

# **The Possible Usage of the European Union Structural Funds for Communities and Their Semi- budgetary Organizations**

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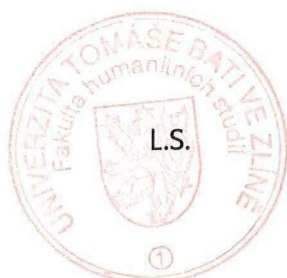
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá možnostmi čerpání dotací z Evropské unie. Teoretická část podrobně popisuje jednak všeobecně možnosti čerpání ze strukturálních fondů Evropské unie a dále se zaměřuje na aktuální situaci v České Republice, tedy na programovací období 2007-2013. Důraz je kladen především na operační program Vzdělávání pro Konkurenceschopnost. Součástí je i část Projektový management, jehož znalost je klíčem k úspěšné realizaci projektu. Analýza se zaměřuje na vztah mezi realizacemi projektů základními školami v Kraji Vysočina, dále se zaměřením na Havlíčkův Brod, a mezi reakcí na stávající situaci – rostoucí konkurence mezi školami, dlouhodobě se snižující počet žáků a neustálý rozvoj metod výuky. Nuselská škola byla vybrána k popisu jí realizovaného projektu.

Klíčová slova: Evropská unie, Strukturální fondy, projektový management, projekt, dotace, základní škola, vzdělávání, ZŠ Nuselská.

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor thesis is dealing with the great possibility the EU has been offering and that is the providing of grants. The theoretical part contains further particulars about possible drawing from the EU Structural Funds as well as the description of current situation in the Czech Republic with emphasis on the Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness. The integral part is the project management, whose knowledge is essential for the successful project realization. The analysis focuses on the relation between realization of projects by the primary schools as the semi-budgetary organizations in the Vysočina Region, more specifically in Havlíčkův Brod and the current situation - increasing competition among primary schools, lowering number of pupils and developing educational methods. The particular project of Nuselská Primary School is chosen to show how this school is dealing with the situation.

Keywords: European Union, Structural Funds, project management, project, grant, primary school, education, Nuselská Primary School.

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## INTRODUCTION

My bachelor thesis focuses on the theme of financing the municipalities and its semi-budgetary organizations from the EU Structural Funds. The EU has been lowering the regional differences among all Member States with the aid of their grants. The municipalities as well as the semi-budgetary organizations have a great opportunity to quickly develop due to these grants. Each project application has to correspond with a specific Operational Programme. In this thesis the Operational Programmes valid for the current programming period 2007-2013 in Czech Republic are specified. The OP Education for Competitiveness is described in more details because this thesis focuses on the primary schools that are important part of the semi-budgetary organizations.

The practical part of this bachelor thesis is related to the defining of current situation of the primary schools in the Vysočina Region and mainly in city Havlíčkův Brod. At present these schools have to face many changes and the help from the EU funds seems to be great possibility how to solve these problems. In details it describes the attitude of primary schools from Havlíčkův Brod to the drawing the support from the EU funds. The Nuselská Primary School has the most active approach to the realization of granted projects and therefore this school was chosen to the closer description of the successful project.

I decided to elaborate this thesis according to the fact it is very important nowadays and profitable to be oriented in the EU funding. There are still too many communities, companies etc. in the Czech Republic that are not aware of all the possibilities the EU funds has been offering.

## **I. THEORY**

## **1 THE AIMS OF BACHELOR THESIS AND THE ELABORATING PROCEDURE**

The main aim of this thesis is to evaluate the situation of usage the financial means from the EU Structural Funds in area of primary education in town Havlíčkův Brod. The particular aims can be formulated as follows:

- describing the theoretical framework of the EU Structural Funds with the emphasis on drawing the support by the Czech Republic and focusing the OP Education for Competitiveness;
- the summary of basic rules for the project preparation and realization with the relation to the EU Structural Funds;
- the identification of current situation in area of drawing the support from the EU Structural Funds by primary schools in town Havlíčkův Brod;
- describing the main aspects of creation the project application on the selected case study of one primary school from Havlíčkův Brod.

The thesis structure was created according to these aims.

The elaborating procedure with the relation to the aims was fulfilled by means of combination the several methods designed for scientific work. The fulfillment of first two aims was based on the literature retrieval of the relevant informative sources which comprised of available monographs, statistical statements, web sites etc. The background search of the third aim was related to the internal information sources of five primary schools in Havlíčkův Brod. In addition, the interviews were realized with the responsible workers of these schools. These interviews focused on five questions:

- Question 1: Has the school ever drawn the EU support?
- Question 2: Has the school ever applied unsuccessfully for the EU support?
- Question 3: Is the school planning to apply for the grant in time period of 1-2 years, 2-5 years?
- Question 4: What are the main reasons the school did not apply for the grant?
- Question 5: Is the school sufficiently informed about the drawing possibilities?

The last aim resulted from the approved project application of the Nuselská Primary School and was provided by the responsible school worker.

## 2 THE EU FUNDS

### 2.1 Basic information about the EU funding

The European Union is a great single market that however has to envisage many social and economic disparities. The European Union comprises 27 Member States that altogether include over 493 million citizens. There are many areas within the EU which are developed at different economic and social level. The EU tries to reduce these disparities through the *Cohesion Policy*. Moreover, the Cohesion Policy is intended to support the economic growth, to improve competitiveness etc. and at the same time to manage the exchange of ideas and experiences within the EU. The main instrument of this policy are the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund that represents the largest source of the EU financial support for investment and is designed to all regions to compete effectively in the internal market. The whole Cohesion Policy harmonizes with the priorities set by the EU for growth and jobs. More than a third of the EU budget is devoted to this regional development, economic and social cohesion. (Cohesion Policy)

The Directorate General is the institution that safeguards this cohesion among regions and countries of the EU. The DG has managed three major funds: the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and served as the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession. The DG is also responsible for:

- “the implementation of the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF), which is dedicated to speedy intervention in the case of major disasters, to provide aid as quickly as possible;
- the co-ordination group on ultra-peripheral regions, whose remit is to encourage Community actions to implement measures compensating for the disadvantaged situation of the outermost regions, according to Article 299(2) of the Treaty;
- the management of the EC contributions to the International Fund for Ireland which, together with the PEACE programme included in the Structural Funds, aims at peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.“ (Mission of the Directorate General for Regional Policy)

### 2.2 Regions in EU

The European Union adopted the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (further used abbreviation NUTS) that is a special type of region's division within the EU. The

NUTS was established by Eurostat<sup>1</sup> and gradually replaced the previous division types used in the various statistical domains. Its purpose is to provide single uniform breakdown of territorial units within the European Union. It serves as a reference for the collection, harmonization and development of regional statistics. The regional economic accounts were developed and the regional sections of the Community surveys were defined on the basis of the NUTS. The important goal of the European Parliament Regulation and of the Council is to minimize the impact of the process of changes in the administrative structures of Member States. (Introduction to the NUTS and the Statistical regions of Europe)

The implementation of the NUTS dates back to the 1970s and it has changed its structure several times. In 1970s the Eurostat set up the first version of the NUTS but it has been used by the Community legislation since the 1988. The Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council adopted the NUTS in 2003, after three years preparation. The other regions from 10 new Member States were added in 1 May 2003 and from 1 January the regions of Romania and Bulgaria are included in the classification. It is fixed that the changes to the NUTS classification will be proposed by the Commission, not more often than every three years. The NUTS is a three-level hierarchical classification and the usage depends on the variable concerned. Basically the NUTS Regulation lays down the minimum and maximum thresholds for the average size of the regions. See the figure 1. The appendix I further refers to the number of NUTS regions in each country. (Introduction to the NUTS and the Statistical regions of Europe)

Level	Minimum	Maximum
NUTS 1	3 million	7 million
NUTS 2	800 000	3 million
NUTS 3	150 000	800 000

**Table 1:** Three-level classification of the NUTS. (European Commission Eurostat)

The single NUTS usage:

NUTS 1 - The major socio-economic regions that are grouping together the basic regions. This classification is used for analyzing regional Community problems such as “the effect of

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1) Eurostat is a Directorate-General of the European Commission located in Luxemburg.

customs union and economic integration on areas at the next level down from national areas". NUTS 2 - So called basic regions, they are the framework that is generally used by the Member States for the application of their regional policies. NUTS 3 - The institutional division within the Member States according to each Member State cohesion policy. These regions are usually too small for complex economic analyses. They are usually used for specific diagnoses.

The NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 are used for the framing of Community regional policies. The allocation of money from the Structural Funds comes under NUTS 2 level. This is valid in the case that regions are concerned by Objective 1 (see more in 2.1. and 2.3. chapter). The areas under other priority Objectives are usually classified at the NUTS 3 level. The report on social and economic situation and the development of the regions is prepared every three years. It is concerning the European Regional Development Fund and is prepared at the NUTS 2 level. (Introduction to the NUTS and the Statistical regions of Europe)

### **3 THE EU STRUCTURAL FUNDS**

The Structural Funds are considered to be the most significant fiscal instruments of the EU Cohesion Policy. The Structural Funds were established to decrease the disparities by the development of various regions and stressing the EU economic and social cohesion. The Structural Funds' grant allocations are used for the implementation of the Operational Programmes and Community Initiatives. The individual types of funds and allocation amounts differ according to the programming period. Each fund contributes to the fulfillment of certain objectives set by the Cohesion Policy.

