

A Comparison of the Systems of Remuneration in the Educational Sectors of the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany

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Abstract

Education and the organisation thereof is the most important factor influencing the competitiveness of an economy, the wealth of a society and quality of life, as is evidenced by those developed countries with higher numbers of educated people. One of the key factors in determining the quality of an education system is the remuneration of the individuals working in it. A sectoral analysis was therefore conducted on the basis of research into the systems of remuneration in the education sectors of three countries, namely the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany. The purpose was to compare the results and indicate a space for further research.

Key words:

Educational sectors, wage, systems of remuneration, Czech Republic, Germany, Belgium.

Introduction

The efficacy of education has become one of the main topics of socio-scientific research, including economics (Ferguson 1991; Leigh 2009; Stinebrickner 2001; Stinebrickner 1999). Education is understood to be a public good that should be available to everyone and in an appropriate quality. The problem is how to define and execute such quality. There are a number of key indicators, of which one is the salary attached to teaching positions. Salaries are not only a measurable indicator of prestige and importance, but also provide motivation to future applicants and teachers (Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin 1999; Hendricks 2015; Imaseki 2015; Figlio 1997; Derkachev 2015; Ballou and Podgursky 1995). The fundamental questions here are – Can we appropriately appraise the high expectations connected to the educational process (Carnoy et al. 2009; Loeb and

Page 2000)? And, what is the situation like in the Czech Republic in comparison to other EU countries (Boarini and Lüdemann 2009; Woessmann 2011; Wolter and Denzler 2003)?

In 2015/16 teachers' salaries increased in 24 countries and in another 16 countries remained the same as the year before (Eurydice 2016). Over the last seven years, minimum statutory salaries have increased or remained at the same level in most European countries. The increase was higher than 15% in the German-speaking communities of Belgium, and in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary (secondary education), Slovakia and Sweden (upper secondary education). However, they were below 2009 levels in Malta, Slovenia, Finland, the United Kingdom and Iceland (with exception to upper secondary education), and significantly lower in Ireland and Greece (Eurydice 2016).

The levels of remuneration in the education sectors of three countries, namely the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany, were selected for further analysis. A general overview was prepared and a subsequent analysis conducted of the individual countries. The results form the basis for the conclusions.

Results

Remuneration in education sectors

Almost all European countries offer salary allowances and complementary payments to teachers. In almost all countries the central/regional authority responsible for education sets the levels of teachers' basic statutory salaries in public schools. However, in some countries, local authorities and schools have the autonomy to decide on certain allowances. The most common allowances are for 'additional responsibilities' and 'overtime'. Salaries in private government-dependent schools generally follow the rules applied in the public sector. Private independent schools often set their own salaries in accordance with national labour legislation/codes of practice (Eurydice 2016; Figlio 1997; Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin 1999).

In 2015/16 there was an increase in teachers' statutory salaries¹ in the majority of European countries, with the level staying the same as that in 2014/2015 in the others. Salaries did not decrease in any country (Eurydice 2016). This trend was due to general salary adjustments for all public sector employees and the reform of teachers' salaries in three countries. In the Czech Republic, the salary rates of public sector employees, including education and non-education staff in schools, were increased by 3% in November 2015, whereby the increase was higher for teachers with longer experience (Eurydice 2016).

In Austria, the education reforms of 2013, which came into effect in September 2015,

¹The basic statutory salary is a component of the total remuneration teachers receive for their work. It refers to the amount that a fully qualified teacher is paid depending on the length of their professional experience and/or age. It does not include salary allowances or other financial benefits and takes no account of taxes and social security contributions. (Eurydice, 2016).

included higher starting salaries and a new salary progression scheme (Eurydice, 2016).

In the UK, there was a 1% pay rise, which reflected the government's average 1% pay rise policy for the entire public sector. In addition, the maximum limit of the main pay range was increased by 2% so as to reinforce the attractiveness of the teaching profession in the early career stages (Eurydice 2016).

