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# National Report on the Tracking of Secondary Vocational School Graduates in Slovakia 2025

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MINISTRY  
OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH,  
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**SIOV**

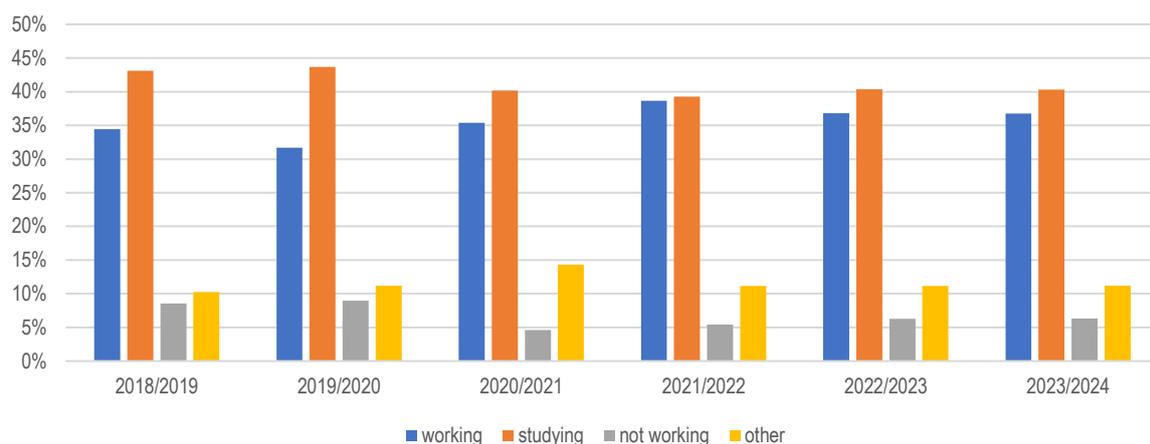
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## Introduction

The second report from the National Survey on Tracking Secondary Vocational School (SVS) Graduates is the result of activities in the second year of duration of the national project *Introduction of Quality Management in Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education*<sup>1</sup> under the Graduate Tracking activity, i.e. the collection and analysis of feedback from secondary vocational school graduates at least 15 months after completing their studies. The output represents a probe into the opinions of SVS graduates and provides topics for further investigation and expert discussion.

Compared to the survey from the first year, the questionnaire has been slightly modified with greater emphasis on questions regarding further studies, especially the choice of university. This change reflects the high share of graduates from secondary vocational school programs who go on to pursue further studies (*Graph 1*).

**Graph 1 Labour market position of secondary vocational school graduates<sup>2</sup>**



Source: Institute for educational policy, Institute for social policy

We remind the reader that the national survey is the second pillar of graduate tracking piloted by the State Institute for Vocational Education (ŠIOV). The first pillar consists of administrative data presented by an interactive database created by the analytical units of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR (MPSVaR SR) and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR (MŠVVaM SR) available to public<sup>3</sup>. The third pillar involves school questionnaires administered by secondary vocational schools according to their own interests and goals. ŠIOV provides support via webinars, methodology, individual consultations, and regional meetings.

The importance of graduate tracking was described in detail in the report from the last year<sup>4</sup>. Administrative data cannot provide a complete picture of educational and career paths, such as barriers and motivations for choosing or early leaving further education, reasons for skill mismatch, and the like. At the same time, similarly to the first pillar, the second pillar (the national survey) is undergoing modifications as a result of experience to date.

In the long term after the national project completion, there are two main goals regarding tracking. The first is for the national survey to collect representative data like other national surveys with representative character. During the final year of the project, we will seek to identify options for conducting a representative survey so that questionnaire findings can serve as a reliable basis for policymakers.

The second long-term goal is for schools - based on their experience during the pilot project, discussions about the national report and other project activities, and also their own practice - to be able and, above all, motivated to continue tracking their own graduates. The value of school-level tracking lies mainly in better information about graduate outcomes, which can be used to improve education and support activities at schools. Central policies from the ministry level may not always reflect the individual needs and situations of specific schools, so it is important to support collecting feedback at the school level.

<sup>1</sup> The national project has a dedicated website [okvalite.sk](http://okvalite.sk). More about the project [on the ŠIOV website](#).

<sup>2</sup> Groups of fields of study K and M (complete secondary vocational education with matura and apprenticeship certificate, and complete secondary vocational education with matura without apprenticeship certificate).

<sup>3</sup> [Graduates employment outcomes \(Uplatnenie.sk\)](#).

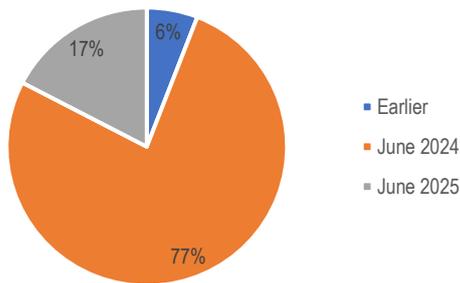
<sup>4</sup> [National Report on the Pilot Tracking of Secondary Vocational School Graduates in Slovakia 2024](#)

## Survey results

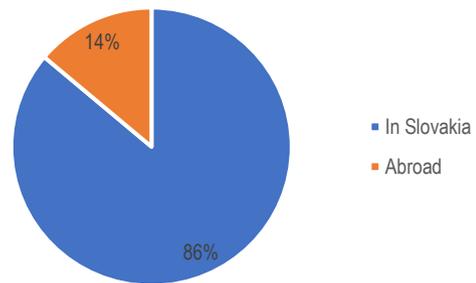
The second round of the national survey of SVS graduates was conducted from October 20 to November 3, 2025. As in the first national survey, the data in this survey are not representative and at this stage cannot be used to formulate policy measures and recommendations<sup>5</sup>. This report, like the previous one, provides a snapshot of SVS graduates' experiences 15 months after graduation. For methodology details, please see the first national report from last year.

The data was collected from 1,582 respondents with the largest cohort of June 2024 graduates comprising of 1,214 responses (*Graph 2*). This cohort is the one used in the presented results<sup>6</sup>. Most respondents from this cohort reported Slovakia as the place where they spend most of their time, while about 14% reported being abroad (*Graph 3*).

**Graph 2 Graduate cohorts by year of graduation (n = 1582)**

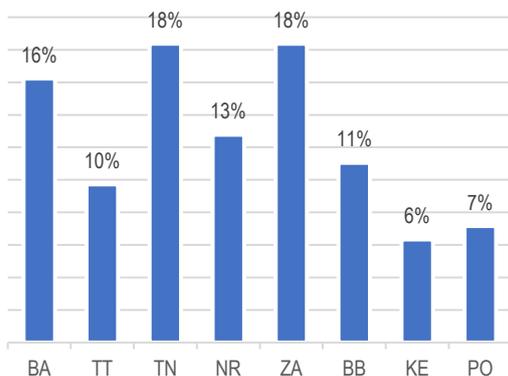


**Graph 2 Graduates by place of residence (n = 1214)**

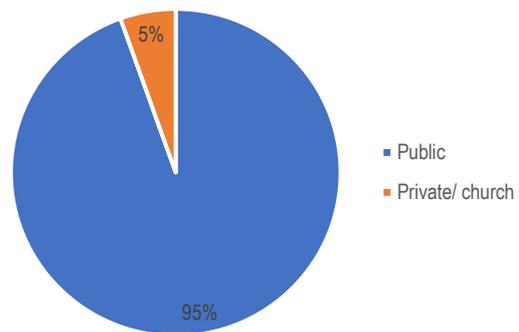


Secondary vocational schools from all regions of Slovakia were represented in the survey. Schools from the Trenčín and Žilina regions had the highest representation (*Graph 4*). Compared to the 2024 survey, representation increased particularly for schools from the Trenčín region and the Nitra region. A significant majority of participating graduates attended public schools (*Graph 5*).