#### **3.1 The Structural Funds in the 2000-2006 programming period**

In the previous programming period 2000 – 2006 there were four Structural Funds that supported the economic and social disparities and three Objectives:

„*Objective 1* – Support to the development and structural changes in lagging-back regions (for regions with GDP less than 75 % of the EU average);

*Objective 2* – Support to the economic and social conversion of regions facing structural problems;

*Objective 3* – Support to the adjustment and modernisation of policies and systems in education, re-qualification and employment.“ (Programy 2004-2006)

##### **3.1.1 The European Regional Development Fund (the ERDF)**

The European Regional Development Fund was established in 1975. It is considered to be the largest fund (regarding the allocation amount and areas of support). The projects from Objective 1 and 2 are funded from the ERDF. (Structural Funds) Its aim is to promote economic and social cohesion within the EU by reducing the imbalances between regions or social groups. For more information, see chapter 2.3.1. (Structural Funds)

##### **3.1.2 The European Social Fund (the ESF)**

The European Social Fund has been operating since 1960 and serves as the main instrument in employment and social policy. The ESF focuses on the unemployment of youth and the long-term unemployment as well as the women and socially disadvantages groups. It includes the projects from all 3 Objectives. For more information, see chapter 2.3.2. (Structural Funds)



### **3.1.3 The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (the EAGGF)**

The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund was established in 1962. EAGGF was operating under Structural Funds in period 2000-2006. At present period 2007-2013 there is the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development that replaced the EAGGF and stands separately from Structural Funds. Its aim was to support the rural development and the improvement of agricultural structures. The fund was subdivided into two sections – the Guidance section and Guarantee section. The Guidance section came under the Objective 1. It supported the modernization and rationalization of agricultural production. The section Guarantee was active in price stabilization or export competencies. (Structural Funds)

### **3.1.4 The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)**

The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance was established in 1994. The FIFG was operating under Structural Funds in period 2000-2006. For period 2007-2013 there was established new fund the European Fisheries Fund that stands separately from Structural Funds. Its aim was to provide the funding for development of coastal areas and to strengthen the competitiveness of fishery sector. It supported the achieving of a sustainable balance between fishery resources and their exploitation. (Structural Funds)

## **3.2 The Structural Funds in the 2007-2013 programming period**

The budget of the Cohesion Policy is EUR 347.41 billion; and includes the Structural Funds (share EUR 277 billion) and the Cohesion Fund (EUR 70 billion). This amount of money represents 35.7% of the total EU budget. The European Commission has been monitoring the spending of the Structural Funds that has to accord with the Community priorities. There are only two Structural Funds in this programming period- the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. The next two funds EAGGF and FIFG that were in progress in the previous programming period 2000-2006 no longer occur under the Structural Funds. (History)

The three new objectives for this period are:

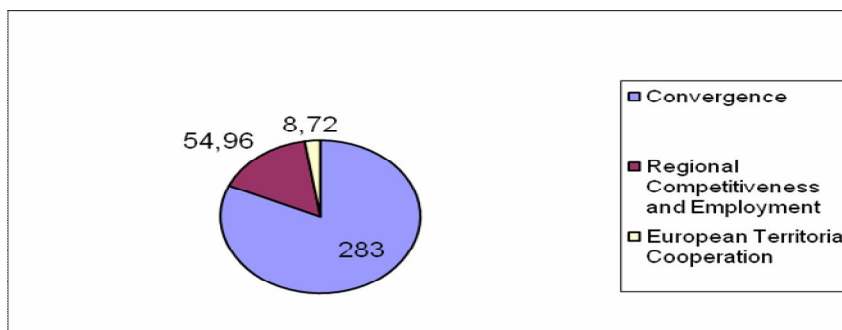
*Convergence objective (Objective 1)* – its aim is to strengthen human resources, namely to increase employment prospects, boost labour productivity and stimulate growth, as well as to support good governance and the strengthening of the institutions and administrative capacities. (2007-2013.eu)

The amount destined for the Convergence objective is EUR 282.8 billion that is representing 81.5 % of the total allocation. In this period 84 regions within 18 Member States with total population of 154 million will draw the support.

Regions under NUTS 2 level classification whose GNP per inhabitant is less than 75 % of the Community average can draw the support. (Key objectives)

*Regional Competitiveness and Employment (Objective 2)* – there is two-fold approach through which competitiveness, attractiveness and the employment are strengthened. First approach focuses on actions of improvement of workers and companies to adapt to change, the promotion of the knowledge society, entrepreneurship, the protection of the environment. Second approach aims at supporting more and better jobs by adapting the workforce and by investing in human resources. The amount destined for the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective is EUR55 billion. Regions in 19 Member States are concerned with this objective. The regions under NUTS 1 or 2 level classification (depending on the Member State) that are not covered by the Convergence objective or by the transitional assistance are eligible for funding from this objective. (Key objectives)

*European Territorial Co-operation (Objective 3)* – this objective focuses on transnational co-operation, exchange of experience, strengthening cross-border co-operation through local and regional initiatives. The amount destined for the European Territorial Co-operation objective is EUR 8.7 billion. The population living in cross-border areas is up to 181.7 million (37.5 % of the total EU population). Cross-border cooperation includes the NUTS 3 level regions along all internal land borders, some external land borders and regions along maritime borders that are separated by a maximum distance of 150 km. (Key objectives)



**Figure 1:** The budget of the Cohesion Policy in 2007-20013 according to the separate objectives (in billion euros). (Funds available)

### 3.2.1 The European Regional Development Fund

The ERDF contributes to the strengthening of territorial, economic and social cohesion by supporting the structural development and reducing regional disparities, mainly the support of declining industrial regions. The ERDF support concentrates on many areas such as: productive investment, infrastructure, creation and development of financing instruments such as venture capital, loan and guarantee funds, exchange of experience between regions, towns and social, economic and environmental actors and technical assistance. (Regional Assistance)

The ERDF supports the EU Member States whose GNP per capita is below 75 % of the EU average in the current period 2007-2013. The ERDF assistance includes all three Objectives. Under the *Convergence* objective its assistance focuses on supporting sustainable integrated regional and local economic development by modernization and diversification of regional economic structures. The main areas of support under the Convergence objective are: R&D in technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, environment, information technology, risk prevention, tourism, investment in transport, education, energy, health, direct assistance for investment in small businesses. (Regional Assistance)

Under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective the ERDF assists in the context of regional sustainable development strategies. It focuses on the following priorities:

- environment and risk prevention;
- innovation and the knowledge economy, through support to the design and implementation of regional innovation strategies conducive to efficient regional innovation system;
- to access outside major urban centres. (Regional Assistance)

The ERDF assistance under the *European Territorial Co-operation* objective targets these areas: making regional policy more effective by encouraging regional and local authorities to form networks and share know-how; developing cross-border economic and social activities, this mainly involves encouraging entrepreneurship, collaboration in the field of environmental protection, and reducing isolation. The Fund also promotes the integration of cross-border labour markets, local employment initiatives, equal opportunities, training and measures to combat social exclusion and the sharing of human resources and facilities

for technology R&D; establishing and developing transnational cooperation, including bilateral cooperation between maritime regions. The necessary parts: managing water resources, improving accessibility, risk prevention and creating science and technology network. (Regional Assistance)

### **3.2.2 The European Social Fund**

The ESF is the EU's financial instrument investing in people. It helps the Member States to meet the mutual goals for creating more and better jobs. Its mission is to fight with unemployment, to make the EU workforce and companies better equipped to face new challenges and to keep the touch of people with the labour market. The ESF assistance supports anticipating and managing the economic and social change. It is implemented in line with the European Employment Strategy and focuses on four areas:

- increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises;
- enhancing access to employment and participation in the labour market;
- reinforcing social inclusion by combating discrimination;
- facilitating access to the labour market for disadvantaged people and promoting partnership for reform in the fields of employment and inclusion (Regional Assistance);
- through Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective the ESF aims to reduce the differences in living standards between people and various regions within the EU. Convergence objective aims to increase employment, boost labour productivity and stimulate growth, supporting good governance of the institutions and its administration. The ESF Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective focuses on higher flexibility of companies and its workers, simpler access to job market, help for disadvantaged, fight against discrimination. (Regional Assistance)

In the present period the ESF has been financing up to 75 % of public spending in areas covered by the Convergence objective and 50 % in those covered by the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective. The ESF supports the least prosperous Member States who's GNP per capita is lower than 75 % of the EU average. (Regional Assistance)

### 3.3 The Cohesion Fund

The Cohesion Fund was established in 1994 and is not a part of the Structural Funds. To specify the mission of this fund is necessary because for the period 2007-2013 the Council Regulation of the European Union established new framework for the action that is held by this fund and the Structural Funds too. In this framework the Cohesion Fund has the same objectives, principles and rules concerning partnership, evaluation, management and programming as the Structural Funds. (Cohesion Fund)

Cohesion Fund is a structural instrument concerning the less developed Member States (whose GNP is lower than 90 % of the EU average). The aim is to reduce the social and economic disparities and to stabilize their economy. The assistance mainly focuses on the environmental protection and the transport infrastructure projects. (Regional Assistance)

“The priority measures concern:

- completion of the connections needed to facilitate transport;
- optimization of the efficiency of existing infrastructure;
- achievement of interoperability of network components;
- integration of the environmental dimension in the network.“ (Regional Assistance)

## 4 THE USAGE OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

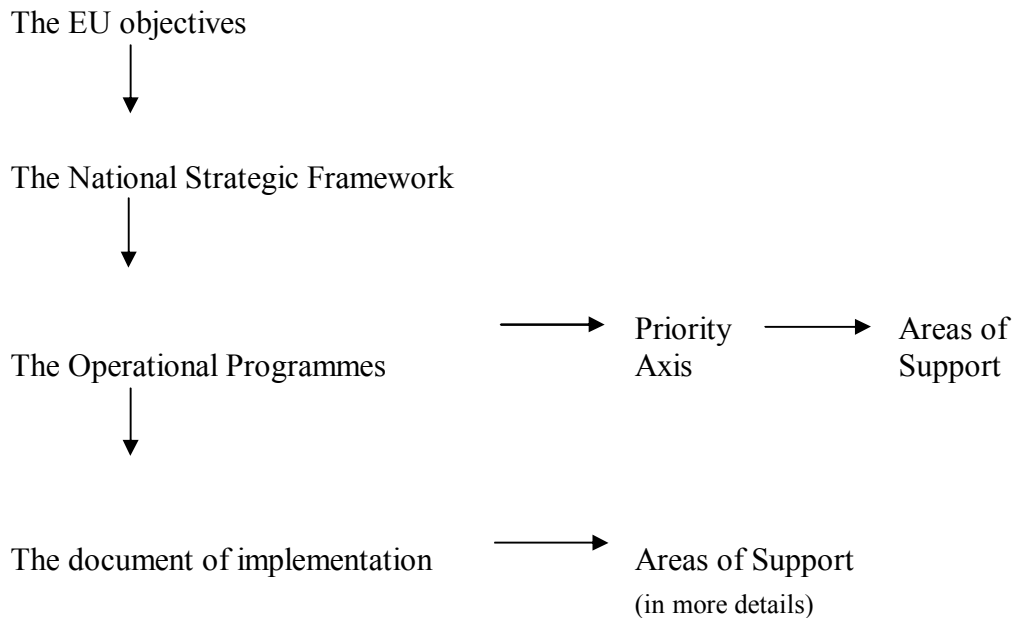
Even if the Czech Republic entered the European Union in 2004, the support of the EU to all the candidate states was offered in the period before the accession. The EU implemented three financial instruments (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD) to assist the candidate states with the preparation for accession. In this Pre-Accession period the Czech Republic had to implement the strategy improving the prospect for EU accession. (European Cohesion Policy in Czech Republic)