Picture1: Changes between 2014/15 and 2015/16 in teachers' statutory salaries in public schools



Source: Eurydice 2016

As a result of the economic crisis, governments in some European countries implemented pay cuts or freezes for public sector employees as a means by which to reduce budget deficits. In more recent years, the wage freezes in many of these countries were lifted and salaries adjusted to meet the cost of living. Some countries also passed reforms,

thereby increasing teachers' salaries. This was done in order to make the profession more attractive, to ensure the high quality of the teaching force and to improve the quality of education (Imaseki 2015; Derkachev 2015). However, the situation remained frozen in some countries, like Italy, Cyprus and Liechtenstein.

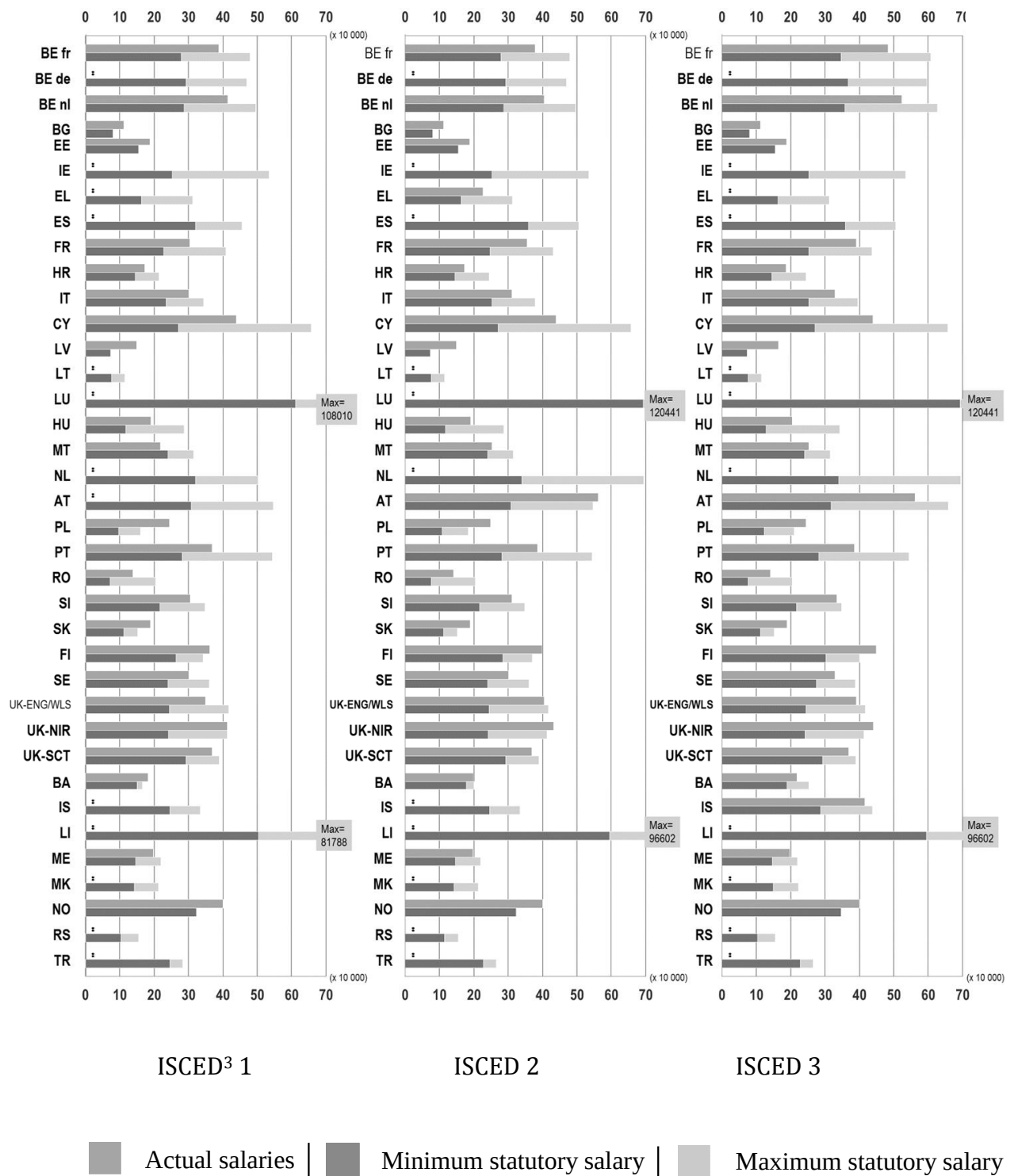
In order to reduce the public deficit, the Italian government froze salaries in 2010, initially up to 2013. However, the measure has been extended every year since then. In Liechtenstein, salary increases, which are subject to parliamentary decisions as part of the overall state budgetary process, have not been awarded since 2010 as a result of the economic crisis and the public deficit. In Cyprus, the government is aiming to reduce expenditures with a view to balancing the budget (Eurydice 2016).