**Graph 4 Percentage of graduates by region (n = 1214)**



**Graph 5 Graduates by type of school authority (n = 1214)**

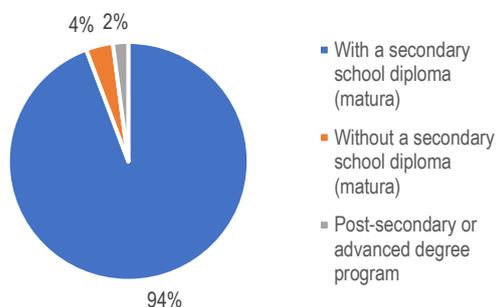


<sup>5</sup> The representativeness of the data can be ensured through stratified random sampling, which was not feasible at this stage of the project. Furthermore, if the collected data represented a large proportion of the population, we could consider them as population-representative data, accepting some degree of potential bias. In the 2023/2024 school year, according to the Uplatnenie.sk portal, there were 32,613 graduates in Slovakia. This means that the raw response rate was only 4.3%.

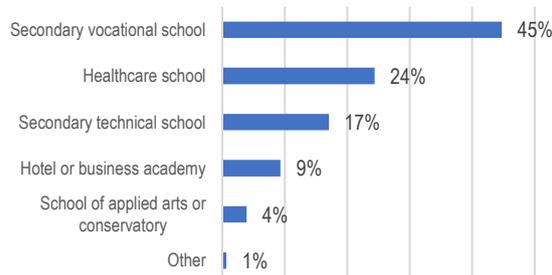
<sup>6</sup> In the first tracking round, we used responses from all respondents who completed their studies in various years between 2019–2024. However, in the long term, it is more appropriate to track individual graduate cohorts separately due to possible influences of external events on their educational and career paths (e.g., reforms, labor market conditions, etc.).

As in the previous survey, respondents are dominated by graduates of programs with matura (Graph 6). The highest share (45%) of respondents reported having graduated from a vocational school; nearly a quarter attended a healthcare school (Graph 7).

**Graph 6 Graduates by level of education (n = 1214)**

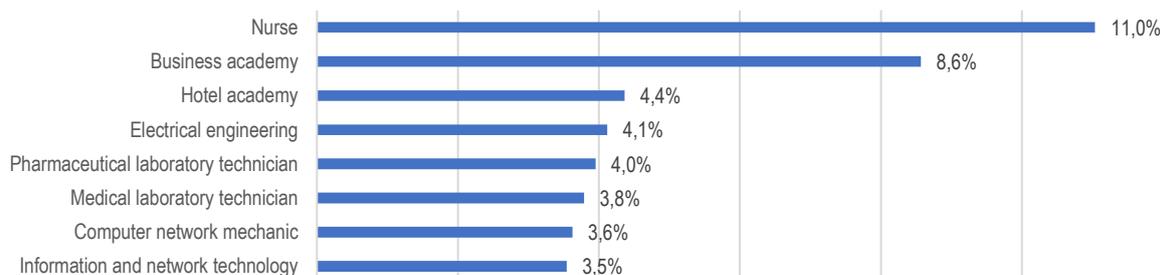


**Graph 7 Graduates by type of school (n = 1214)**



Respondents stated which field of study they completed in an open question. The most represented were fields belonging to vocational schools; this group was also the most diverse. It included technical, agricultural-forestry and veterinary fields, as well as service-oriented and other programs. Among healthcare fields, practical nurses and pharmaceutical and healthcare laboratory technicians made up the largest share (Graph 8).

**Graph 8 Representation of fields of study (n = 1214)**

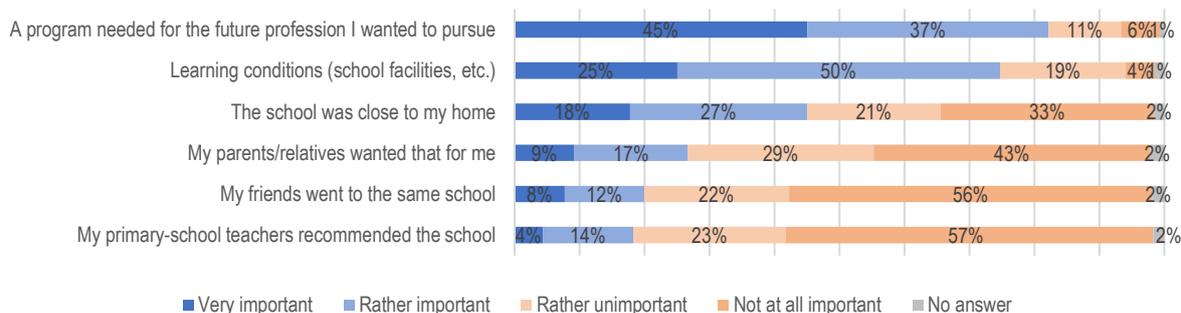


Note: Fields with more than 40 respondents are listed.

### Satisfaction with the secondary school

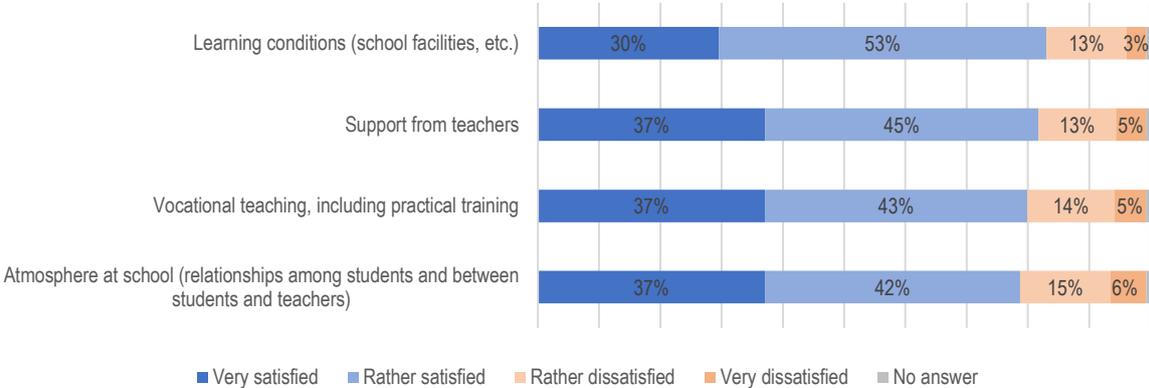
The two most important reasons for choosing a particular school were the field for their future profession and the learning conditions (Graph 9). Conversely, recommendations from primary-school teachers, staying with friends, or family wishes had the least influence on school choice. The ranking of factors influencing school choice for the surveyed 2024 graduate cohort was identical to the previous pilot questionnaire survey, which included cohorts mainly from 2023, as well as 2024 and earlier years 2019–2022.