The Czech Republic fully started to derive the benefit from the Cohesion Policy in the shortened period 2004-2006, immediately after the Czech Republic entered the EU. In this period the EU invested into the Czech Cohesion Policy EUR 2.6 billion and the allocation focused on the support to improve the business environment, to increase flexibility in labour market and to upgrade the transport infrastructure. According to the data from the end of the year 2008, when the drawing from previous programming period was finished, the Czech Republic utilized around 90 % of the total allocation. The result of this help was large, over 30 000 new jobs were created, the support used almost 3 000 small and medium-sized enterprises and over 300 information and communication technologies projects were funded. The EU support also targeted the environmental projects including the construction of 370 km of new sewage systems. (Rok 2008 znamenal pro Českou republiku prudký nárůst žádostí o evropské dotace)

### 4.1 The preparation and implementation of the Structural Funds in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic as well as each Member State prepares the *National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)* that defines the strategy chosen by the Member State and proposes a list of the *Operational Programmes* it wants to implement. The EU Commission has three months after receipt of the NSRF to make any comments and to require any additional information from the Member State. The Operational Programmes present the priorities of the Member State that should be supported and the way in which it will lead its programming. These programmes provide the necessary information for the potential applicants. Each Operational Programme is divided in details into the Priority Axis that represents the main directions for the interventions. The fulfillment of these Axis leads to

the accomplishment of the Operational Programme specific goals. The single axis includes several areas of support that defines the main activities, receivers of the support, the way of realization etc. (National Strategic Reference Framework)



**Figure 2:** The hierarchy specifying the Structural Funds implementation. (Chvojková and Květoň 2007, 12)

## 4.2 The authority for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013

The Czech authority with overall responsibility for Cohesion policy 2007-2013 is the *Ministry for Regional Development*. This ministry has performed the role of the central official partner to the EU Commission. Before the current period 2007-2013 the ministry had safeguarded the preliminary coordination, including the processing of the National Development Plan and the NSRF. (Informace o fonděch EU)

## 4.3 Current 2007-2013 programming period in the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has been allocated EUR 26.7 billion in total during the current seven years long period and the amount can be drawn till 2015. To complete the EU investment, the Czech Republic has been contributing by EUR 4.6 billion over these seven years. (Programy 2007 - 2013)

The Czech NSRF laid down that the EU support has been invested in four strategic objectives divided into fifteen strategic priorities:

- 1) "Strategic objective Competitive Czech economy
  - competitive business sector;
  - support of R&D capacity for innovation;

- development of a sustainable travel and tourism sector and utilization of the potential offered by the cultural heritage;
- 2) Strategic objective Open, flexible and cohesive society
- education;
  - increasing employment and employability;
  - strengthening social cohesion;
  - development of the information society;
  - smart administration;
- 3) Strategic objective Attractive environment
- protection and improvement of the environment quality;
  - improved accessibility to transport (for instance, increasing the share of railway transport and developing combined transport);
- 4) Strategic objective Balanced territory development
- balanced regional development;
  - development of urban areas;
  - development of rural areas;
  - regional Competitiveness and Employment – the Capital City of Prague Territorial Cooperation.” (European Cohesion Policy in Czech Republic)

#### **4.3.1 The Operatinal Programmes (OPs)**

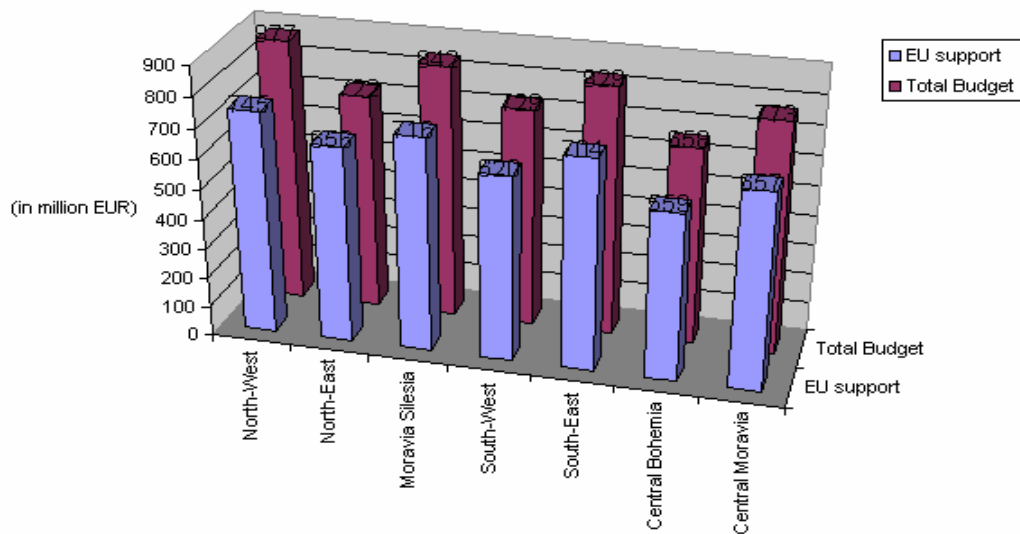
The Czech Republic implemented 26 Operational Programmes from which 9 come under the European Territorial Cooperation objective. 14 Operational Programmes come under the ERDF and partly under the Cohesion Fund and 3 under the ESF. The ERDF manages four sectoral and seven regional operational programmes that are under the Convergence objective, one operational programme Prague Competitiveness under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective and two multi-objective operational programmes under Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objectives. The ESF manages two multi-objective operational programmes under Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objectives and one operational programme Prague Adaptability under Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective. (European Cohesion Policy in Czech Republic) The NSRF (17 OPs) does not cover the operational programmes within the European Territorial Cooperation objective.



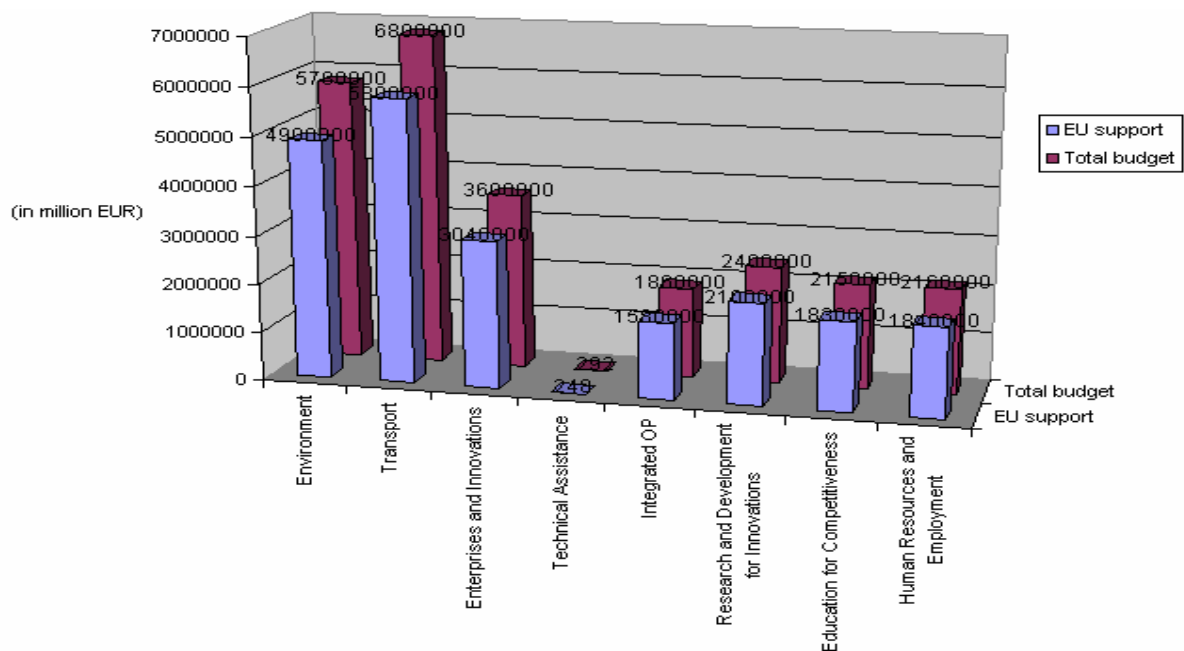
<i>The Regional Ops</i>	Consist of 7 OPs, all coming under the Convergence Objective framework. The overall goal is the support of economic, social, territorially balanced and sustainable development of the single regions, according to its specific needs and resources. The Community investment is for all OPs through the ERDF.
OP North-West	Priorities: urban regeneration and development, integrated support of local development, accessibility and transport service ability, sustainable development of tourism, technical assistance.
OP North-East	Priorities: development of transport infrastructure, development of urban and rural areas, tourism, development of the entrepreneurial environment, technical assistance.
OP Moravia Silesia	Priorities: regional infrastructure and accessibility support for the prosperity of the region, urban and rural development, technical assistance.
OP South-West	Priorities: accessibility of centres, stabilization and development of towns and municipalities, development of tourism, technical assistance
OP South-East	Priorities: transport accessibility, development of sustainable tourism, sustainable development of towns and rural areas, technical assistance.
OP Central Bohemia	Priorities: transport, tourism, integrated territorial development, technical assistance.
OP Central Moravia	Priorities: transport, integrated development and regeneration of the region, tourism, technical assistance.
<i>The Thematic OPs</i>	There are 8 OPs, coming under the Convergence Objective. The Technical assistance and Integrated OPs come under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective in addition. This Thematic OPs support all regions. The programmes are financed from the ERDF.
OP Environment	Priorities: improvement of water management and reduction of flood risks, improvement of air quality and reduction of emissions, sustainable use of energy sources, improvement of waste management and rehabilitation of old ecological burdens, limitation of industrial pollution and environmental risks, improvement of the state of nature and landscape, development of infrastructure for environmental education, consultancy and awareness, technical assistance.
OP Transport	Priorities: upgrading and development of the TEN-T Railway Network, construction and upgrading of motorways and roads in the and outside the TEN-T network, improving transport on class I roads outside of the TEN-T Network, upgrading and development of the Prague underground and systems for managing road transport in the Prague, support of multimodal freight transport and development of inland waterway transport, technical assistance.
OP Enterprises and Innovations	Priorities: establishment and development of firms, effective energy, innovation, environment for enterprise and innovation, business development services, technical assistance.
OP Technical assistance	Priorities: management and coordination assistance, monitoring, administration and absorption capacity, publicity. It is coming under two Objectives - Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment.

