

## THE PRESENT STATE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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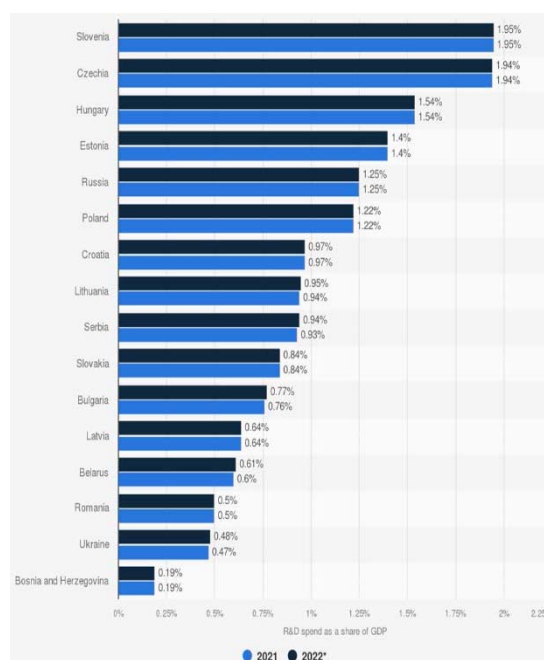
**Abstract:** Universities are all over the world the highest educational, scientific, and artistic institutions. Slovakia has the long-term tradition of higher education. The Slovak republic that in 2004 became the part of higher education system of EU, gained new possibilities and obligations in the field of requirements on the quality of education in all scientific areas. By the accession to EU, universities got the possibility of funding from the Structural Funds. Financing of universities in Slovakia consists of the financial support from the state budget, handling their own assets and their entrepreneurship.

**Key Words:** higher education, multi-source funding, funding, education system, state budget.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Every member state of EU has its own education policy, and it deals with the question of the state of its education that has the impact on the whole society mainly in the field of economics, culture, and social development of the country. Universities are the highest educational, scientific, and artistic institutions. Therefore, higher education must be as of a high quality as possible within the framework of its present possibilities, mainly since the man has the right to get the most qualitative education because his own future is dependent on it to a large extent. Slovakia has the long-term tradition of higher education. From the beginning of 15th century and by establishing Universita Istropolitana, till today, we have many universities in Slovakia with the different focus and very well-built name in this country as well as in the world. Since 1989, higher education in Slovakia has come through the major changes that are connected to the requirements of labour market and to the requirements on the quality of educational system. The Slovak republic that is the member of EU respects increasing requirements on the quality and it tries to improve the system of education regarding open and globalized space within the scope of conceptional and legislation measures.

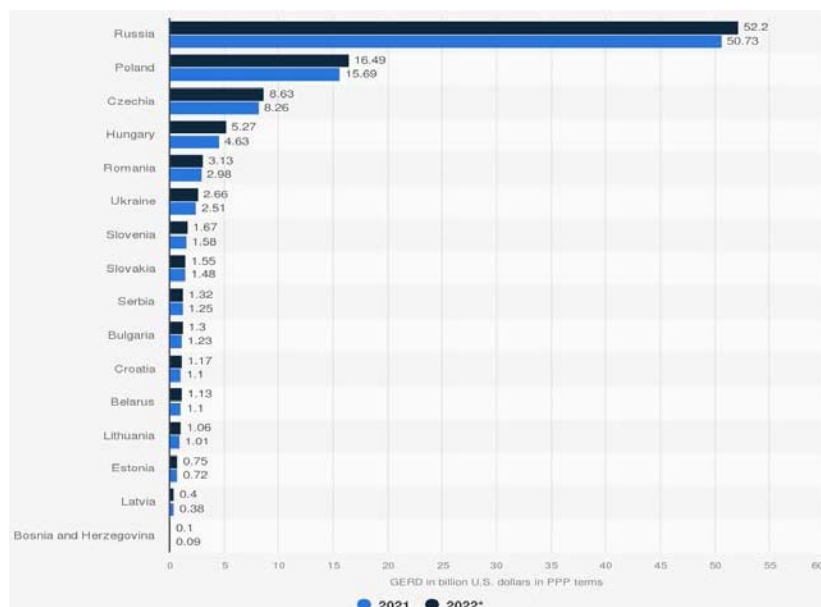
### 2. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE



Picture 1: Research and development (R&D) spending as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) from 2021 to 2022, by selected country

Slovenia spent the largest share of its gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development among Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries at nearly two percent in 2021. Czechia ranked second, with a slightly lower share.

The support of university research and development must focus necessarily on the support of favourable environment arranging mutual cooperation of subjects. It is necessary that the Slovak republic creates competitive environment and that encourages overall development of university research and development. Financial resources of universities depend on their performance in the field of research and development, on their entrepreneurial abilities and on the gained financial resources from EU by means of allocations from the different supporting programs for the quality and support of education.



Picture 2: Gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) from 2021 to 2022, by selected country (in billion U.S. dollars in PPP terms)

Russia's gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) was the largest in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), at nearly 51 billion U.S. dollars in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms in 2021. Poland followed, having spent around 15.7 billion U.S. dollars in PPP terms on R&D. In the following year, Poland was forecast to increase its spending by around five percent.

### 3. FUNDING OF UNIVERSITIES IN SLOVAKIA

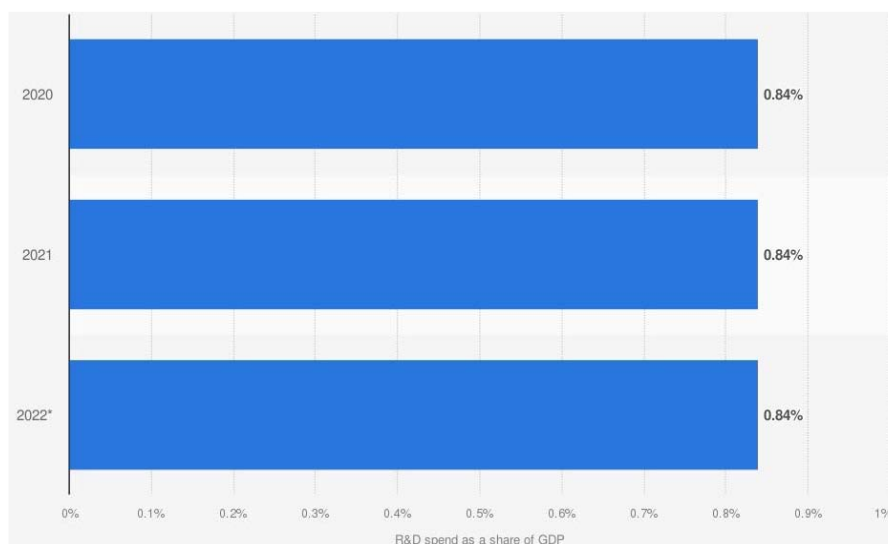
Universities in Slovakia exist in a very competitive environment. After 1990, there was a change in higher education in Slovakia as private universities were established which fought for their place on the market. Except of the big competition on the Slovak market, universities must count with the openness of the market. Universities have the opportunity to gain students from abroad. If a university wants to achieve successful future, it must perceive education as the life advantage and it must run by self-regulation.

Division of funds for public, state, or private universities is specially adjusted while foreign universities are not funded from the state budget. Funding of universities in Slovakia consists of the financial support from the state budget, managing their own assets and entrepreneurship itself. By the accession to EU, universities got the possibility of funding from the Structural Funds.

Ministry of education, research and development and sport of Slovakia participates in funding and allocations of universities as follows:

- allocation for accomplishing accredited study programs
- allocation for research, development, or artistic performance,
- allocation for the development of a university,
- allocation for the social support of students.