The minimum and maximum statutory salary levels is a key point in attracting and retaining high-quality teachers. High starting salaries may attract young people to the profession, but if teachers need many years in service to get relatively low pay increases, this might have a detrimental effect, i.e. teachers may leave the profession (Stinebrickner 1998; Stinebrickner 2001).

Statutory salaries vary substantially between European countries. In most of them, both the minimum and maximum statutory salaries increase according to the educational level. In primary education, the minimum statutory salary ranges from 6,974 to 61,138 PPS (Purchasing Power Standards²), and up to 69,289 PPS at secondary level. The maximum statutory salary varies from 11,553 to 108,010 PPS in primary education, whereas in secondary education, it can reach 120,441 PPS (Eurydice 2016).

²The Purchasing Power Standard (PPS) is an artificial currency unit. Theoretically, one PPS can buy the same amount of goods and services in each country. However, price differences across borders mean that different amounts of national currency units are needed for the same goods and services depending on the country. PPS are derived by dividing any economic aggregate of a country in national currency by its respective purchasing power parities. *Source: Eurostat.*

Figure 1: Minimum and maximum statutory salaries and actual salaries of teachers (in PPS) in primary and secondary schools in 2015/16



Source: Eurydice 2016

³The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is a statistical framework for organising information on education maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Table 1: Percentage change between minimum and maximum statutory salaries according to ISCED level and the number of years in service necessary to achieve this increase⁴

(%)	BE fr	BE de	BE nl	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT
ISCED 1	72.3	60.2	72.7	:	31.8	18.4	33.2	:	111.3	90.3	41.7	79.9	47.8	47.0	143.3	:	52.5	76.7	145.0	30.6
ISCED 2	72.3	60.2	72.7	:	31.8	18.4	31.8	:	111.3	90.3	40.9	73.9	68.7	49.7	143.3	:	52.5	73.8	145.0	30.6
ISCED 3	75.2	62.2	75.2	:	31.8	30.0	45.2	:	111.3	90.3	40.9	72.7	68.7	56.5	143.3	:	52.5	73.8	165.0	30.6
Number of years	27 (25)	27 (25)	27 (25)	:	32	12 (7)	:	:	22	36	39	29	35	35	22	10	15	25	42	16
(%)	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK-(1)	UK-NIR	UK-SCT	BA	IS	LI	ME	MK	NO	RS	TR
ISCED 1	56.9	77.4	66.9	93.0	182.5	60.0	35.4	30.1	50.0	70.3	70.3	33.0	10.2	36.2	62.3	49.8	48.8	:	49.7	15.2
ISCED 2	104.3	77.4	68.9	93.0	165.7	60.0	35.4	30.1	50.0	70.3	70.3	33.0	12.0	36.2	62.3	49.8	48.8	:	35.0	16.3
ISCED 3	104.3	107.7	71.0	93.0	165.7	60.0	35.4	32.4	41.1	70.3	70.3	33.0	33.4	52.1	62.3	49.8	49.0	:	49.7	16.3
Number of years	15 (12)	34	20	34	40	25	32	20	:	:	10	6	35	:	:	40	40	16	38	27

Source: Eurydice 2016

The actual salaries (in the indicated education sectors) are closer to the maximum than to the minimum statutory salary in the following 11 countries or regions: the French Community of Belgium (primary and upper secondary education), the Flemish Community of Belgium, the Czech Republic, France (secondary education), Italy (primary and upper secondary education), Austria (upper secondary education) and Montenegro. In another five education systems, actual salaries are even higher than the maximum statutory salary (Denmark, Poland, Slovakia, Finland and the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)).