OP Integrated Operational Programme	Priorities: modernizing of the public administration, ICT for territorial public administration, improving the quality and accessibility of public services, national support for tourism, national support for territorial development, technical assistance.
OP Research and Development for Innovations	Priorities: European centres of excellence, regional R&D centres, commercialization and popularization of R&D, infrastructure for university education related to research, technical assistance.
OP Education for Competitiveness	See chapter 4.
OP Human Resources and Employment	Priorities: adaptability, active policy of labour market, social integration and equal opportunities, public administration and public service, international cooperation, technical assistance.
<i>The OPs in capital city Prague</i>	There are 2 OPs and both come under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective. The OP Prague Adaptability is financed from the ESF and the OP Prague Competitiveness from the ERDF.
OP Prague Adaptability	Priorities: transport accessibility and ICT development, environment, innovations and enterprise, technical assistance.
OP Prague Competitiveness	Priorities: support of the knowledge economy, support of the labour market entrance, modernization of initial education, technical assistance.
<i>The European Territorial Cooperation Ops</i>	There are 9 OPs from which 5 are the Cross-border Cooperation OPs. All the OPs come under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective and the ERDF finances these programmes.
OP INTERREG IVC	This programme helps the EU Member States plus Switzerland and Norway to share the knowledge and experience. There are two priorities: innovation and knowledge economy and environment and risk prevention.
OP The Transnational Cooperation	The programme promotes competitiveness, innovation, accessibility and environmental sustainability in Central Europe (Czech Republic comes under this zone).
OP ESPON 2013	This programme focuses on the providing information, evidence and analyses of the development in certain territory and its recommendations should highly influence the political decisions.
OP INTERACT II	It aims the efficiency improvement of territorial cooperation, to higher the quality of the territorial cooperation and the support to implement transnational, cross-border and interregional cooperation. The programme concurs the INTERACT from previous programming period and there are no realized new programmes in current period.
<i>Cross-border Cooperation Ops</i>	The cooperation of these 5 OPs concerns the border-regions (NUTS III) of Czech Republic and the neighboring states. There are following Ops: CR – free state Bavaria, CR – Slovakia, CR – Poland, CR – Austria and CR – free state Saxony. The basic aim is the support of cross-border economic, cultural and municipal cooperation, the environmental improvement and the support of tourism.

**Table 2:** Operational Programmes within the Czech Republic. (Programy 2007-2013)



**Figure 3:** Financial division among the Regional Ops. (Programy 2007 - 2013)



**Figure 4:** Financial division among the Thematic OPs. (Programy 2007-2013)

The OPs in capital city Prague neither are included in the Regional nor in the Thematic OPs and therefore its financing is not included in the figures 4 and 5 above. The budget of OP Prague Adaptability is EUR 127.52 million from which the ESF finances EUR 108.39 million. The second OP Prague Competitiveness has higher budget, EUR 276.4 million from which the ERDF finances EUR 234.94 million. The financing of the European Territorial Cooperation OPs is slightly more complicated than the financing of Regional and Thematic OPs. The budget of the OP INTERREG IVC is EUR 405.09 million from which the states

concerned finance EUR 83.77 million and the ERDF 321.32 million. The amount of money designed for the Czech Republic under the Central Europe OP and financed from the ERDF is EUR 37.46 million. The total budget of the OP ESPON 2013 is EUR 200.000 and three partners take part in this financing: the ERDF, the EU Member States and the EU partners<sup>2</sup>. There is no budget for the OP INTERACT II because it has no realized new projects in this programming period. The amount of money designed for 5 Cross-border Cooperation OPs, financed from the ERDF is EUR 742.55 million. (Programy 2007 - 2013)

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2) The EU partners are: Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

## 5 THE OP EDUCATION FOR COMPETITIVENESS

The Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme (ECOP) aims the area of development the human resources through education in all its various forms, important is lifelong learning, innovation of activities and stimulation for cooperation among the entities involved and creation of suitable environment for research. (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

“The global goal of the ECOP 2007–2013 is the development of an educated society for the purpose of strengthening the competitiveness of the CR through modernisation of the systems of initial, tertiary and further education, their incorporation into the complex system of lifelong learning and improvement of the conditions in research and development.” (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

The ECOP comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. The support is drawn from the European Social Fund in this programming period 2007-2013. The amount of money destined for financing the ECOP in this current period is EUR 1.83 billion, that is around 6,8 % of the total amount destined for the CR. The co-financing of the projects reaches up to 100 %, of which 85 % comprises from European Social Fund resources and 15 % from state budget of the CR. The support from the Czech Republic is EUR 0.32 billion. (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

### 5.1 Priority Axes

The OP ECOP covers five main domains called Priority Axes. Each axis is further divided into its main areas of support and has its own budget.

Priority Axes	Areas of support	Allocation amount (in million EUR)
1 – Initial Education	increasing quality in education, equal opportunities for children and pupils (including those with special educational needs)	612.1
2 – Tertiary Education, Research and Development	Higher vocational education, tertiary education, human resources in research and development, partnerships and networks	626.5
3 – Further education	individual further education, support for the offer of further education	289.9
4 – System Framework for Lifelong Learning	System framework for initial education, system framework for tertiary education and the development of human resources in	227.1

	research and development	
5 – Technical Assistance	management, control, monitoring and assessment of the programme; awareness and publicity of the programme; absorption capacity of the entities implementing the programme	72.4

**Table 3:** An overview of Priority Axes and main areas of support (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

The ECOP distinguishes two kinds of projects that can be financed: the individual and grant projects. The *Individual projects* come under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and cover all priority axes except Technical Assistance. The National individual projects are implemented in the whole CR whereas the other projects have regional or non-regional character. The *Grant projects* come under global grants, which are announced, by the regions of the Czech Republic. They cover priority axes Initial and Further Education. The projects are implemented on the territory of the relevant region. The amount of money is CZK 400.000 – 25.000.000. The maximum length of the project is 3 years. (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

“Receivers of support within the ECOP depending on the individual areas of support are:

- central organs of public administration (including the organizations directly managed by them= semi-budgetary organizations)
- regions;
- towns and villages;
- schools and education facilities (including colleges of higher education and higher education institutions);
- school association consortium;
- employers;
- professional organizations of employers and employees, entrepreneurs
- professional union, employee, employer and field organizations;
- organizations active in education and career consulting;
- organizations active in the area of leisure time of children and youths;
- institutions providing consulting for the area of further education;
- science and research institutions;
- development and innovation centres;

- non-governmental not-for-profit organizations;
- health-care facilities.” (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

### 5.1.1 Priority Axis 1 – Initial Education

„The global objective of the priority axis is the development and quality improvement of initial education with emphasis on improving the key competencies of school leavers in order to ensure their employability in the labour market and to increase their motivation for further education.“ (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

Intervention will be implemented only under the Convergence objective. This priority axis focuses on the initial education system as a whole. The emphasis is placed on the key skills, quality of teaching staff and to support the person’s individual talent. The aim is to raise the employment rate of school leavers and in the same time the creation of motivating system for further studies. The financial support is provided to intensify the cooperation of schools and educational institutions and to support the international projects as well. Emphasis is also placed on the equal opportunities for everybody, with special emphasis on Roma ethnic issue and pupils with special educational needs or extraordinary talent. The attention is paid to prevention of racism and xenophobia and to the support of multicultural and environmental training. The support does not include only the children and pupils, but also the teaching and non-teaching staff. The further education of this staff is key part for transformation of teaching environment and to change the climate for continual development of schools. (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)

The key factor is the full implementation of the curriculum reform by each receiver of support. This reform provides comprehensive methodological support for implementation of school framework programmes. The curriculum reform is decisive for new quality level in initial education. The receiver of support has a room to implement the retrospective corrections and innovations of the curriculum reform that is based on monitoring, evaluation, self-evaluation by schools and quality assuring tools.

There are certain weaknesses in the Czech Republic initial education:

- insufficient and regionally differentiated levels of facilities for modern language teaching and textbooks;

- 
- absence of preparation for enterprising;
  - low level of individual approach to pupils;
  - shortcomings in the area of evaluation and self evaluation of schools;
  - low involvement of the Czech schools in international projects (the reason can be observed in a language barrier, low competence or inadequate equipment);
  - insufficient dealing with how to enable all pupils to develop their potential to its maximum;
  - limiting factor is the amount of expenditure on education, which is below the European average. (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme Period 2007–2013)



## 6 THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The knowledge of the project management is essential for the successful project realization. The goal of this management is to secure the preparation period, physical realization, termination procedure as well as the project assessment.

### 6.1 The procedures and rules for the preparation and implementation of the project

The application results from four basic documents: the Operational Programme, the Manual for the applicants, the Call and from the Manual for the receiver.

*The Manual for the applicants* enters into details the information listed in the OP. It includes the legitimacy criteria: who is the applicant, the place of the realization, the target group, the project activities and financial resources. It describes the formal aspect of the application. The projects coming under the Education for Competitiveness OP have to be worked up in BENEFIT 7 programme, delivered in written and CD version to the authority (the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport). As following it describes how the application should look like. (Slovník pojmů)

*The Call* calls up the potential applicants to present their projects. It specifies list of supported activities, target groups, the legitimate receivers of the support, the financial and time framework of the project, the monitoring and evaluative criteria. (Slovník pojmů)

*The Manual for the receivers* is the fundamental document for the successful applicant. It proposes the solution methods using with modification, the financial management (the document registration, archiving and so on). It transmits the rules for selection of suppliers, the rules for working up the monitoring reports and the publicity rules. (Slovník pojmů)

### 6.2 The requirements and goals of the project

In this planning period the project should results from the long-term strategy of its organization. Each project should also establish its own strategy that will answer following questions:

- “Where is the company now and where do we want to get?
- Which kind of instruments are we going to use?
- How to check whether the objective was reached?
- What are the threats of the project?” (Doležal 2009, 58-61)

The *logframe* (logical framework) is the main instrument to fulfill this strategy. The lograme is the method that supports the project operating. The logframe consists of parts that you can see below in table 4 below. The first column consists of the objectives (also called the Tree of Objectives), the second shows the objectively verifiable indicators proving the achievement of these objectives. The next column is called The verification method that verifies the indicators. The last column is The risks and conditions. These conditions have to be fulfilled to reach the realization of the project.