**Graph 9 Importance of factors for the choice of secondary school (n = 1214)**

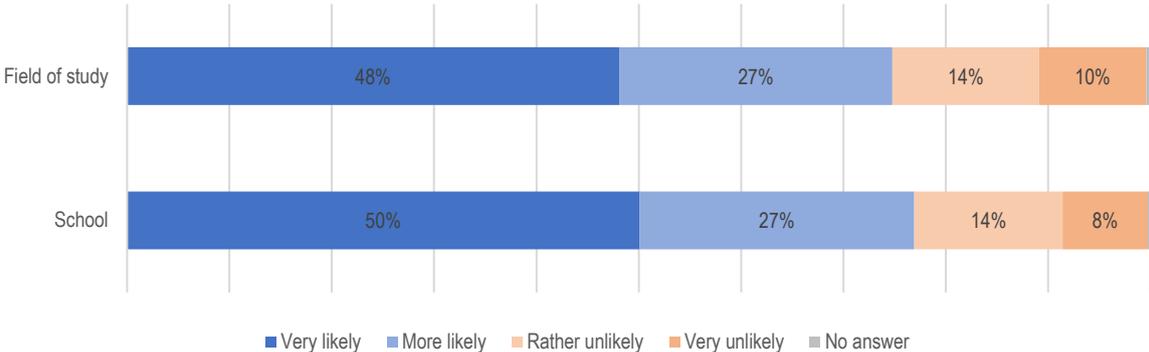


Respondents expressed high degree of satisfaction across all surveyed areas (Graph 10), the highest satisfaction was with learning conditions. At the same time, more than three quarters of graduates would choose the same school or program again (Graph 11).

**Graph 10 Satisfaction with the experience at school (n = 1214)**

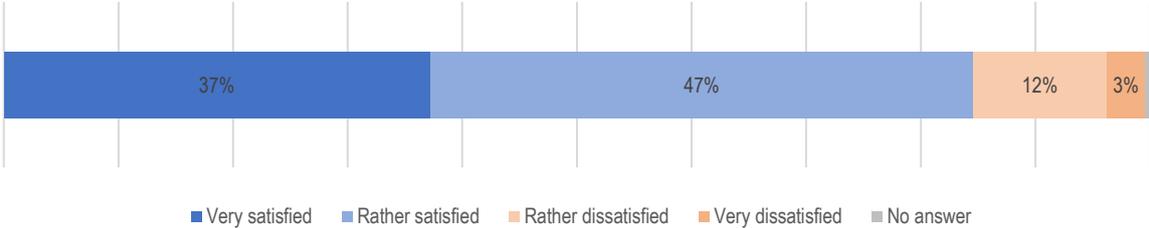


**Graph 11 If you could choose again, how likely is it that you would choose the same school or field of study? (n = 1214)**



As with the individual surveyed areas, 84 % of respondents also reported satisfaction with the overall level of acquired vocational knowledge and skills (Graph 12).

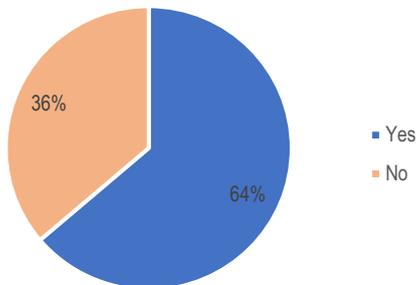
**Graph 12 How satisfied overall are you with the level of vocational knowledge and skills you learned at your school? (n = 1214)**



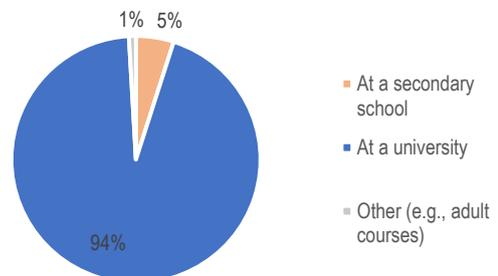
## Further Study

About 64% of graduates reported that they continued studying after completion of secondary school (*Graph 13*), and 94% of them continued at the tertiary level (*Graph 14*).

**Graph 13 Did you pursue further studies after completing secondary school? (n = 1214)**

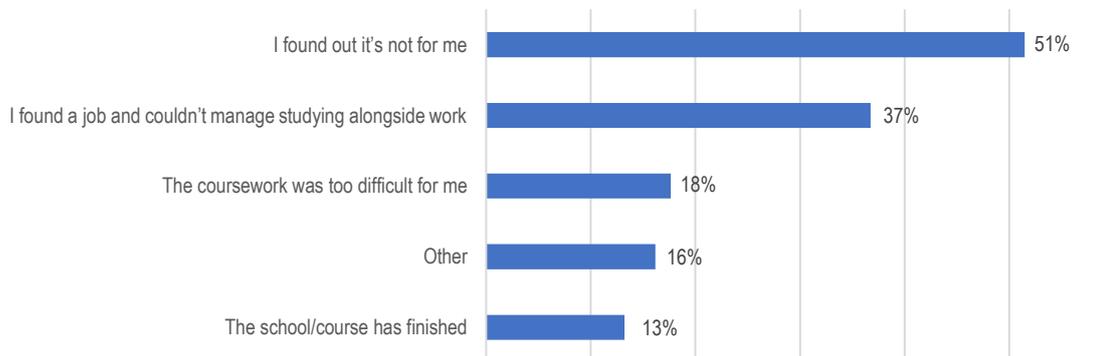


**Graph 14 Where did you continue your studies? (n = 774)**



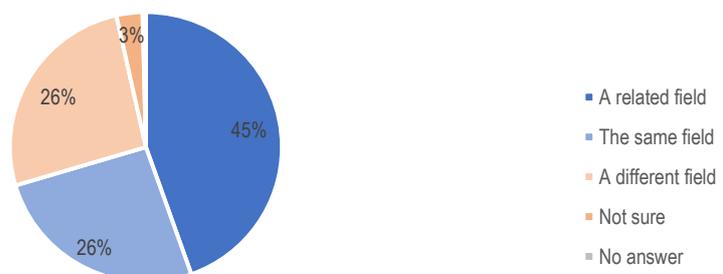
At the time of survey, 91% of those who continued their studies were still studying, and only 9% have interrupted or discontinued their studies. The most common reason given for not continuing studies was that the study program did not meet their expectations (*Graph 15*). Approximately 16% have chosen "other" reasons, which included various personal reasons or postponement of further studies.

**Graph 15 Why are you no longer studying? You can select more than one option. (n = 68)**



For 71% of respondents who were studying, the field they chose for further study was the same or related to the one they studied in secondary school. About one quarter continued in a different field (*Graph 16*).

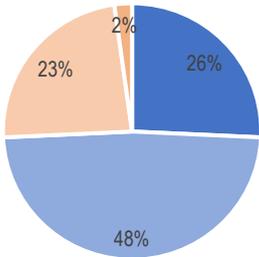
**Graph 16 Is the field you studied or are studying related to what you studied in secondary school? (n = 774)**



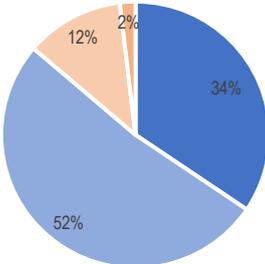
Students who continued in the same or a related field were asked about the importance of subjects they studied at the secondary school. About one quarter of them rate all secondary-school subjects as important, and nearly half consider most subjects important (Graph 17). Those who indicated the importance of at least some secondary-school subjects largely feel well prepared in those subjects (Graph 18).

