

Public Opinion Survey: Citizens' Views on Quality of Czech Education

According to the opinion of Czech citizens, the quality of schools in the Czech Republic is relatively good. In recent years, however, public opinion has been indicating a slight increase in scepticism in relation to all types of schools. As a rule, vocational schools are usually rated worse than general/academically oriented schools. On the other hand, over a long-term, an optimistic opinion of the Czechs has strengthened that everybody has the opportunity to achieve qualifications corresponding to their abilities. Czech citizens believe that schools are performing well in developing knowledge of students, however, they fail in cultivating their moral values and discipline.

Since 2002, the Public Opinion Research Centre (CVVM) of the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences conducts an annual public opinion survey on quality of education provided by the most common types of schools.

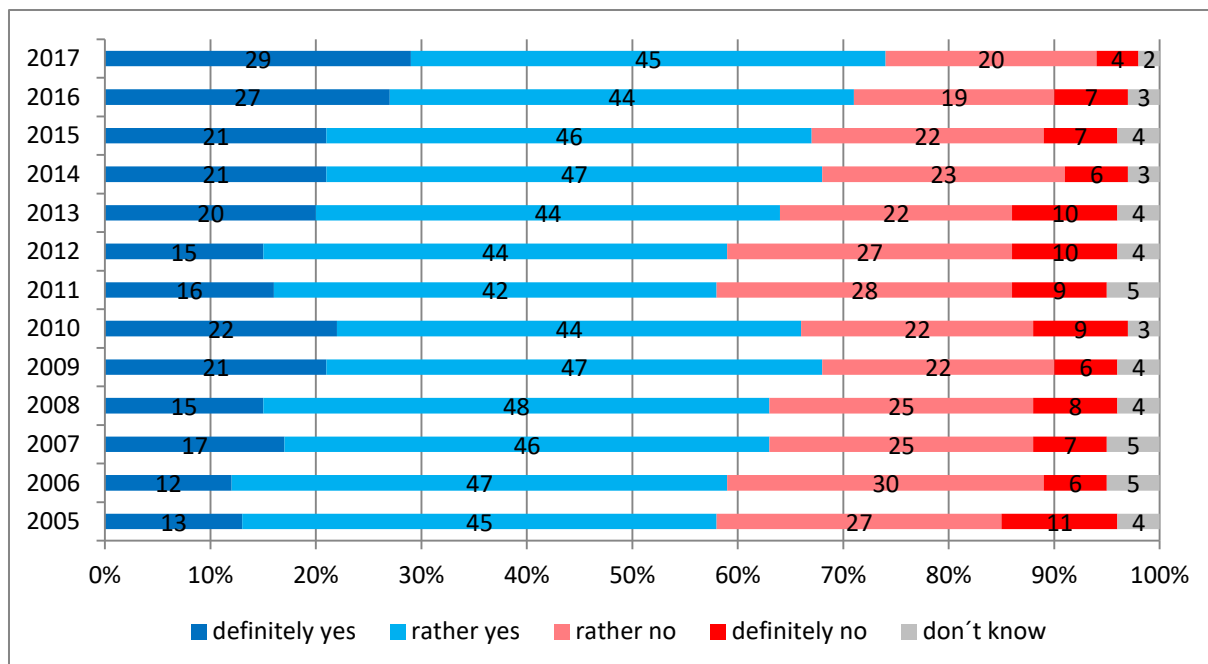
Generally speaking, Czech citizens evaluate the quality of education in selected types of schools relatively favourably. As a rule, general and academically oriented education is rated higher than VET. In 2017, Gymnázia¹ were the best rated schools (66% of citizens believe that their quality is good), followed by basic schools² (64%) and higher education institutions (59%). Secondary technical schools with Maturita were evaluated as good-quality schools by 54% of respondents, which cannot be regarded as a good result for this type of schools. In some previous survey years (especially in the period 2002-2006), secondary technical schools were granted even better evaluation than higher education institutions. In this year's ranking, secondary technical schools are followed by tertiary professional schools (52%) and, finally, Czech citizens attribute the poorest quality to secondary vocational schools (only 45% think that they are of a good quality).

Positive development was recorded in the public opinion on whether everybody in the Czech Republic has opportunity to acquire qualifications corresponding to their abilities. In 2005, a total of 58% of respondents agreed with the statement (sum of responses "definitely yes" and "rather yes"), in 2017, this share represented already 74%.

Has everybody in the Czech Republic opportunity to achieve qualifications corresponding to their abilities? (%)

¹ Gymnázia = secondary general schools.

² Basic schools = general education schools covering compulsory schooling (primary and lower secondary level).



Source: Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (SOÚ AV), Public Opinion Research Centre (CVVM): *Public Opinion Survey on Quality of Education Provided by Different Types of Schools* – September 2017. Press release of 23.10.2017, available online: <https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/tiskove-zpravy/ostatni/ostatni-ruzne/4436-hodnoceni-kvality-ruznych-typu-skol-zari-2017>.

Czech citizens believe that the school system is most successful in developing students’ knowledge (69% of positive responses), followed by orientation in society (60%), independence and autonomy (60%), team work skills (58%), creativity (56%), public appearance skills (54%), self-confidence (54%). Worse evaluation was granted to cultivation of moral values (only 31% of respondents believe that schools are developing them successfully) and discipline (26%).

As in many European countries, the public opinion on VET tends to be less favourable than of the general or academic schools. If compared internationally, the public view on VET as such is nevertheless more positive than the European average (as find out e.g. by Cedefop’s Opinion Survey on VET in 2016). This goes in line with the strong tradition of quality VET, which represents a mainstream of upper secondary schooling in the Czech Republic. In recent years, the share of applicants for technical VET fields is growing again, despite the demographic decline, which documents the strong position of this segment in the education system and reflects the general perception that it ensures good opportunities at the labour market for its graduates.

Sources: ReferNet CZ; CVVM press release 23.10.2017.