The objectives:

1. The highest level is the project intention. This should answer the question Why do we want to reach the project objective?
2. The second is the objective of the project. This should answer the question What is the target of the project?
3. The third level is the project output. It answers the question How do we want to reach the objective?
4. The lowest level is the project activities. This includes the key activities that conduce to the output realization. (Doležal 2009, 64-66)

The project objective has to be unambiguous. The SMART technique is used to define the objective in the right manner. According to this technique the objective should be: S-specific, M-measurable, A-agreed, R-realistic and T-timed. (Doležal 2009, 62-63)

Objectives	Objectively verifiable indicators	The verification metod	The risks and conditions
Goal	Objectively verifiable indicators	Information sources for verification	
Objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Information sources for verification	The risks and conditions
Outputs	Objectively verifiable indicators	Information sources for verification	The risks and conditions
Activities	Resources (people...)	Time-framework of the activities	The risks and conditions
-	-	-	The preliminary conditions

**Table 4:** The logical framework of the project. (Doležal 2009, 64)

### 6.3 The organization of the project

The organizational structure should be highly flexible and adaptable with the view of fast reaction to each possible change. The creation of *the project team* is the essential condition

for the project organization. This project team should coordinate its organization with the internal organization within the company. The project team has to establish the organizational structure inside the team. The individual members of the team have defined type of competencies and responsibilities that can however change during the project development. *The responsibility matrix* defines the limited competencies within the concrete activity for its individual members. (Doležal 2009, 110-112)

#### **6.4 The time framework of the project**

The project is limited from time, cost and source criterion. Therefore the time is one of the key parameters for the project. The project can be divided into a single operating periods according to the time view of point. These single periods together create the operating life cycle of the project. (Doležal 2009, 154) There are three basic operating periods:

##### *A) The Pre-project period*

The single opportunities are investigated in this period. There can be also included the main idea and vision of the project. The main document<sup>3</sup> is *The Feasibility Study* that shows the most suitable way for the project realization. This document specifies the content, start-up and termination date, the total calculated costs and the calculated important resources. (Doležal 2009, 156-158)

##### *B) The Project period*

The project team and plan realization is created in this period. In more details this period can be divided into four parts. The first part is so called *Start-up* when the objectives are specified according to the pre-project period, the personal occupation is created and the competences are resolved. These technical and organizational parameters of the project can be covered in found charter. The following part is *the Planning*. The project team has to create the plan called the baseline after its approval. *The physical project realization* can be accompanied with the kick-off meeting. In this meeting there is the recapitulation of the baseline and of the timetable. During the physical realization it is necessary to monitor and compare the process with its baseline. In the last *Close-out* period the outputs are committed, the invoicing is carried out etc. (Doležal 2009, 158-159)

### C) *Post-project period*

The obligations with the project do not finish with the end of its physical realization. Each project has to be sustainable<sup>4</sup> generally for 5 years after the realization. The infraction of this sustainability can lead to the grant repayment. It is also important to analyze the project process and to lay down its positive and negative experiences because the project realization brings the valuable experience and knowledge that can be used in other following projects. (Doležal 2009, 159)

## 6.5 The financial framework of the project

The financial framework of the project is the usually continuation of the time framework. The project costs represent the consumption of all the production factors (expressed in money). These costs set up *the cost budget* of the project. The process of cost identification combines these typical steps:

- the total activity costs are calculated like the sum of the particular activity costs because the financial requirements are simpler to set separately for each particular activity;
- the particular activity costs are calculated in the following way:
  - the defining of the unit of measure;
  - the setting of the total unit number;
  - the setting of the price per unit;
  - the calculation of the activity.
- the application of broad range of methods for the cost calculation:
  - the previous similar experience;
  - the price research of the suppliers;
  - the usage of already existing statistics;
  - the expert valuation.

The total budget of the project should fulfill these expense conditions:

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3) Other useful document can be the Opportunity Study considering the situation in the company, market conditions, the supposed market development, similar companies, etc.

4) The project sustainability means the maintaining of outputs, goals and products as well as the institutionalizing the process.

- the suitability – the amount of expenses should coincide with the current prices in given place and branch;
- the expediency – the expenses are designed for activities that are according to the project goals;
- the demonstrability – the expenses are kept on file (accounting, tax accounting);
- the date of realization – the expenses have to be set in during the realization period;
- the economy and efficiency – the input-output ratio should be maximalized. (Doležal 2009, 186-190)

The budget of the project distinguishes the eligible and ineligible costs. The main difference is the eligibility – in contrary to ineligible costs can be financed from the funds. In the case of the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme *the eligible costs are*: the personal expenses, the traveling compensations, the facilities connected with the project realization, the local office (within the ECOP the financed amount of money is up to 100 % whether the office is used only for the project activity and maximally 8 % whether the office is used likewise for the standard activities), the purchase of the services (within ECOP the maximal financed amount is 49 % of the total budget), construction work, the direct support and other expenses according to the contract. (Doležal 2009, 186-190)

## **II. ANALYSIS**

## **7 PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION IN THE VYSOČINA REGION AND HAVLÍČKŮV BROD CITY**

### **7.1 The Vysočina Region**

The competition among primary schools cannot be furthermore marginalized. Since the number of pupils has been decreasing the schools have real problems to survive<sup>5</sup> and according to the Czech Statistical Office Web site it is just the Vysočina Region that has the second highest decline in number of primary schools in period 1999-2008 even if the proportion of children aged 0-14 is 14,5 % that is above the average of Czech Republic (14,1 %). This problem is connected with the continual decrease in the number and proportion of children in the population and as the CSO states on its Web site; the number of children aged 0-14 should experience even more rapid decrease in next several years. The schools should be also aware of the fact, the educational methods have been developing all the time and it is necessary to follow this trend. The computer literacy has been no more matter only for the secondary schools. By using of these computer technologies, the schools can reduce the great handicap and can improve the competitive advantage of their students. On the Web site [strukturalni-fondy.cz](http://strukturalni-fondy.cz) it is written that in terms of computer literacy the worst situation is in the Vysočina and Karlsbad Region where only 22 % of people over 15 years of age know how to use the computer. The usage of Internet seems to be other problem; generally the teachers consider the using of Internet very problematic during the lessons.

Most of the schools would draw the support, however the project realization is too difficult and time-consuming. The schools often create groups and together realize one project. These collective projects have fairly big advantages. It is usually the school with great experiences in drawing, that become the applicant and the partnership schools can acquire the necessary knowledge in this sphere as they do not have such a responsibility.

### **7.2 Situation in Havlíčkův Brod**

The Vysočina Region consists of 5 districts. According to the CSO Web site, Havlíčkův Brod district is the second smallest in number of people and its total population growth was

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1) The contribution from Havlíčkův Brod was CZK 7.795 per pupil in year 2009.

–246 (including the migration as well as the natural growth/decrease) in 2009, that means the largest decrease of population among the Vysočina's Region districts. There are 5 primary schools in Havlíčkův Brod at the present time. Having a look to the near past, one school was closed in 2003 but with its continual decrease of pupils it has been discussing since 2007 one of five remaining schools should be closed. According to the table below it is obvious there are two large schools and three smaller in number of students. The average amounted 418,8 per school, that is highly above the average 178,2 per school in the Vysočina Region (in school year 2007/2008).

The name of a school	Sady Primary School	Wolkerova Primary School	Štáflova Primary School	Nuselská Primary School	Konečná Primary School
Number of students	651	572	355	281	235

**Table 5:** Number of students in school year 2008/2009 in Havlíčkův Brod (Worked out by the author on the basis of internal information of schools)

With reference to the increasing competition among schools, the schools have to find out new innovative instruments that would attract the attention of potential pupils. The project realization within the frame of the EU Cohesion Policy is one of the up-to-date possibilities how to solve the situation. For the better understanding of the current situation in the area of project realization, all five primary schools were addressed. Following text is summarizing five asked questions as well as the main findings.

First question targeted the fact, whether the schools had applied for the project realization from the EU funds. Three schools were active in this respect (Nuselská Primary School, Konečná Primary School, Štáflova Primary School). Finally only two schools were successful with their application. One of these schools is called Štáflova and realized two projects (one application was delayed). First project realized under the GSEP in programming period 2004-2006. Regarding the second project, this school has become the partner of Nuselská Primary School in 2009 and joined its project Interactive learning. Štáflova Primary School could be ranked among the type of schools that firstly join the projects as the partners to acquire appropriate experience for further drawing. The Nuselská Primary School already realized five projects and is definitely on the top (probably not only in the area of Havlíčkův Brod) with this number of projects financed by the EU. Konečná, Nuselská and Štáflova primary schools (placed upwardly) are the smallest schools within Havlíčkův Brod and at the same time the only schools using the great advantage of the EU



funding. From this recognition a new unwritten rule<sup>6</sup> could be created: small schools are interested in drawing the support from the EU much more. These schools are also aware of the fact; they could be closed.

Concerning question number 3 displaying the future situation of drawing the grants, only the Wolkerova Primary School is not planning to apply for the grant, other four schools would like to apply for the support sooner or later (time interval 1-5 years). There are three schools which would want to draw the support in forthcoming 1-2 years, which means to use the support in 2007-2013 programming period. In this case the support would be drawn from the ESF, the project(s) would come under the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme.

The fourth question is showing that although the support from the EU has been offering for many years, to obtain all the information is not that much simple. To find out the necessary information is often too time-consuming for the school management that is engaged in the daily work. The Nuselská Primary School is the most active in obtaining this information. Even if it is time-consuming, its employees try to make the most of this possibility of financing the projects. Important point here is, the school management has great experience with the EU funding and knows where and from whom to obtain all the necessary information.