**Graph 17** How important were (or are) the subjects in the field you studied at secondary school for this further study? (n = 545)

**Graph 18** Do you feel you were well prepared in these subjects by your secondary school? (n = 532)



- All subjects are important
- Most subjects are important
- Only some subjects are important
- Almost no subject is important



- Definitely yes
- Rather yes
- Rather no
- Definitely no

Respondents cited various reasons for feeling insufficiently prepared. The most frequently mentioned reason was an inadequate instruction level of required subjects at secondary school, but also absence of some subjects and poor teachers' attitudes.

**If you didn't feel well prepared, can you state the main reasons?**

*"The curriculum was outdated and not current even by existing industry standards; at university I now struggle because what I thought I knew I know only about 20% of, since we learned things that are completely obsolete and there was no attention to standards, norms and their update."*

*"At secondary school, the material wasn't covered in as much depth as university teachers expect, even though it's the same subject."*

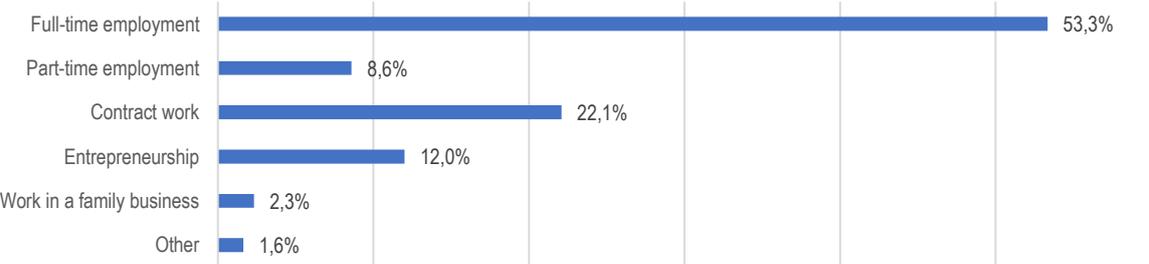
*"Some topics were not covered at school."*

*"I lacked the prerequisite knowledge needed at the start of some courses and had to fill it in myself."*

**Working Graduates**

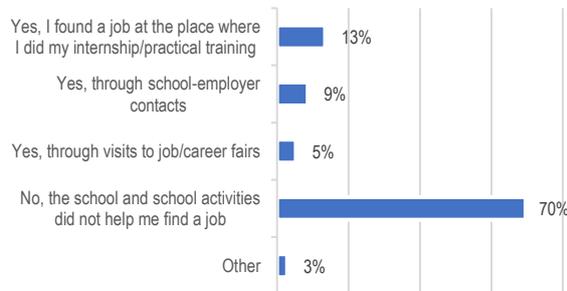
At the time of the survey, 60% of respondents reported that they were working. More than half of those working stated that their main work activity was full-time employment (Graph 19), 22% had contract work, and approximately 12% were self-employed.

**Graph 19** What form of work do you do? If you have more than one job, choose the one that is the most important to you (for example, where you spend the most of the time or earn the most — it's up to you). (n = 733)

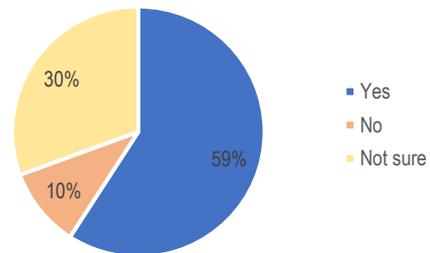


We asked employed graduates (full- or part-time) whether the school helped them with finding their first job. For 70% of working respondents, the school or school activities did not help in finding their first job (*Graph 20*). About 27% said the school did help, mainly through work-based practical training as a part of their studies. At the same time, 59% of all employed respondents consider their field to be in demand based on personal experience, while 30% cannot assess this. Only 10% consider their field to be unattractive on the labor market (*Graph 21*).

**Graph 20 Did the school help you find your first job? (n = 454)**

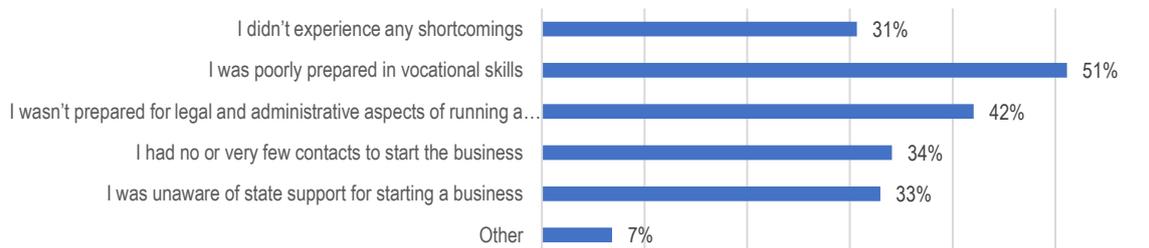


**Graph 21 Based on your experience, would you say your field of study is in demand? (n = 733)**



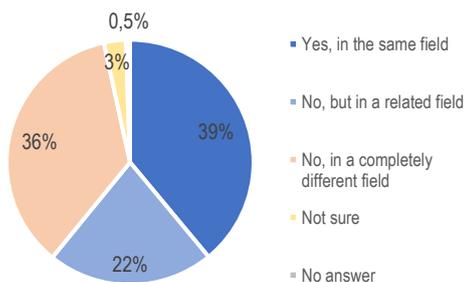
About 12% of the working respondents were self-employed; we asked them about the start of their business. A large majority - 87% - started their business from scratch. The main obstacles they reported about the early stages were weak preparedness in vocational skills, as well as difficulties with the legal and administrative procedures related to running a business (*Graph 22*). About one third also pointed to a lack of contacts at the beginning and a lack of awareness of available government support.

**Graph 22 What shortcomings did you experience when starting your business, or do you still experience? You can select more than one answer. (n = 88)**

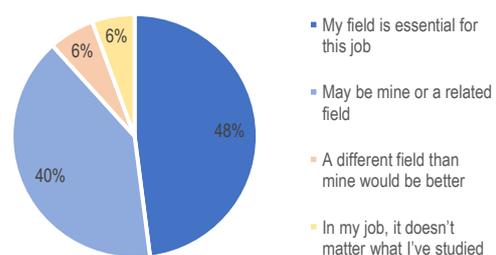


About 61% of graduates work or run a business in areas related to their field of study (*Graph 23*). Those who reported the match were asked how important the skill match is for their current job. For nearly half, the completed field is a necessity in their current employment; for 40% their field or a related field is suitable (*Graph 24*). For only 6% the field they studied does not matter.