Teachers often receive additional allowances and financial benefits. The decision on allowances, criteria and methods of calculation can be taken at central, local and school levels or be a shared responsibility (Leigh, 2009; Stinebrickner, 1999). Allowances include:

- further formal qualifications;
- continuing professional development qualifications;

⁴ EU: European Union; BE Belgium; BE fr Belgium – French Community; BE de Belgium – German-speaking Community; BE nl Belgium – Flemish Community; BG Bulgaria; CZ Czech Republic; DK Denmark; DE Germany; EE Estonia; IE Ireland; EL Greece; ES Spain; FR France; HR Croatia; IT Italy; CY Cyprus; LV Latvia; LT Lithuania; LU Luxembourg; HU Hungary; MT Malta; NL Netherlands; AT Austria; PL Poland; PT Portugal; RO Romania; SI Slovenia; SK Slovakia; FI Finland; SE Sweden; UK United Kingdom; UK-ENG England; UK-WLS Wales; UK-NIR Northern Island; UK-SCT Scotland; BA Bosnia and Herzegovina; IS Iceland; LI Liechtenstein; ME Montenegro; MK Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; NO Norway; RS Serbia; TR Turkey. The values in national currencies have been converted into PPS using the purchasing power parities (PPPs) for 2015.

- additional responsibilities;
- participating in extracurricular activities;
- overtime;
- teaching in challenging circumstances;
- teaching in remote or expensive geographical areas;
- positive teaching performance.

Private government-dependent schools receive the majority of their funding from public authorities and are usually subject to the same rules and regulations as public schools. In almost one third of the European countries, salary arrangements for teachers and school heads in these schools are based on the same calculation methods and basic statutory salary references as in the public sector (Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Spain, France, Cyprus, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, the United Kingdom (Scotland), Norway and Serbia. Nevertheless, private independent schools in these countries are free to adopt different salary policies.

Primary, secondary schools and higher education – a comparison between countries

Belgium (French Community)

Teachers' basic statutory salaries are defined for public and private government-dependent schools using the same methods. Private independent schools determine their basic statutory salaries themselves.

Table 2: Monthly gross salaries of full-time fully qualified teachers in public schools

	Basic statutory salary		Average actual salary
	Minimum (EUR)	Maximum (EUR)	EUR
Pre-Primary	2,511	4,327	3,540
Primary	2,511	4,327	3,500
Lower Secondary	2,511	4,327	3,415
Upper Secondary	3,124	5,474	4,358

Source: Eurydice 2016

The average number of years that a reference teacher must complete to obtain the maximum basic statutory salary is 27 years for pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education and 25 years for upper secondary education.

The basic statutory salaries of school heads' are defined for public and private government-dependent schools using the same methods. Private independent schools determine their basic statutory salaries themselves (Eurydice 2016).

In academia, salaries follow seniority scales and salary brackets are fixed by decree. The number of years at work to get the end-of-career salary varies depending on the position: 24 years for a lecturer, 18 years for a professor and 15 years for a full professor (European University Institute).

Table 3: Monthly gross salary in Euro per month for tenured academic positions

Seniority	0	6	12	Max
Lecturer	4,249	4,857	5,464	6,679
Professor	4,976	5,851	6,725	7,599
Full Professor	5,574	6,752	-	8,519

Source: European University Institute; Université Catholique de Louvain

Belgium (Flemish Community)

In the Flemish Community of Belgium, the teachers' statutory salaries are also defined for public and private government-dependent schools using the same methods, and, once again, private independent schools determine their basic statutory salaries themselves.