The last question was related to the four most significant reasons why the schools did not apply for the grant. The schools in Havlíčkův Brod find the physical realization of the project as the most serious reason. Its realization is for them too time-consuming and difficult. The second biggest problem is the preparation of application. The lengthy ratification procedure as well as the limited advance payment for the semi-budgetary organizations placed the last position, however also these reasons are not insignificant. Two reasons mentioned first – the difficultness of physical realization and the preparation of application could be resolved in simple way. The schools should hire any experienced employee who would administer all the matters connected with the project. Two schools, which have already realized the projects - The Nuselská and Štáflova primary schools, have never hired the external employees, however also they admitted that their employees are

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2) This unwritten rule concerns only primary schools in Havlíčkův Brod and cannot be applicable for all primary schools within Czech Republic.

well experienced and disposed to the project realization and they often have to work at the expense of their free time.

In terms of the text above, the Nuselská Primary School was chosen for the further representation of its realized project financed from the ESF. This project that the school has realized is directly “made-to-measure” for these problems. The Nuselská Primary School has seen the fantastic advantages that the drawing from Structural Funds can bring and employs such a type of teachers, who have been trying to conform to this current situation.

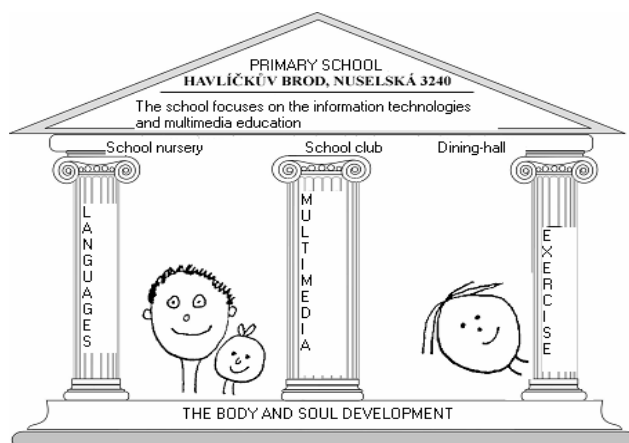
## 8 THE NUSELSKÁ PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Nuselská Primary School is situated in the housing estate at the town periphery. The school has a panel building style and composes of three pavilions (educational pavilion, catering establishment and from gymnasium). This school was established in 1990 and since 1996 it has been including in the Czech Republic school network.

### 8.1 The school environment

The school has been a semi-budgetary organization since 2001 and its institutor is the town Havlíčkův Brod. The school has own nursery school, the school club, the dining hall and in addition there is situated the private art school, club for mothers with children called Zvoneček and the branch library. The school campus consists of two playgrounds, grassplot where the children can play. There is the traffic ground before the school that is using for traffic education by other schools as well.

The school was included in the Framework educational programme in school year 2003/2004 and became one of the pilot schools that implemented this programme. The School educational programme that results from the Framework educational programme is called “The school is a workroom for the humanity”. It is important when performing of this programme to fulfill the cognitive goals as well as the goals leading to the character formation and moralities of the pupils. The development should have both the body and soul character. The School educational programme targets the information technologies and multimedia education and consists of three educational pillars; see these pillars in figure 6 below.



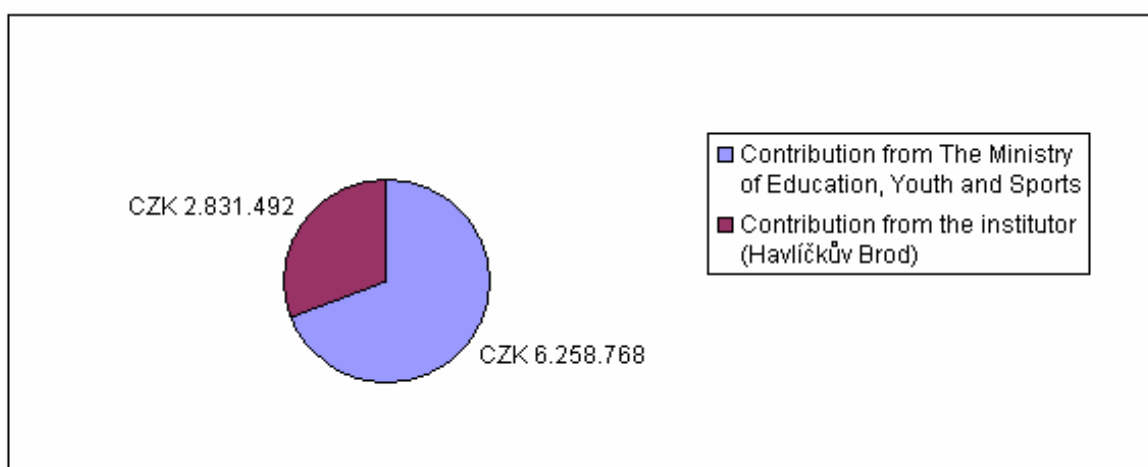
**Figure 6:** Picture of school educational pillars (školní vzdělávací program)

The school principal activity is the providing of education, financed by the institutor in the form of contributions, it also usually receives other contributions from MEYS. Other grants can be obtained, however they have to be designed for special purpose and fixed time. This principal activity is not-for profit and the school does not pay the taxes from it. The school administers the complementary activity in addition. The complementary activity is practised according to the rules designed for semi-budgetary organizations and the school has to pay the taxes from this activity. The complementary activities are:

1. The Catering business
2. The rental of non-residential premises
  - The private art school
  - The club for mothers with children “Zvoneček“
  - The branch library
  - The gymnasium and classroom lease
3. The sport activities (e.g. aerobic)
4. Other services - the speech therapy, the craft room (ceramic work) etc.

The school practices the voluntary work as well. It supports the environmental protection, the Movement against Cancer, the improvement of school promotion, the support of the Czech Red Cross by manufacturing the giveaways. The school intends to enter the wider public awareness by these activities.

## 8.2 The financial management in school year 2008/2009

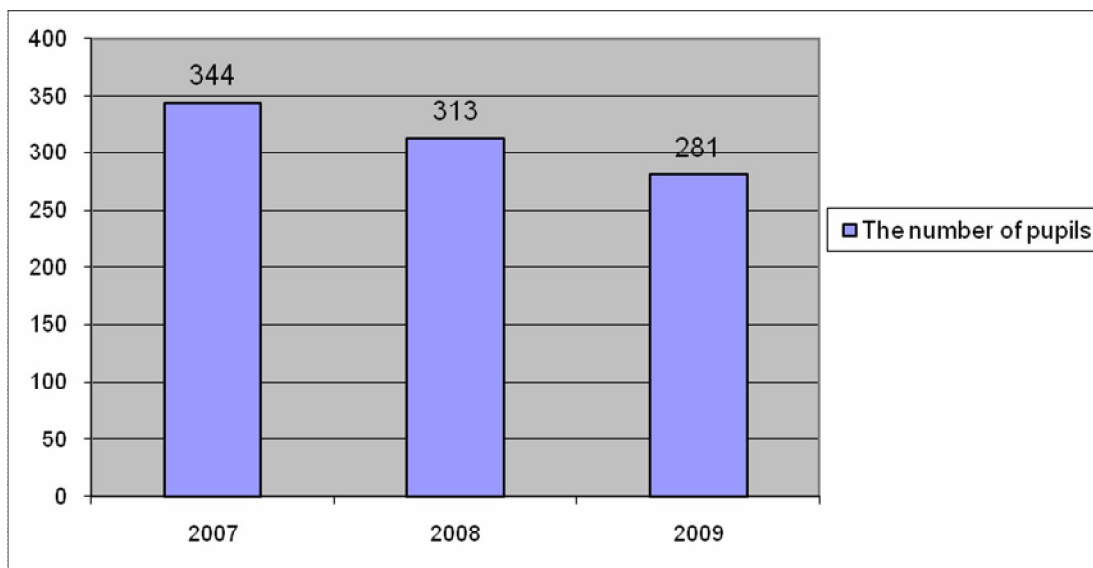


**Figure 7:** The school budget in school year 2008/2009. (Výroční zpráva)

The school was financed from two sources in school year 2008/2009. Having a look at the figure 7 above, these two sources are obvious; the school received a contribution from the MEYS and from Havlíčkův Brod. The MEYS was financing mainly the salaries while Havlíčkův Brod other essential operating costs. In total the contribution from MEYS highly exceeded the contribution from the institutor.

### 8.3 The personal school constitution and the number of students<sup>7</sup>

The school has maintained the personal responsibility, interest and the natural dominancy of the pedagogical employees. These qualities should result from the professional and personal qualities of each teacher. There were working 39 employees in total from which 25 practised the pedagogical profession (96 % of them was fully skilled). The school has concerned about the pupils with special needs. For this purpose the school engaged 2 pedagogical assistants for socially disadvantaged pupils, two pedagogical assistants for disordered pupils and one logopedic teacher. The figure 8 below is representing the number of student's development in year 2007-2009. From this graph it is evident the decrease in number is relatively rapid. Comparing the year 2007 with 2009, the school lost more than 1/5 of pupils.



**Figure 8:** Development in number of pupils in the Nuselská Primary School.  
(Výroční zpráva)

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7) According to the data from 30.6.2009.

#### 8.4 The experiences with the project realization

The school can receive following contributions and donations: the town Havlíčkův Brod provides the operating contribution and the grant to pay the direct costs, the MEYS finances the projects under The Prevention of the Socio-Pathological Factors and other costs (salaries etc.), the grant coming under the National Strategy for ICT in Education project, the grant from the ERDF and ESF, the municipality grant designed for the educational projects as well as the grant from the Vysočina region (NUTS III). (Mockovčiaková et al. 2009, 156)

This primary school is unique in numbers of projects it has realized. The school management is aware of the fact the contribution from the town is dependant on the number of students and teachers in the school. The number of students has been decreasing as I already mentioned, but the costs connected with the salaries for teachers have remained the same. This primary school decided to fight against these high costs and declining contributions from Havlíčkův Brod by realizing variety of granted projects. But this lack of money is not the only driving force why the school has realized such a time-consuming and work-intensive projects. The school tends to innovative ways of learning, lifelong education of teachers, to help the disadvantaged pupils, the support of minority groups of students to integrate as well as the cooperation among primary schools. The school management wants to follow the continual trend of development the educational methods (mainly the interactive educational methods). All their realized projects have had to attract the attention of potential pupils because with this type of help the school is always a few steps further than the other schools.