**Graph 232 Do you work in your field of study? (n = 733)**



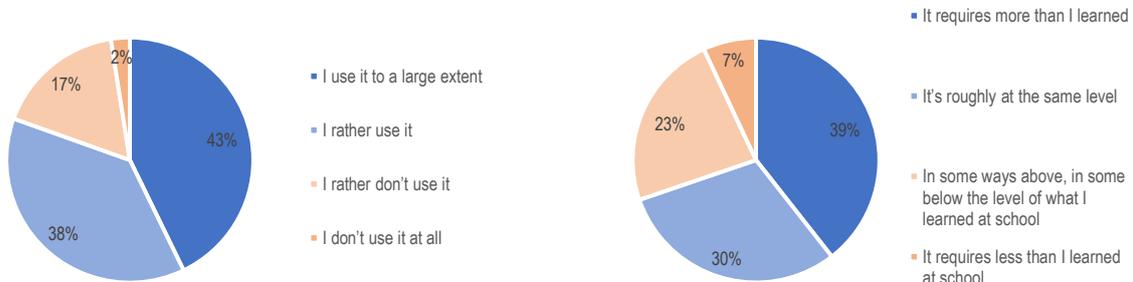
**Graph 243 How important is your field of study to your current work? (n = 446)**



At the same time, 81% of graduates working in their field of study use the knowledge or skills they acquired during their studies (*Graph 25*). For 39% of respondents working in their field, the job's requirements are higher than the skills gained during their studies (*Graph 26*). For about a half of respondents the requirements roughly match the acquired knowledge and skills, and 7% consider the job's requirements low compared with what they learned.

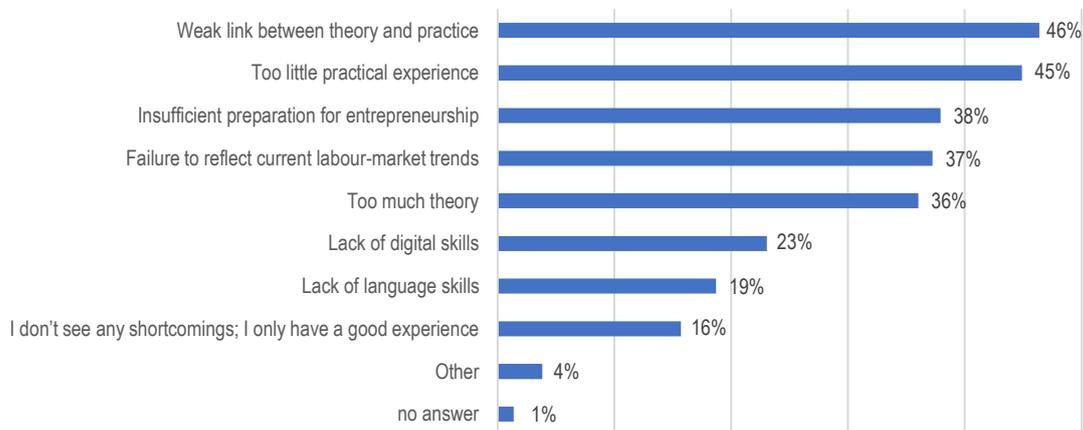
**Graph 254 To what extent do you use at work what you learned in your field of study? (n = 446)**

**Graph 26 Are the requirements of your current job beyond what you learned at school in your field? (n = 446)**



Working respondents were asked about shortcomings in preparation for the labor market during their studies. The biggest deficits perceived were the insufficient link between theory and practice and a shortage of practical experience (*Graph 27*). They reported inadequate preparation for entrepreneurship, failure to reflect current labor-market trends, and an excessive emphasis on theory during studies, all at roughly the same level. Those who chose "other" expressed shortcomings mainly in practical training, mismatches between school subjects and practical skills needed for work, or the up-to-date curriculum.

**Graph 27 Now that you are working, can you say what you think the shortcomings in students' preparation for the labour market are? You can select more than one option. (n = 733)**



**Shortcomings in labour-market preparation — "Other"**

*"Administrative matters are not taught at schools at all! And if you make a mistake with those administrative things, the state only fines you!"*

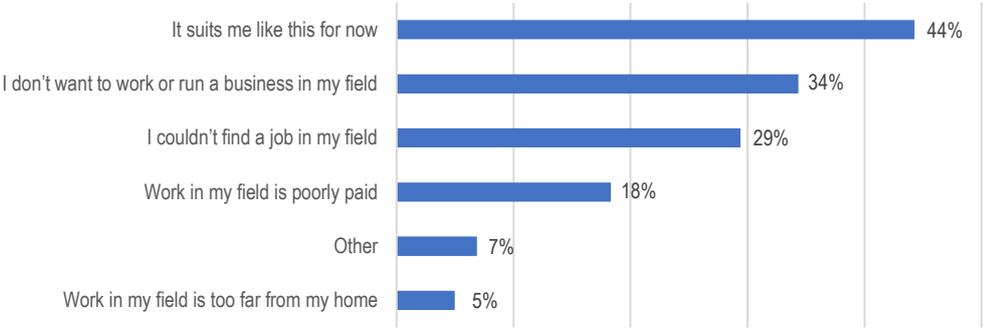
*"What is taught at school is no longer up to date."*

*"An outdated teaching system, including teaching materials."*

*"Too much theory that isn't used in practice; I would introduce a subject specifically devoted to what is actually used in practice and what is needed on the job."*

Respondents with a mismatch between their field of study and employment were asked about the reasons for working outside their field of study, multiple answers were allowed. We considered field-of-study mismatch for those who reported working or running a business in a completely different field than they had studied. The most common reason for working outside their field was that it suits them for now (Graph 28). Roughly one third also said they do not want to work or run a business in their field, and about 29% did not find a job in their field.

**Graph 28 Why do you work or run a business outside your field of study? You can select more than one option. (n = 262)**

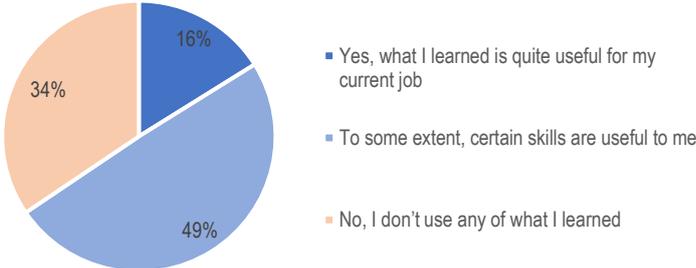


**Outside the field of study - "Other"**

*"Work positions for my qualification require professional experience that I have not yet had the opportunity to gain."*  
*"I do not have sufficient experience for work in my field."*  
*"I didn't enjoy it."*  
*"I work outside my field while attending university."*

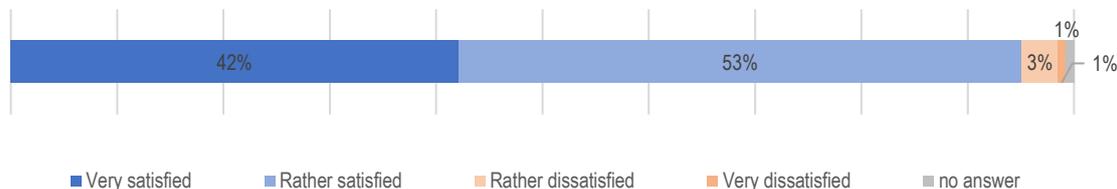
The final question for those working outside their field was whether they consider the skills they acquired at school useful in their current job. About 16% of respondents said what they learned is quite useful; about half reported that they use some skills to a certain extent; and around 34% do not use the knowledge and skills gained at secondary school at all (Graph 29).

**Graph 29 Even though you work outside your field, do you consider the knowledge and skills you acquired at school useful for your current job? (n = 262)**



We finally asked all working respondents about their overall satisfaction with their current job or business; 95% of them expressed satisfaction (*Graph 30*). Those who are dissatisfied cite low pay and working outside their field as the main reasons for their dissatisfaction.