Table 4: Monthly gross salaries of full-time fully qualified teachers in public schools

	Basic statutory salary		Average actual salary
	Minimum (EUR)	Maximum (EUR)	EUR
Pre-Primary	2,588	4,470	3,696
Primary	2,588	4,470	3,737
Lower Secondary	2,588	4,470	3,643
Upper Secondary	3,229	5,655	4,716

Source: Eurydice 2016

The average number of years that a reference teacher must complete to obtain the maximum basic statutory salary is 27 years for pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education and 25 years for upper secondary education.

In academia, salaries depend on grants and seniority. A salary scale consists of a minimum and a maximum salary, with several intermediary steps, which mark periodic salary increases. The salary scales of independent and assistant academic staff are laid down by the Flemish Government. In addition to their monthly salary, all staff are entitled to holiday pay and an end-of-year bonus (European University Institute, Belgium – Flemish Community).

Table 5: Monthly gross salary in Euro per month for tenured academic positions

	Start	Average	Max
Doctor-Assistant	3,600	4,494-4,654	5,611
Lecturer (Docent)	3,704	4,582	5,460
Senior Lecturer (Hoofddocent)	4,242	5,453	6,664
Professor (Hoogleraar)	4,967	6,274	7,581
Full Professor (Gewoon hoogleraar)	5,563	6,737	8,498

Source: European University Institute; Academic Service KU Leuven

Czech Republic

The average number of years that a reference teacher must complete to obtain the maximum basic statutory salary is 32 years. In November 2015, an additional level was added to the salary scale for teachers with more than 32 years professional experience. Previously, teachers had to work 27 years in the profession to obtain maximum basic statutory salary (Eurydice, 2016). Teachers' salaries in private schools are contractually determined. However, they are regulated by the Labour Code and the minimum level of pay defined by Government is guaranteed.

Table 6: Monthly gross salaries of full-time fully qualified teachers in public schools

	Basic statutory salary		Average actual salary
	Minimum (CZK/EUR)	Maximum (CZK/EUR)	CZK/EUR
Pre-Primary	16,375/600	25,058/918	22,941/841
Primary	21,000/770	27,675/1,014	27,071/992
Lower Secondary	21,000/770	27,675/1,014	27,036/991
Upper Secondary	21,000/770	27,675/1,014	28,310/1,038

Source: Eurydice 2016

Since 1 November 2015, the salary tariffs of employees in services and administration, including the education and non-education staff at schools, were increased by 3%. In this way, the Government achieved the goal set out in its Policy Statement. With regards to the modification of the teachers' salary scales – the salary increase was higher for those teachers with longer experience (Eurydice 2016).

In the Czech Republic, both academic and non-academic institutions provide higher education, but only the former offer Masters and Doctoral programmes. Most higher

education institutions are public and funded by the state through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. There are also 14 private institutions, which are partly state-funded. The Accreditation Commission is responsible for the accreditation and assessment of programmes at all higher education institutions (European University Institute).

The organisation of Czech academia is rooted in the German/Austrian higher education system. The first position a PhD graduate is appointed to is that of Assistant Professor (there is also a lower rank of Assistant). The major career step is habilitation, through which a candidate obtains their *venia legendi* or “permission to lecture” in a certain field and permission to supervise PhD students in that field.

To become an Associate Professor (or Docent), a candidate must undergo a process of habilitation. In the request for commencing the habilitation process, a candidate must prove their publishing record and teaching experience. The candidate must also present and publicly defend a thesis. Those candidates who obtain an absolute majority of the votes from the habilitation committee are appointed to the position of Associate Professor by the rector of the university.

The highest position in the structure of scholars in academia is a (full) professorship. A candidate who has obtained their habilitation may request the commencement of the procedure for professorship. They must submit recommendations from at least two professors from the same area of expertise. The candidate must give a presentation to the scientific board, which then votes by absolute majority. The consent of the scientific board is submitted to the Minister of Education for a final decision. The candidate is then formally appointed a professor by the President of the Czech Republic (European University Institute).