The Nuselská Primary School has engaged in the General School Educational Program (GSEP). The reason is simple - the direct participation during the realization of the GSEP that will be effectual for all primary schools in Czech Republic. The participation has included its creation, the practice verification as well as the education of the teachers for the GSEP single educational sections.

The name of project	The grant provider	The project duration
Youngpool Havlíčkův Brod	PHARE (2003)	This project was financing the educational course designed for young unemployed people and for women after the maternity leave
PILOT 1	MEYS (2004-2009)	The main goal was the teaching

		verification according to the GSEP
PILOT Z	ESF (2004-2009)	The main goal was the teaching verification according to the GSEP
The Key to School Educational Programme	MEYS (2005-2007)	The aim was the realization of the GSEP, Nuselská school joined the project as a partner
The Children's Free Time	Vysočina Fund (2006)	The main goal was the financial support of the projects concerning the children's free time
The Lesson in the Seventh class	MEYS	This project was financing the creation of the syllabus in the seventh class
UPROU	Vysočina Fund (2006-2008)	It included 15 pilot schools in the Vysočina Region and was developing the cooperation among teachers
By Bicycle without Injury	Vysočina Fund (2008)	The main goal was the prevention of children injuries
The Pedagogical Assistant for Socially Disadvantaged Pupils	MEYS (2008-2010)	This project has been financing the pedagogical assistants for socially disadvantaged pupils
The Support in Education of Czech Language as Foreign Language	State budget (2008)	This project focused on the integration of foreigners
M.R.K.E.V.	MEYS (2008-2009)	The school engaged in the ecological education
COORDINATOR	ESF (2009)	The key activity of this project was the training of coordinators (teachers) who should subsequently create the GSEP
Healthy Teeth	MEYS, Ministry of Health (2000-2010)	The aim is the adoption of basic knowledge of the dental care
First Aid to Schools	Vysočina Fund (2005-2010)	The aim is the adoption of basic knowledge of the first aid
Children's Television	ESF (2009-2012)	The syllabus should be enlarged by these subjects -the administration technique and the children's television
Interactive Learning	ESF (2009-2012)	The project focuses on the implementing and development of interactive and multimedia ways of educating

**Table 6:** Grants realized by the Nuselská Primary School. (Worked out by the author on the basis of discussions with the responsible school worker)

The table 6 above is displaying all the grants the school has realized since year 2003. It is obvious the school has applied from all possible providers of the grants. Comparing the number of national and regional providers with the EU, the school drew ten grants from providers within the Czech Republic and five from the EU. Some of the projects granted by

the providers within the Czech Republic can be characterized as a multiyear, however the support is destined only for a few short and specific activities per year, e.g. the project Healthy teeth and First Aid to Schools. In general, the grants from the EU has exceeded not in number but in amount of money. The school was drawing the support from the EU in three separate time periods. In first, Pre-Accession period, the school realized one project Youngpool Havlíčkův Brod financed from the PHARE fund. In the programming period 2004-2006, the school realized one project PILOT Z that was taking the duration till 2009. In this current period 2007-2013, the management decided to be more active according to the previous positive experiences and has realized three projects from which two are still running.

There are running two great projects financing from the EU Structural Funds in this period. These projects are financed from the ESF, coming under the Operational Programme the Education for Competitiveness in the Czech Republic. The first one is called The GSEP Syllabus Enlargement of the New Educational Programs: Children's Television, Multimedia Education and the Administration Technique (thereinafter only Children's Television). The second project is called Interactive Learning: the Implementing and Development of Interactive and Multimedia Educational Methods among Primary Schools in the Vysočina Region (thereinafter only Interactive Learning). The first project I mentioned has been financing from the ESF and has been running from 1.10.2009 till 30.6.2012. The total amount of money is CZK 3.428.590.80. The goal of the project is to strengthen the competitive advantage of the school leavers by means of this syllabus enlargement. A part of this project is creating of eleven complete methodical materials and its following verification, so these materials could be later used by other primary schools according to the GSEP. The educational program The Children's Television is creating the education knowledge in photography sphere and in video formation. The key educational competences should be developed and at the same time the interclass relationships should be strengthen. This program is designed for pupils from 5. to 9. classes. The Administration Technique program has implemented the innovative form of education. The pupils from 4. to 9. classes should learn how to use ten fingers while writing on the keyboard.



## 9 THE PROJECT INTERACTIVE LEARNING

This chapter characterizes the largest project the school has realized. Its description should conform to all the basic parts of the project management in relation to the EU Structural Funds. Note that the following information is based on the project application.

This project is gigantic in the amount of money as well as in the amount of participants (partners) and employees. The school is responsible for the entire running and the other participants of the project. The everyday cooperation of the participants and employees is therefore necessary. Fortunately the school has a great advantage – multiyear experience with the project realization. The school is aware of the fact this project is largely different and its successful realization will be absolutely time-consuming for all its main workers. However the future vision of the school seems to be so positive the school decided to realize it.

### 9.1 Selected applicant's data

<i>The name of the subject:</i>	The primary school Nuselská, Havlíčkův Brod, Nuselská 3240
<i>The legal entity:</i>	Semi-budgetary organization
<i>The identification number:</i>	70910961
<i>The type of applicant:</i>	schools and educational organizations (corporate body registered in the School record)
<i>The share in allocation:</i>	CZK 12.591.946,50

The main goal of the project is to strengthen the potential of education in the Vysočina Region. This goal should be reached by broadening the interactive education methods in primary schools. The project contains both, the individual activities integrating the pupils to this interactive education and the creation of interactive lessons for particular subjects. The school partnership helps to create and to share new teaching materials. The allocation is used to purchase the necessary equipment as well to educate the teachers and for creation of the web pages. There are 21 primary schools from the Vysočina Region that have engaged this project. These 21 schools include more than 7500 pupils and 124 employees.

### 9.2 Selected data of the project

<i>The project duration:</i>	1.11. 2009 – 30.4. 2012
<i>The total budget:</i>	CZK 19.529.014,50

<i>The number of participants:</i>	1 applicant, 20 partners (primary schools in the Vysočina Region)
<i>The allocation from:</i>	ESF – OP ECOP, State budget
<i>NUTS II region:</i>	SouthEast
<i>NUTS III region:</i>	Vysočina Region

### **9.3 The innovative aspects and the benefits for pupils and teachers**

The pupils and teachers will use the most modern ICT technologies as well as the Internet with the crucial usage of interactive educational materials (e.g. SmartBoard and ActiveBoard). This attractive way of teaching will intensify the pupil's interest and their following knowledge, so they will have great advantage in face of other school leavers. The pupils will participate practically as well; they are supposed to create around 1500 interactive presentations. The teachers will create 3100 lessons by the interactive method. These lessons will be subsequently put to the mutual website where the database will be held. All teachers integrated in this project will have an access to this database. By creating of these own educational materials, these materials will be “made-to-measure” for the concrete schools and pupils requirements.

### **9.4 The strategy**

Each applicant should choose certain strategy by which a fulfillment of separate steps will lead to the successful realization of the project. Dividing the strategy into three periods, the school was thinking about the realization of two monumental projects in the Pre-project period. Finally the school decided to apply for both of them. This project supposed to be exceedingly time-consuming and labour-intensive for one school, therefore the school decided to make an offer to the other schools in the region. There were 25 schools which expressed the interest and finally 20 decided to join the project as the partners. The application was unsuccessful in the first round of the call, fortunately in the second it got through. The Project period is already running and the schools have purchased the teaching aids and facilities. The purchase of facilities is based on the selection procedure. As following the teachers should be adequately educated and the website will be created. In the Post-project period the executive team should analyze the project process to sustain the outputs at least for five years after the physical realization of the project.

## 9.5 The executive team

The Nuselská Primary School is the applicant who has been receiving the largest amount of money and accordingly to this fact, it is the main managing body. The most important person is the project manager, who is responsible for the whole realization, for the contracts as well as the running and final reports. The manager has two assistants called the main coordinators who are in charge of the administrative realization and subsequent control. The economic operation comes under the competencies of the financial manager. This person should keep accounts, observe the cash flows, process the payments etc. The project also has to have its web administrator who safeguards the creation of database. The last employees under the Nuselská Primary School competency are the administrative workers. There are two workers and each of them is responsible for certain classes (1-5 class, 6-9 class). The partnership schools manage the “lower” team consisting of 20 coordinators (in each school one), the executors of teaching materials and the subject methodists (the number of these employees differs in each school accordingly to the number of involved teachers). The project employees from the managing body have to meet every two weeks and the lower team once a month during the period of the physical realization of the project.

## 9.6 Key activities and its monitoring indicators

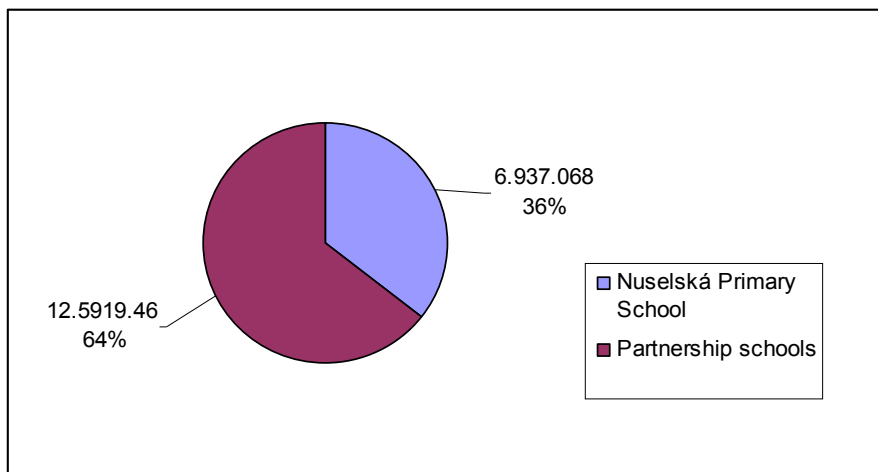
The project is divided into three key activities the school has to create during its physical realization. The project running as well as the outcome of realization has to conform to *the monitoring indicators* the school mentioned in the application. Each of these three key activities has its monitoring indicator.

