quality and reflected practices. Improving the technical and organizational provision of practices – good-practice portals and other tools.
- Extension of PedF / FVU cooperation with regional education, i.e. nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools outside the system of student internships. Connecting the academic environment with the practice environment in regional education through the community of practice and collegial support centres.
- Development of didactic, mentoring, digital, language, subject and other competencies of university teachers.
- Development of didactic, digital, inclusive and professional competencies of students - future teachers.
- Application of foreign experience and examples of good practice through the internationalization of studies at PedF / FVU, including foreign mobility.
- Creation of new or updated educational resources for undergraduate training of future teachers at PedF / FVU.
- Introduction of new teaching methods and procedures through action research.

However, in connection with the above results, it is necessary to point out that at the time of the evaluation, a number of evaluated projects were still being implemented. It can thus be expected that the results expected within the intervention logic will be fully achieved after the completion of their implementation, i.e. after the termination of all OP RDE interventions in PedF / FVU. However, it is already possible to monitor the impact of some interventions on the educational and research activities of PedF / FVU, and the training of future teachers:

- Increased emphasis on the practical and didactic component of undergraduate teacher training. This change is caused by innovation and expansion of practice, linking theoretical training with practice and increasing the emphasis on subject didactics.
- The development of competencies of university teachers can be perceived as a consequence of support directly targeted at them, as well as a consequence of cooperation of university teachers in solving other projects of the OP RDE to support regional education.
- The study programs at PedF / FVU are being adjusted to reflect the needs of practice and modern trends in education. Study programs are also modified on the basis of pilot actions implemented as a part of interventions from the OP RDE.

---

<sup>2</sup> A summary with a more detailed list of results is introduced in Chapter 4.5.1, the results at the level of single recipients are provided in external annex (Annex II: Background and primary data).

- The development of infrastructure and material provision increases the quality of undergraduate preparation at PedF / FVU and expands the possibilities for the implementation of study programs of the required quality.
- Development of research activities at PedF / FVU as a consequence of gaining experience with these activities within the interventions from the OP RDE. Effective targeting of research will be achieved through the identification of relevant research needs through the connection of PedF / FVU with the practice of regional education.

The impact of interventions in PedF / FVU on improving the quality of work of beginning teachers is currently difficult to assess. The reason is the above-mentioned fact that many projects are still ongoing, but, at the same time, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the impacts of PedF / FVU interventions concern students who will enter practice in the following years. Based on the results of the evaluation, an increase in the quality of the work of beginning teachers can only be assumed, in the following form:

- Higher level of acquisition of didactic competencies of future teachers.
- Progress in students' readiness for the real environment of regional education. Consequence of greater contact of undergraduate preparation students with practice within the study, connecting practice with undergraduate preparation at PedF / FVU.
- Progress in the acquisition of other relevant competencies for the performance of the teaching profession (digital, inclusive).
- Maintaining the quality of acquired theoretical field knowledge of beginning teachers.

Although a number of results can be identified on the basis of field surveys and other evaluation activities, persistent shortcomings and needs for further development have also been identified, even in areas where some positive progress has already been made. These are shortcomings that need to be addressed not only within the follow-up OP JAK, but also from the point of view of systemic changes and the conceptual solution of undergraduate preparation. These shortcomings, needs and the potential of their solutions are elaborated in the form of the following evaluation conclusions:

- A. Within the framework of undergraduate teacher training, the need for quality improvement is identified, especially in the area of general and subject didactics. While the theoretical pedagogical-psychological and professional training of future teachers is assessed as high quality across university faculties, shortcomings are seen in the didactic training, not only from the point of view of students, but also from the staff of the faculties themselves. Thus, students do not have a problem with what they will teach in terms of content in the future, but they see shortcomings in how and with what methods they will implement this teaching. This is mainly due to the lack of subject didactics at PedF / FVU or the organization of study, which places emphasis on subject didactics only in the later years of undergraduate study. It is also appropriate to emphasize the implementation of undergraduate training of future teachers through the involvement of a sufficient number of university teachers with real teaching practice and experience.
- B. The results of evaluation activities show a number of shortcomings in the practical training of students, future teachers. In recent years, there has been an improvement in the re-accreditation of study programs in this area, specifically increasing the volume of internships and, at the same time, addressing their quality. The progress in these aspects is visible in the different perception of internships by student respondents depending on whether they completed internships in the past or now, i.e. after re-accreditations. They thus confirm the ongoing changes, which are either still insufficient or, due to the short time since the implementation of accreditation, have not been sufficient to affect the target group. Problems of internships were identified mainly in the