Table 7: Monthly gross salary in CZK and Euro per month for tenured academic positions

	Start	Average	Max
PhD Candidate	5,783/226	9,186/359	12,590/492
Postdoc	17,272/675	20,291/793	23,336/912
Assistant Professor	21,008/821	24,489/957	27,994/1,094
Associate Professor	25,204/985	29,401/1,149	33,598/1,313
Full Professor	29,862/1,167	34,980/1,367	40,123/1,568

Source: Internal salary regulation of Charles University in Prague

Each university sets its salaries individually according to its internal salary regulation. Charles University, the oldest, biggest, and still the most respected university in the Czech Republic, serves as a model for other universities and higher education institutions.

In general, the Charles University internal salary regulation allows the university and its employees to freely negotiate on the level of salary, although this is extremely rare. Instead, the salary is determined after the employment contract is signed according to a

tariff. Employees are divided into two groups – academics and researchers – according to whether the primary objective of their employment is teaching or research. The stipend for PhD candidates is determined under a separate regulation, as they are not employees, but students. PhD programs are studies in two forms – external (without stipend, the most common) and combined (with stipend and obligations such as teaching, conference organising, etc.). The PhD stipend is not subject to tax, which means that in the table above, the PhD “salary” is net income.

In addition to the basic salaries indicated in the table, an employee may receive additional repeated payments for management tasks (dean, vice-dean, chair, director of study programme, etc.) and a bonus or one-off payment (e.g. for PhD supervision, membership in a PhD defence committee, opponent on a habilitation committee, etc.). Although these payments vary, on average they do not exceed EUR 500 a month.

Germany

Table 8: Monthly gross salaries of full-time fully qualified teachers in public schools

	Basic statutory salary		Average actual salary
	Minimum (EUR)	Maximum (EUR)	EUR
Pre-Primary	:	:	:
Primary	3,738	4,978	:
Lower Secondary	4,204	5,542	:
Upper Secondary	4,230	6,142	:

Source: Eurydice 2016

In Germany, salaries are determined through national legislation. Their progression is not determined by seniority rules, but regulated through a system of bonuses that rewards the completion of administrative tasks and successful research and teaching (European University Institute, Academic Careers Observatory, Germany).

Table 9: Gross monthly salary in Euro per month for tenured academic positions

	Eastern Provinces	Western Provinces
PhD Candidate	:	:
Postdoc	:	:
Junior Professor	3,150	3,405
Associate Professor	3,598	3,890
Full Professor	4,369	4,723

Source: Deutscher Hochschulverband; Academics.de

The German system is usually classified as “continental European” and it is affected by the federal organisation of the state. The education policies of the respective federal states

(Bundesländer) can differ. Even though a framework exists for coordinating the respective education policies, the legislative prescriptions and the organisation of educational content is very heterogeneous.

With only a few exceptions, the universities in Germany are state institutions. Because of the federal structure of Germany, universities are controlled and financed by the respective Ministry of Education. The relationship between the ministries of the federal states and the universities is regulated by the different Acts on Higher Education of each federal state, which in turn are determined and coordinated by the Framework Act on Higher Education (Hochschulrahmengesetz), which applies to all the federal states (European University Institute).

Conclusion

Without any doubt, today's successful economies are knowledge economies (Ferguson 1991). The pressure on skills and the ability to use knowledge in real life creates the basic conditions for competitiveness in an increasingly globalised world. That is why education sectors – as incubators for developing comprehensive skills and knowledge – will play an even more important role in our lives. In converging economies, like that of the Czech Republic, it will be even more important, which is why this needs to be reflected in the system of earnings in the education sector. The conditions should be such that the best teachers and experts are motivated to come and share their skills with students, who in turn become more and more competitive (Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin 1999; Boyd et al. 2006).

In the overview presented in this article, we compare the systems of remuneration in the education sectors of the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany. The absolute and relative numbers clearly show that the remuneration levels in Belgium and Germany are very similar, but that in the Czech Republic they are significantly lower for all education grades. These differences are in some respects even bigger when compared to the average or median wages in other sectors of the economy. From this perspective, we can conclude that the Czech educational sector is still waiting for the impulse that will drive the whole system to a higher level (Ballou and Podgursky 1995).

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