**Graf 30 Overall, are you satisfied with your current work? (n = 733)**



**What do you attribute your dissatisfaction with work to?**

"I don't use knowledge from my field of study."

"I work like a slave for little money."

"Salary, employer's attitude."

"Poor pay conditions."

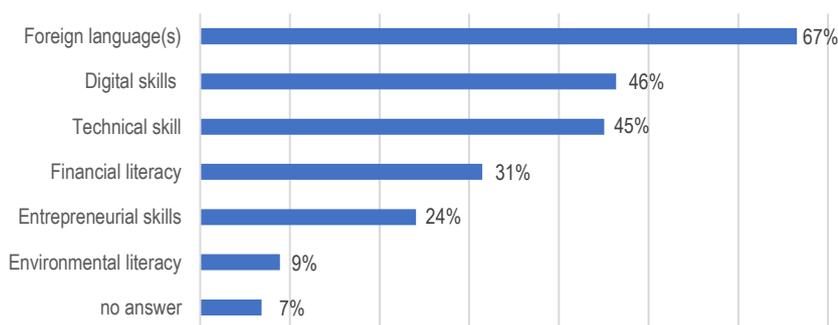
"It's not a job in the field I focused on."

We also asked about the current situation on the labour market of the group that reported they did not continue studying and are currently not working or self-employed — this group represents 3% of respondents (38 respondents). Just over half are looking for work, 11% are on maternity/parental leave, and 32% selected "other." We did not collect further details about this category.

**Skills**

Among the professional, technical and other hard skills that respondents acquired during secondary school, foreign languages were the most common reported by 67% of respondents (*Graph 31*). Almost half of respondents stated that they acquired digital and technical skills during their secondary-school studies (45 and 46%).

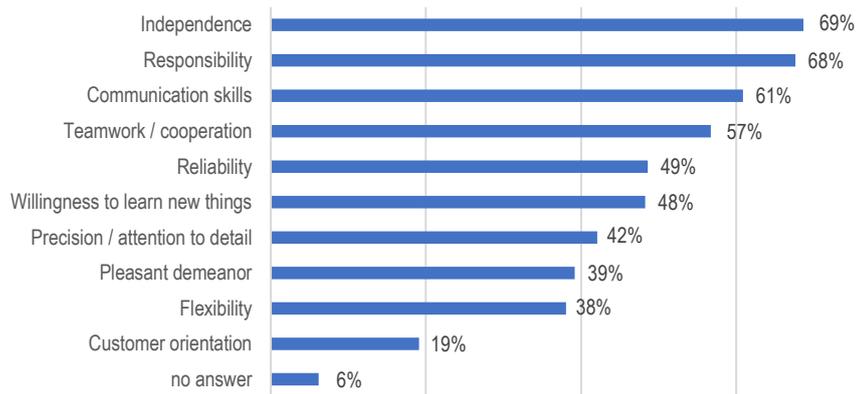
**Graph 31 From the list select all the skills you learned at school. (n = 1214)**



Among soft skills, graduates reported that they were given opportunity to develop independence, responsibility, communication skills and ability to cooperate during their studies (*Graph 32*). As in the previous survey, during the 2025 survey respondents were choosing from the list of soft skills based on the most frequent employer requirements in job ads on Profesia.sk for positions requiring secondary education and suitable for graduates.<sup>7</sup>

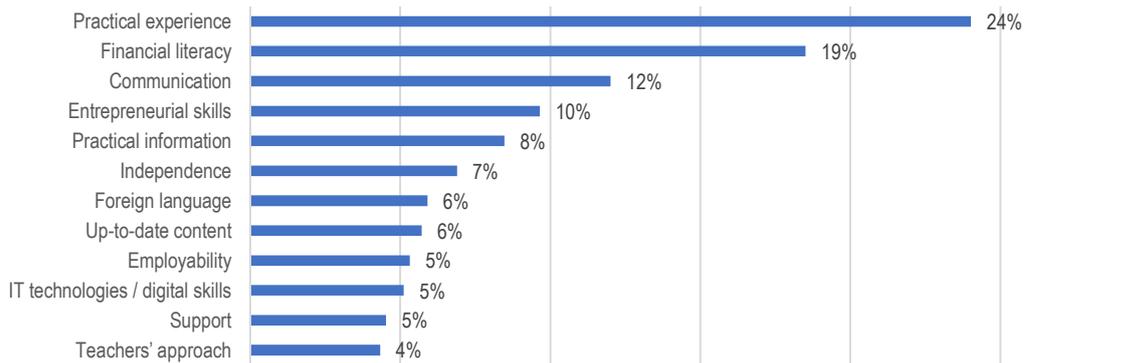
<sup>7</sup> This information was provided by the operator of the Alma Career Slovakia portal.

**Graph 52 From the list, select all the skills you learned at school or had the opportunity to develop there. (n = 1214)**



Respondents then had the opportunity to express their own views on which skills schools should develop during study. In open-ended answers practical experience, financial literacy and communication were mentioned most frequently (Graph 33)<sup>8</sup>.

**Graph 33 Now that you have finished school, which skills do you think the school should teach or support more? You can select more than one option. (n = 508)**



### **Practical training**

Although there is general call for a higher share of practical training in vocational education and training (VET), graduates' responses often emphasized the need for higher-quality practice (up-to-date, relevance, approach), as well as specific recommendations for training in their field of study. For this reason, it is essential to implement school-level questionnaires collecting graduates' feedback so that their specific experience on the job can be translated into schools' practical training in individual study programmes.

Simply increasing the number of hours of practical training does not automatically improve graduates' readiness for the labour market. It is also necessary to examine the actual course of practical training from the perspective of all participants (students, companies and schools). A probe into graduates' opinions about their experience is only a first such perspective beyond the standard measurement of the share of practical training in VET, as commonly reported in other analytical documents<sup>9</sup>. Behind the correlation between the share of practical training and graduates' employment lies a whole range of other factors that should be investigated. At the same time,

<sup>8</sup> Open responses were coded based on word frequency and aggregated by content. Last year's report included raw word frequencies without adjustments. This year's coding enables better classification; however results remain consistent, mainly focus on practical training, financial literacy, and practical skills.

<sup>9</sup> Graph 35 on page 17 from the [The Spending Review on Primary and Secondary Schools](#), published by ÚHP (Public Finance Unit) and IVP under Slovakia's Ministry of Finance.

respondents' honesty and willingness to share suggestions for improvement based on personal experience in the survey represent valuable feedback, and it is important that the results are not limited to simple reporting.