1. The acquiring of necessary knowledge for the creation of educational interactive lessons is the first activity. There are four main monitoring indicators connected with this activity. All 21 schools and 124 teachers have joined to the training activities. The teachers will be educated by together 42 user’s trainings and by 77 trainings designed for the managing of individual subjects.
2. The second activity is the creation of interactive lessons and their following application, the methodical operating, the network coordination among schools and the maintenance of technical facilities. By the project realization, over 3100 interactive lessons should be created (including 50 lessons for developing the computer literacy) and 54 classrooms will have the most modern interactive technical facilities.

3. The creation and running of the web pages serving as the platform for the exchange of lessons and experiences is the last activity. The monitoring indicator by this activity is the creation of new platform that is the web presentation of the project. This platform is unique in the Vysočina Region and will serve for the cooperation among schools.

### 9.7 The financial analysis according to the project

The project is fully financed from the foreign sources because the budget of the project has included only the eligible costs that could be financed from the Structural Funds. The *total budget is CZK 19.529.014* from which *ESF finances 85 %* that means *CZK 16.599.662* and the state contributed by *CZK 2.929.352*, from the *state budget*, that amount *15 %* of the total allocation.



**Figure 9:** The division of the project budget. (Interactive Learning)

From this table above we can see the Nuselská Primary School has received more than 64 % of the total allocation. It may seem the other amounts of money for the schools are insignificant, however the other schools did not want to take such a responsibility and task. The Nuselská school needed more schools (that equals more teachers) that would create the complete interactive database. Concerning Havlíčkův Brod the only school that joined this project is the Štáflova Primary School, which has received 1,08 % of the total allocation.

In the table 7 below the budget is divided according to the total activity costs that are calculated like the sum of costs from three main activities.

The activity	The costs (in CZK)	Percentage
The acquiring of necessary knowledge of teachers	2.703.600	13,84
The creation and application of interactive lessons, technical facilities etc.	13.229.036	67,74
The creation and running of the web pages	89.250	0,46

**Table 7:** The budget of the project according to the key activities. (Interactive Learning)

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious the EU Structural Funds provide great help to the Czech Republic in this programming period. Its support has concerned many different areas, designed under 26 Operational Programmes that should improve the economic and social levels. I focused on the social level – the area of primary education that has been financing within the Education for Competitiveness OP. The education is one of basic “building stones” without which the society cannot improve. If the society wants to develop it is therefore necessary to improve the human resources.

In my practical part I found out the situation of primary education in the Vysočina Region. This situation is not satisfactory, there is lack of modern educational methods (ICT, Internet) using by the EU advanced Member States. The reason is simple; the schools are semi-budgetary organizations and are dependent on the contributions from the state budget. These contributions usually include money designed only for the needful school operation and therefore the schools have no chance to follow all the modern trends. The EU grants seemed to be a great solution. To determine the real position of the EU grants among the primary schools I choose my hometown Havlíčkův Brod. The result was not as positive as I supposed it will be. According to the research, most of schools are not applying for the grants. The schools mentioned many reasons why they are not drawing. The main problems however seems to be their employees see the project realization as too difficult. One school has very positive relation to the drawing of this support according to this research and I therefore chose this Nuselská Primary School to present how the fight against the unsatisfactory situation of primary education can appear with the help of the EU grants.

The Nuselská Primary School is fighting not only with the lack of modern education but also with the lack of pupils. They already successfully applied for five grants that generally should increase the competitive advantage of school leavers. I focused on their last and largest project the Interactive Learning that will help to strengthen the potential of education in the Vysočina Region by the implementing of interactive educational methods. The ICT literacy will improve as well as the knowledge of Internet. The school competitive advantage ensured by this project should provide the influx of pupils. In contrast to other schools the management of Nuselská Primary School is very active and tries to use this help as much as possible. These people prove the saying “everything is about people, who have to be willing”.

During the elaborating of this thesis I learned many about the EU funding and found out the great possibilities it brings. My opinion is that not only the organizations fully or partly dependant on the state support should apply for the grant. The project realization is time-consuming and difficult but it is the only “tax paid”.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CR	Czech Republic
CSO	Czech Statistical Office
DG	Directorate General
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EC	European Commission
ECOP	Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FIFG	Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance
GNP	Gross National Product
GSEP	General School Educational Program
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
MEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OP	Operational Programme
R&D	Research and Development
Ten-T	Trans European Transport Network

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## APPENDICES

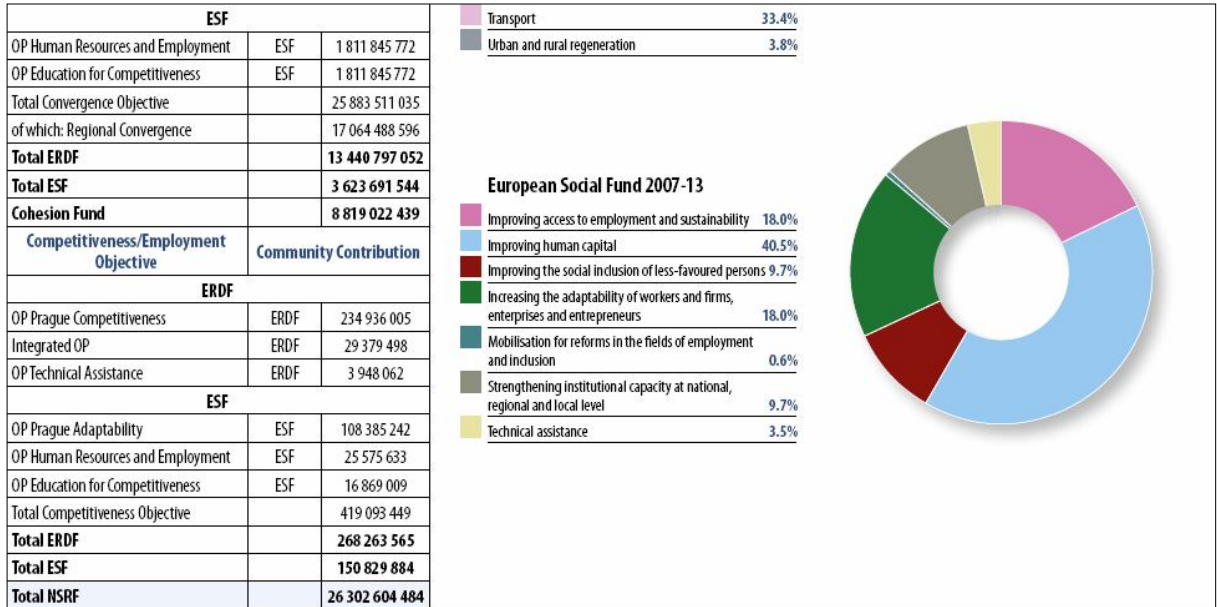
- P I NUTS levels according to the all EU Member States
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- P III An overview of the EU funds in period 2004-2013
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**APENDIX P I: NUTS LEVELS ACCORDING TO THE ALL EU  
MEMBER STATES**

<b>EU 27</b>	<b>NUTS I level</b>	<b>NUTS II level</b>	<b>NUTS III level</b>
Belgium	3	11	44
Bulgaria	2	6	28
Czech Republic	1	8	14
Denmark	1	5	11
Germany	16	39	429
Estonia	1	1	5
Ireland	1	2	8
Greece	4	13	51
Spain	7	19	59
France	9	26	100
Italy	5	21	107
Cyprus	1	1	1
Latvia	1	1	6
Lithuania	1	1	10
Luxembourg	1	1	1
Hungary	3	7	20
Malta	1	1	2
Netherlands	4	12	40
Austria	3	9	35
Poland	6	16	66
Portugal	3	7	30
Romania	4	8	42
Slovenia	1	2	12
Slovakia	1	4	8
Finland	2	5	20
Sweden	3	8	21
United Kingdom	12	37	133
Liechtenstein	1	1	1

(List of NUTS regions)

## APPENDIX P II: AN OVERVIEW OF ALL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN CZECH REPUBLIC IN PERIOD 2007-2013



(National Strategic Reference Framework)

**APPENDIX P III: AN OVERVIEW OF THE EU FUNDS IN PERIOD  
2004-2013**

<b>The EU funds</b>	<b>Period 2004-2006</b>	<b>Period 2007-2013</b>
Structural Funds	European Regional Development Fund	yes
	European Social Fund	yes
	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund	no
	Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance	no
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	No	yes
European Fisheries Fund	No	yes
Funds of Pre-Accession Assistance	PHARE	IPA
	SAPARD	
	ISPA	
European Union Solidarity Fund	Yes	yes
Financial instruments of regional policy	No	JASPERS
		JEREMIE
		JESSICA

(History)



**APPENDIX P IV: THE BUDGET OF THE INTERACTIVE LEARNING  
PROJECT ACCORDING TO THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS**

<b>The name of the school, municipality</b>	<b>Share in costs</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The Primary School Humpolec	269.519	1,38
The Primary School Štáflova, Havlíčkův Brod	210.751	1,08
The Primary School T.G. Masaryka, Jihlava	714.958	3,66
The Primary and Nursery School Stonařov	269.519	1,38
The Primary School Žďár nad Sázavou	574.214	2,94
The Primary and Nursery School Lukavec	351.495	1,80
The Primary and Nursery School Dobronín	328.288	1,68
The Primary School Pelhřimov	210.751	1,08
The Primary School Telč	292.727	1,50
The Primary School Ledec nad Sázavou	392.483	2,01
The Primary School Pacov	251.739	1,29
The Primary School Třešť	351.495	1,80
The Primary and Nursery School Ždírec nad Doubravou	251.739	1,29
The Primary school Příbryslav	428.044	2,19
The Primary School of Otakar Březina, Počátky	310.507	1,59
The Primary school Demlova, Jihlava	568.787	2,91
The Primary school Polná	310.507	1,59
The Primary and Nursery School Golčův Jeníkov	269.519	1,38
The Primary and Nursery School Hořepník	269.519	1,38
<b>The Primary school Nuselská, Havlíčkův Brod</b>	<b>12.591.946</b>	<b>64,48</b>
The Primary and Nursery School Luka nad Jihlavou	310.507	1,59

(Interactive Learning)