**9. JOBS AND EMPLOYEMENT B2**

Work (or our **occupation** – zamestnanie) plays an important role in our lives. This way we do not only earn (zarábame) money but also find our place in society, spend time with other people and feel useful. Choosing one’s job can be difficult and it can take time to make a final decision (konečné rozhodnutie) and choose the job we would like to do.

The **economically active population** (obyvateľstvo) includes people who are willing and able to work and people who search for work (ktorí si hľadajú prácu) – the unemployed (nezamestnaní). The first group includes self-employed people (živnostníkov) and employees (zamestnancov). The **economically inactive people** are those under 18, students, the retired (dôchodcovia), the disabled (zdravotne postihnutí), the sick (chorí) or those who do not wish or are unable to work.

**Employement** (zamestnanie) is a contract (zmluvný vzťah) between an employer and an employee. The **employer** (zamestnávateľ) is a person who hires (si najíma) employees. It can also be an institution. The employee receives wage (mzdu) or salary (plat) for his/her work.

In large organizations the personnel selection (výber personálu) is organized by the Human Resources Department (oddelením ľudských zdrojov). The available positions are usually published in the newspapers or on the internet. The candidates send the **job application** (žiadosť o zamestnanie) and their **CV** (životopis), together with a **motivation letter** (motivačný list). Their CV should include personal data and details (podrobnosti) about their education, skills and work experience (pracovné skúsenosti). The ones who are chosen are invited to an **interview** (pohovor). At an interview they usually answer questions, describe (opíšu) their motivation and expectations (očakávania). It is important to prepare for the interview, find information about the company, answer clearly (zrozumiteľne) and stay calm (zostať pokojný). If a candidate succeeds [səksíds](uspeje, he or she is given an **official offer of employement** (oficiálnu ponuku na prácu) with a **defined starting salary** (so stanoveným nástupným platom), **position**, **medical benefits** (nemocenskými dávkami) and **vacation days** (voľnými dňami, dovolenkou). Employees can be hired to work **full-time** (na plný úväzok) or **part-time** (na polovičný úväzok) and have a **permanent contract** (zmluvu na dobu neurčitú) or **part-time contract** (zmluvu na dobu určitú). They are organized into trade unions (odborov) which protest in case the employees are unhappy with low wages or few benefits.

The working time (pracovný čas) in Europe varies between 33 and 41 hours a week. In Slovakia, the working time is 40 hours a week (8 hours a day). However, there are jobs where people work long hours (dlho). Majority of people work regular hours, it means from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Shift work (práca na smeny) describes regular employment outside the normal daytime hours and is typical for healthcare services (zdravotníctvo) (doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers,), firefighters, policemen and production (workers in car companies) and transport (dopravu) (truck drivers). In Slovakia, people in general start to work at 8.00 and finish at 4-5 p.m. They normally have a lunch break at lunch time. Some people have flexible working time, which means they can work at different times or work from home. New technologies, especially the Internet have enabled people to work from home. In Britain people start work at 9 o’clock and finish at 5.30 (half past five).

When a child is born to a couple (páru), it is usually the mother who takes **maternity leave** (kto ide na materskú dovolenku). In Slovakia it takes three years. The maternity pay is very low. When the child grows a little and is able to attend a nursery school (jasle), the mother often goes back to work. She has responsibility for childcare (starostlivosť o deti) and the household (domácnosť), so flexible working time is very convenient for her (je pre ňu veľmi vhodný). Many families cannot afford this (si to nemôžu dovoliť), so women often continue working full time and take care of the child and the household too. It is difficult for every woman to have both a good family life and a successful (úspešnú) career.

Many people are self-employed and run their own business. They can but do not have to employ other people. People who are not paid wages and work are called **volunteers** (dobrovoľníci) – they usually **work for free** in regions in war or regions hit by natural catastrophes.

**Choosing a career**

When we are young, we don’t think hard about our future job. Most of us want to be rich and famous. As we grow up (ako dospievame), we become wiser (múdrejšími) and realise the importance (umedomujeme si dôležitosť) of choosing our job. We start thinking about what we would like to do and what job would be appropriate (vhodný) for us. It is not easy to choose the right profession, especially at a young age. We need a job that fulfils us (potrebujeme zamestnanie, ktoré nás napĺňa), as well as a job in which we can make enough (dosť) money to cover our living costs (na pokrytie našich nákladov na živobytie). We also have to consider (zvážiť) several factors, such as the type of work, possible promotion (možné povýšenie) and career development (kariérny rast), salary (plat), working hours, travel opportunities, place of work and others. The time to make this final decision is when we study at a secondary school. We decide whether (či) we want to do a **manual**/**physical** job, which requires (si vyžaduje) physical powers or a better-paid job that requires more qualifications. Professions like a lawyer, economist, manager, teacher and doctor require college or university education and it takes hard work to get the qualification.

**Physical and intellectual work**

We basically, differentiate (rozlišujeme) between **physical** and **intellectual work**. Physical work requires physical powers and manual skills (manuálne zručnosti). Most manual workers work in manufacturing (production) or construct buildings (stavajú budovy). There are many different types of intellectual work. Some professions require detailed knowledge (podrobné znalosti) – scientists, doctors, lawyers [lójrs], accountants (účtovníci), others talent and creativity (artists). There are more and more professions that require communication and organization skills (zručnosti, schopnosti), such as public relations (styk s verejnosťou) managers, interpreters (tlmočníci), teachers, psychoanalysts, sales representatives (obchodní zástupcovia) and others. Nowadays, in most professions it is important to improve (zlepšovať sa) one’s skills and abilities by attending seminars and trainings, reading books or news in their field on the Internet.

In some occupations (v niektorých zamestnaniach), people have responsibility (zodpovednosť) for other people’s lives (doctors, pilots, drivers). Professions like a policeman, pilot, construction worker and truck driver belong to very dangerous professions because there is a high risk (vysoké riziko) of an injury (zranenia) or an accident (nehody).

The labour market (trh práce) in Slovakia has changed a lot in the past decades. More work opportunitites have been created thanks to foreign investors (vďaka zahraničným investorom) coming to the country to set up (založiť) their companies here. A lot of people had to retrain (preškoliť sa). The working conditions, especially the pay and benefits, are still insufficient. The salaries of Slovaks are much lower than the ones in Western Europe.

In Slovakia it is becoming more and more difficult to get a job. The **rate of unemployment** (miera nezamestnanosti) varies according to the regions – the Bratislava region has the lowest, while the Eastern Slovak region the highest rate. The most concerned are the young graduates (absolventi) and the people over 50. Many people decide to leave Slovakia and work abroad. They get more money, have better benefits, learn foreign language and gain working experience. In many regions it is common that father works abroad, comes home two times a month and it is the mother who takes care of the household and children.

On the other hand there is a lack of qualified labour force (nedostatok kvalifikovanej pracovnej sily) in some fields, such as car industry, mechanical engineering or building industry. People who are not willing to work are **on the dole** (sú na podpore v nezamestnanosti).