*"Pay more attention to students during practical training. Dedicate more time to students during training."*  
*"Show them and make them learn."*  
*"Independence and more professional tasks during practical training."*  
*"Less unnecessary theory, more practical demonstrations."*  
*"Establish partner programs where companies can select students for paid practical training or part-time jobs. Enable students to obtain certificates or confirmations of training completion to attach to their CVs."*  
*"More practical training, especially in the field."*  
*"More practical training at school and especially going into the field to see work processes on construction sites with your own eyes."*  
*"Linking theory with practice would help a lot."*  
*"Focus on practice; in practice, many things don't work as we learned them theoretically."*  
*"I had weak practical training in the contracted clinic and didn't assist. I missed it at work."*  
*"Teach computer networks more practically."*  
*"More in terms of drawing and woodworking."*  
*"More practice with wine. Be in the cellar every day or at least 3x a week to make it meaningful."*  
*"Definitely more manual skills, especially for the field of Computer Networks Mechanic / electrician."*  
*"Plumbers should do more plumbing tasks."*  
*"Learn more about over-the-counter medicines."*  
*"In practice: Know how to react to patients' negative behavior."*

### **Financial literacy, practical information, entrepreneurial skills**

The need for financial literacy has recently gained importance, partly due to promotion of the topic by the National Bank of Slovakia<sup>10</sup>. Although it is not entirely clear what young people mean by financial literacy, this term appeared in the survey as the second most frequent request to improve skills taught in secondary vocational schools. In responses where this request was elaborated, it mainly concerned practical skills related to financing, investing, taxes, etc. It can therefore be argued that "financial literacy" covers a broader demand for practical skills in the area of social-security and tax obligations, everyday financing and planning, as well as understanding a citizen's position in the state with associated rights and legal protections. This is also confirmed by a relatively significant group of respondents expressing this need, which we grouped under the term "practical information."

Similarly, the need for better preparedness in financial literacy overlaps with the demand to improve "entrepreneurial skills." Entrepreneurial skills clearly intersect with financial literacy in areas such as financing business activities and creating business plans. The overlap with "practical information" lies in understanding tax and social-security obligations, legislation for starting companies or sole trades, and related expenses.

Frequently discussed resilience of participants in the labor market in the current economic structure also includes their perception of alternative opportunities. Entrepreneurship is among alternatives to employment. Paying attention to entrepreneurial skills will not only contribute to better employability and self-realization of young graduates but will also contribute to building labor force resilience during structural changes in the economy.

#### **Financial literacy**

*"More practical experience in financing."*  
*"Economics, but not just as a subject about what money is — everything about taxes, expenses, absolutely everything!"*  
*"Financial literacy (starting a business, regarding paying taxes and similar)."*  
*"Financial literacy. Definitely need more information so you don't misunderstand how leasing works later."*

<sup>10</sup> The NBS educational program titled "5peňazi" ([5penazi.sk](http://5penazi.sk)).

*"Financial literacy, general overview."*

*"How real life in society works (money)."*

*"Better handling of financial resources, since I see many young people don't know how to manage them."*

*"Students should be more familiar with entrepreneurship and investing."*

*"Topics related to financial literacy, critical thinking."*

*"Financial literacy, things for life and for the profession they will want to perform."*

### **Practical information**

*"Preparation for real life, financial literacy, handling paperwork."*

*"Financial literacy, math, functioning of public administration and the state."*

*"Working with official documents."*

*"How to navigate and handle matters at offices."*

*"Education in official matters (tax returns, etc.)."*

*"Preparation for future occupations — contracts, tax returns."*

*"Bureaucratic skills (taxes, social contributions, administration, etc.)."*

*"How it works in real life (work and so on)."*

*"Teach time and money management and better prepare for real life."*

*"What to expect from an employer, or how to properly submit a resignation."*

*"Administration in practice (tax returns, resignations, labour code)."*

### **Entrepreneurial skills**

*"Benefits from the state for employees, self-employed. What to watch out for and what is not worth it."*

*"Explanation of how entrepreneurial skills work and how contributions work in a bit more detail."*

*"How exactly to handle, e.g., a trade license (documents, tax return)."*

*"Financing, inventiveness, ability to entrepreneur."*

*"How to do a tax return. How to set up a company/trade and so on. How to manage a company or other business."*

### **Communication**

The third most frequently cited area of skills that schools should support more during studies, according to graduates, was communication. In expanded responses, this involved a mix of communication skills (excluding presentation skills, which form a separate category) across various situations, including the role of communication in interpersonal relationships and the work environment.

*"Proper communication in business as well as communication in everyday life."*

*"Socializing at public meetings and company conferences."*

*"Professional communication."*

*"Communication in a professional environment."*

*"Be able to communicate directly and speak up when something is wrong."*

*"They should test more orally so that students are forced to learn and get used to speaking in front of people."*

*"Communication in a foreign language."*

*"Respect, courtesy, polite behavior."*

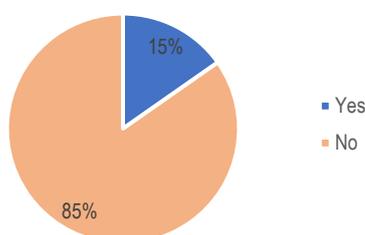
*"More communication patient/client nurse, expressing oneself in front of patient/client."*

## Dual Education

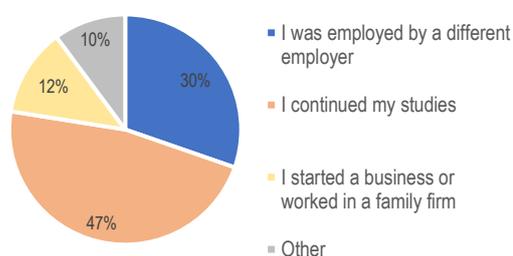
Involving SVS students in the dual education system is considered an advantage because it is assumed to lead to better and faster labour-market placement. Among respondents 105 of them (9%) had a training contract during their studies in the dual education system (DES). Of these, 15% were subsequently employed by the employer with whom they had the training contract (Graph 34). The same share of graduates outside the DES were employed by the employer where they had done their practical training (not shown in the graph). The survey results therefore do not show a difference in the rate at which graduates moved into employment with the employer where they did their practical training based on their participation in the DES.

The most common reason for not getting employed by the same employer was continuing further studies, for nearly half of the graduates (Graph 35). Approximately 30% more were employed by a different employer, and roughly 12% started their own business.

**Graph 34 After finishing your studies, were you employed by the employer with whom you had a training contract? (n = 105)**



**Graph 35 If not, what were the reasons? (n = 89)**



### Other, please specify.

"No position available for us."

"They fired me from the company a month before graduation."

"Moved abroad."

"I didn't have sufficient practical training and experience."

"They fired us."

## University Education

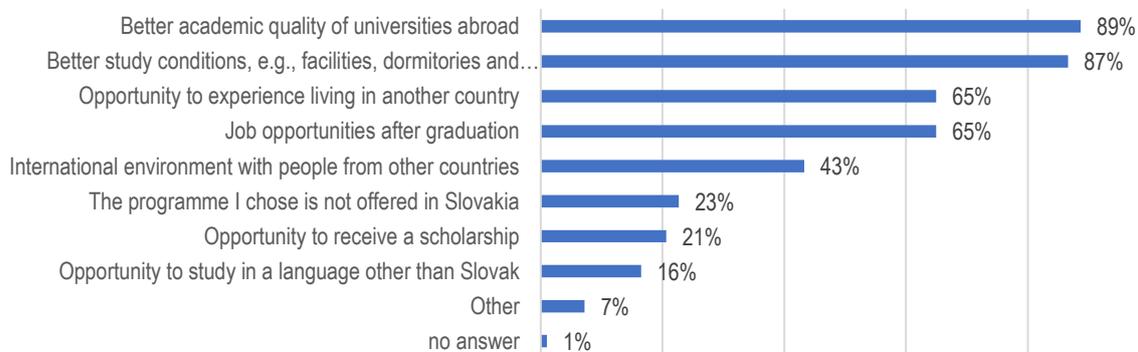
In the final section we addressed the topic of so-called "brain drain," i.e., the high share of university students studying abroad, while only some of whom return to Slovakia. At the time of the survey, 60% of all respondents were enrolled at university. The vast majority study at Slovak universities; 14% study abroad, mainly in the Czech Republic (Graph 36).