Regarding private universities, management of their financial resources depends on the type of legal entity. Their funding from the state budget is not totally excluded but it is restricted on the provision of allocations of social scholarship.



Picture 3: Research and development (R&D) spending as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) in Slovakia from 2020 to 2022

Research and development spending as a share of Slovakia's GDP remained the same in the observed period, roughly 0.84 percent. The forecast for the year 2022 expected no changes in this trend.

#### **Division of allocations from the state budget to public universities.**

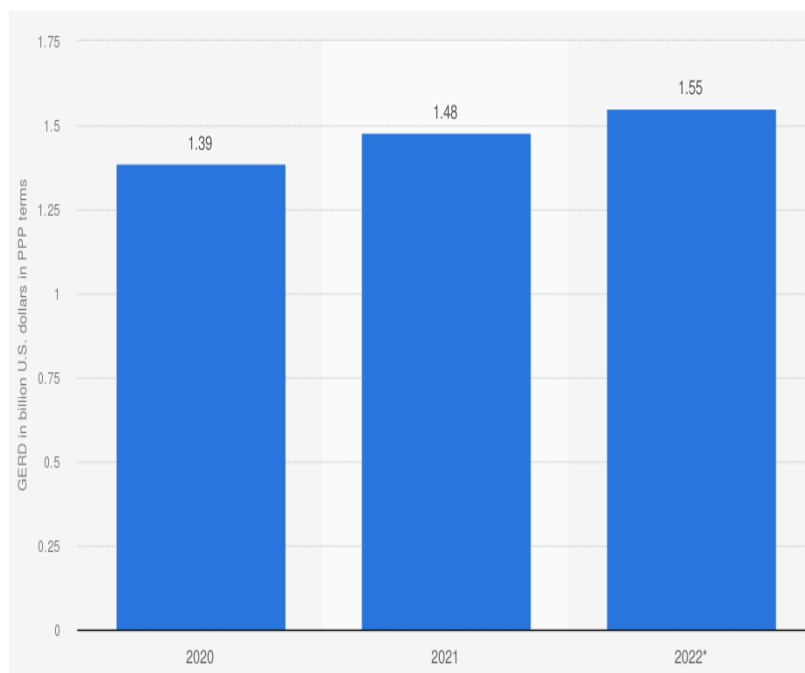
Funding of public universities from the state budget is realized by means of allocations and more specifically in four areas:

a) allocation for the realization of accredited study programs – redistribution of this allocation depends on the number of students, graduates, economic difficulty of programs, incorporation of university or the quality and use of graduates in practice.

b) allocation for scientific, developing, or artistic performance – it is institutional support of the types of performances. We include also grant agencies VEGA and KEGA, that allocate subsidies based on the projects' support.

c) allocation for the development of university – this type of allocation can be gained by universities by submitting development programs. In this case, the quality of submitting projects, long-term interest of Ministry or the university itself is taken into an account.

d) allocation for the social support of students – this allocation comes from the students' requirements for the social support. It can be a direct type in the form of social scholarship or motivation scholarship or indirect type through contributions for the costs connected to food or accommodation or the financial support of sport, cultural or university centres.



Picture 4: Gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) in Slovakia from 2020 to 2022(in billion U.S. dollars in PPP terms)

Slovakia's gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) was 1.48 billion U.S. dollars in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms in 2021. This number was forecast to increase to 1.55 billion U.S. dollars in PPP terms in 2022, a 4.7 percent growth compared to the previous year. The country's R&D spending increased continuously over the observed period.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The issues connected to universities in Slovakia are decreasing number of students, students leaving abroad and lack of funding of science and research as well as their lagging behind against other countries. The Slovak Republic has to support science, research and has to focus on various areas, specifically to support new areas of research and development on the international level, economic development, application of innovations, cooperation with companies and creation of the effective infrastructure mainly universities' scientific parks, etc.

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