area of their insufficient volume, which contributes to the time required to study, targeting internships to higher years of study (very often up to the next master's degree), etc. The quality of practices is also a problematic point, which hides a much higher potential from the point of view of the solution than the solution of its time-consuming nature. In the area of quality, the problems are mainly due to limited access to reflections on internships, the lack of quality faculty and cooperating schools able to offer places for effective implementation of reflected practice, led by accompanying teachers with the necessary competencies.

- C. The acquisition of competencies by undergraduate students corresponds to the conclusions in the field of quality of undergraduate training (for more details see conclusion A). Students are strong in subject and pedagogical-psychological theory, but they see shortcomings in subject didactics and in the ability to apply this theoretical knowledge in practice, and also in some specific cases, such as inclusive education. The acquisition of competencies related to school life is also assessed as insufficient, for example in the field of communication with parents or colleagues, competence to manage administrative duties associated with teaching, competences in the field of pupil assessment and feedback, motivation of pupils, etc. The complexity of undergraduate training and the number of areas that need to be addressed in this training remains a challenge to identify competencies, which can be effectively addressed in undergraduate training, and competencies, the acquisition of which will be largely the subject of teaching practice.
- D. Support from the OP RDE significantly contributes to the improvement of infrastructure, equipment and material provision of undergraduate training of future teachers. However, in the case of fields that are subject to current rapid technological developments, there may be a relatively rapid need for reinvestments.
- E. The issue of quality undergraduate training is influenced by a number of facts that cannot be affected by PedF / FVU directly. This mainly includes the requirements arising from the superior legislation, the method of financing universities, but also, for example, the view of society on the teaching profession. Currently, undergraduate training is significantly affected by restrictions and measures associated with the pandemic situation in connection with COVID-19. Effective management of these influences must be the subject of systematic changes in the education system, as PedF / FVU can only operationally mitigate the negative impacts of these external influences to a limited extent.
- F. The potential of the results of projects supported by the OP RDE and the course of their actual implementation is often influenced by a number of technical and organizational shortcomings. A long-term topic is the overall administrative burden associated with the implementation of projects, but there are also problems such as the follow-up of individual calls, insufficient promotion and subsequent use of project outputs, mainly due to lack of funds such as software updates, portals, educational resources, etc.

For individual conclusions, the evaluation report defines draft recommendations for solving persistent problems and needs of undergraduate training of future teachers, both for solving support within the follow-up OP JAK and for solving through systematic changes and conceptual activities of the Ministry of Education. A very important strategic document will be the above-mentioned Concept of Undergraduate Preparation.

As mentioned above, although the 2014-2020 programming period has ended, interventions supported by the OP RDE are still in progress. The impacts of these interventions will be felt long after the end of the OP RDE, as the results of the interventions will be implemented in practice. Changes in the solution of the area of quality of undergraduate preparation will thus take place continuously. It is necessary to evaluate them continuously in the future. The greatest potential for effective evaluation of the quality of

undergraduate training is the regular implementation of research with the aim of collecting relevant data from all actors of this system both on the part of PedF / FVU and on the part of regional education. This evaluation significantly supported the cooperation of the involved actors in the field of undergraduate education not only within the branch, but also outside the branch. Thanks to the support of management in this professional cooperation, for example in the form of consultations regarding the form of interpretation of data provided, participation in expert panel to preliminary conclusions and evaluation results and active cooperation in comments, this evaluation can serve as an important data source for the above-mentioned Concept of Undergraduate Education and support in the future OP JAK programs. The cooperation of respondents to field surveys on the part of representatives of universities, students, principals of faculty schools was also irreplaceable. This evaluation could not have arisen without their willingness to cooperate. Many thanks to all of them for their time and energy given to this evaluation with an immodest wish, so that together we can contribute to improving the specific conditions for long-term undergraduate training and creating an evaluation culture and confidence in its importance.