**Graph 36 Studying at the university (n = 729)**



Respondents consider the most important factors in choosing a foreign university to be the better academic quality of universities abroad and better study conditions (Graph 37). Nearly two-thirds view the opportunity to experience life in a foreign country as important together with a higher employability on the labor market after completing studies.

**Graph 377 What are your reasons for studying abroad? You can select more than one answer. (n = 97)**



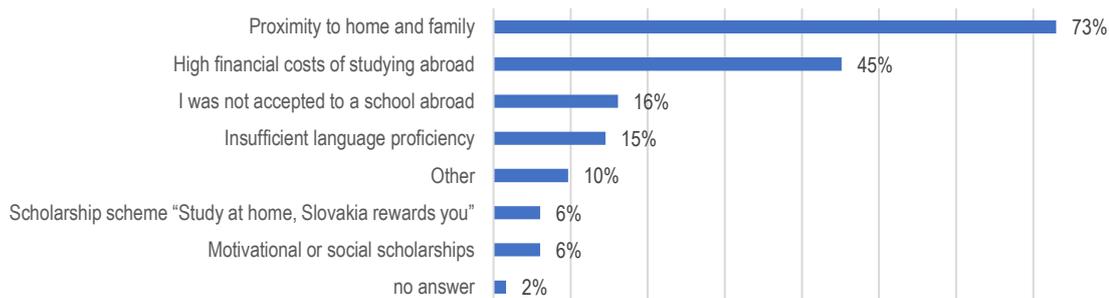
If respondents had to choose only one most important factor for choosing a school abroad, 45% would choose studying outside Slovakia because of better academic quality at foreign universities and 20% because of better study conditions (Graph 38). As many as 94% of university students studying abroad would choose to study abroad again (not shown in the graph).

**Graph 388 What is your reason for studying abroad? Choose only one option this time. (n = 97)**



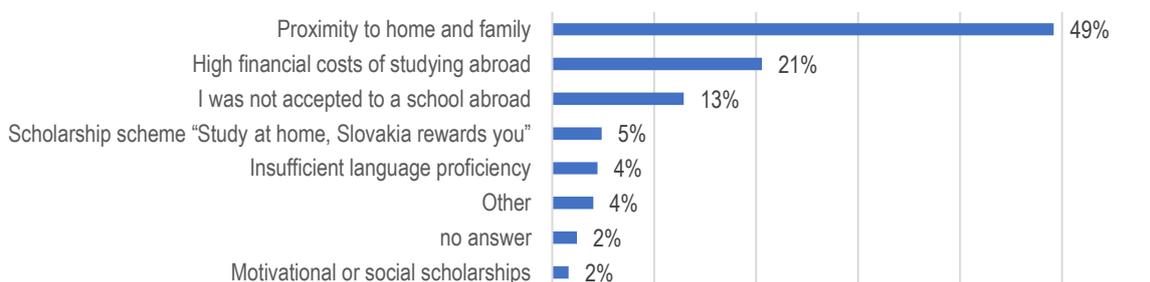
Students at Slovak universities were asked whether they considered studying abroad, with 44% expressing positive consideration. Through multiple-choice selection, these respondents could choose the decision-making factors that influenced their choice in favor of a Slovak university (Graph 39). The most common reason was proximity to home and family. High costs associated with studying abroad were also an important factor.

**Graph 399 What made you choose a Slovak university? You can select more than one option. (n = 248)**



When respondents were asked to choose only one reason, nearly half rated proximity to home as the most important (Graph 40).

**Graph 4010 What made you choose a Slovak university? Choose only one option. (n = 248)**



**What made you choose a Slovak university? Responses from "Other" option.**

- "I don't know anyone abroad."
- "The university I chose offered a study programme that interests me."
- "It's easier to live in SK than to constantly travel to and from abroad."
- "I missed the application deadline."
- "I found a better study programme in Slovakia."

At the end, respondents had the opportunity to express anything they considered important, with approximately 11% utilizing this option. These responses comprise a mix of positive feedback as well as relevant constructive criticism.

**If there is something important you would like us to know, please do so here<sup>11</sup>.**

- "I would like to say that what was taught in school was very meaningful and had potential for the future. Only now at the university do I see that those subjects and heaps of textbooks served a purpose, and I would like to thank all the teachers at my school very much. That drilling had its purpose — it makes it easier to get through further studies now 😊."
- "The school did not provide sufficient vocational training in the field. Instruction was weak in practical terms. Vocational training could have been of higher quality and more practice-oriented. Some instructors had approach that discouraged students' learning and motivation. Students left school unprepared for real practical world because vocational teaching lacked individual attention and thorough explanation of work procedures."
- "Vocational schools are very underestimated, but at university I realized I have more knowledge than students from gymnasiums."
- "I strongly recommend helping young people with explanations for adult life. Open the topic of finances and entrepreneurship a bit more... explain what documents are needed at which office. I personally missed this, and running around the insurance offices was a nightmare without that knowledge."
- "A school does not provide adequate preparation of students regarding practical skills. Vocational trainers pay attention mainly to talented students or those with a family background in the field. Teaching is conducted using outdated methods and the equipment used (especially technical tools) in my opinion does not meet required safety standards. The school shows no interest in students who do not bring benefits in the form of a good reputation. The overall atmosphere and relationships at the school are very poor — among staff and among students. I strongly recommend a complete replacement of vocational trainers and school management."
- "Questionnaires will not help the children; maybe an education reform will. The system is outdated and dysfunctional. You teach children to be good employees, but in today's world and economy being an ordinary rank-and-file employee does not pay for rent and food."

<sup>11</sup> Comments are not edited, except for grammar.

*"I think that at our school vocational training could be supported more, because it helps us better prepare for the labour market. We had little practical training. In the field of transport operations and economics, practical experience is very important because employers require experience. I would also like to praise the teachers who patiently guided us during our studies and passed on a lot of useful knowledge and experience."*

*"Many things at secondary school are not clear, and I think students will really miss financial literacy. I won't lie — I still lack it myself, even though I've been working for over half a year now. And there should be more linking theory with practice, not just explaining what a diode, resistor, coil, etc. are, but what real modern uses they have — something interesting that could engage young people."*

*"The school where I studied has unmatched equipment and lots of Erasmus+ mobilities and a three-week professional placement in Ireland."*

*"Some professors will stay in my heart for the rest of my life."*

*"I would just add that teachers should behave politely to students. They should support them and teach what they really need for their field and for life. They should guide them to achieve something in life rather than humiliate them and imply they won't accomplish anything. As it is said, school is our second home, so we should feel that way. Many students skip school because of teachers' behaviour and attitudes in class."*

*"There need to be companies willing to employ/allow students to do practical placements during secondary vocational school. Or schools should sign contracts with them. When coming to university and looking for a job in the field, employers expect years of experience that an ordinary graduate has nowhere to obtain."*

*"Students should be made more aware that after secondary vocational school they can also go to more demanding universities, for example law or medicine, without having attended a gymnasium. If they want it, they should believe in themselves and go. They should not feel forced to continue in a field they don't enjoy."*