



# **LEAP**

# **Local Adult Education**

# **Policy**

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**Intellectual output 2**

**Trends and Dynamics in AE Local Policy Making**

**CityTown of NITRA**

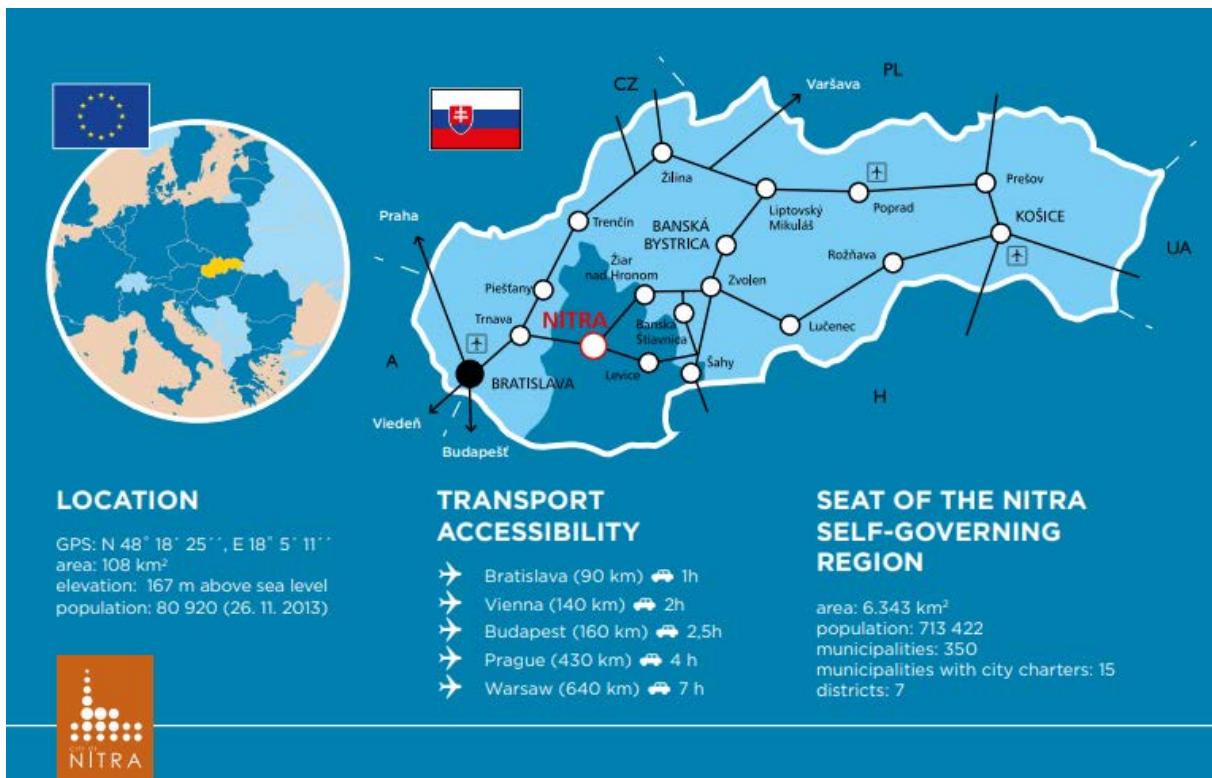
**Case Study**

# 1 Characteristics of the

## Geography

Nitra is a city in western Slovakia. It is the fifth largest city in Slovakia, with a population of approximately 77,000 people. Nitra is located in the Nitra Region, which is one of the eight regions in Slovakia.

The city of Nitra covers an area of 108 square kilometres. It is situated between the Zobor Massif (587 m) and the Kalvária (215 m) and Šibeničný vrch (218.5 m) mountains, forming part of the Tribečské pohorie mountain range separated from the main massif by the Nitra River. The city's cadastral area measures 4,083 hectares, of which the built-up area is 194 hectares. The elevation ranges from 138 to 587 meters above sea level.



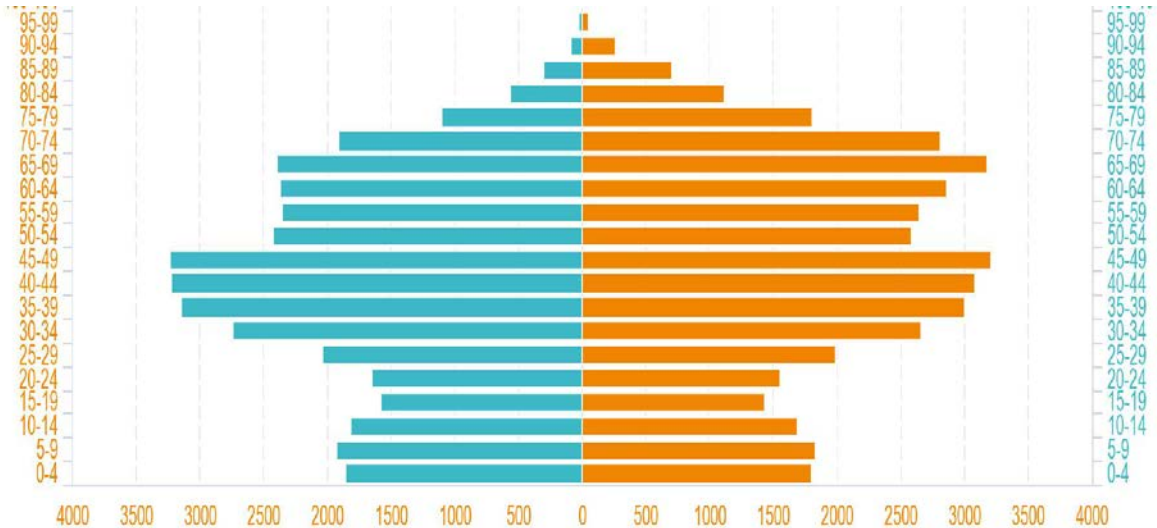
## Geography and transport accessibility

Source: City of Nitra

Nitra is the administrative center of the Nitriansky kraj (Nitra region), which comprises the districts around the towns of Nitra, Komárno, Levice, Nové Zámky, Šaľa, Topoľčany, and Zlaté Moravce. Today, Nitra is the center of the economy, culture, church, and sports in the Nitriansky kraj, and also serves as an international exhibition center through Agrokomplex. It is also known as a city of youth.

## Population, economy and industry

As of December 31, 2022, there were 76,951 inhabitants in the City of Nitra, of which 36,709 were men and 40,242 were women. Their age structure can be seen in the following graph.



### City population by gender (men by the left, women by the right)

Source: <https://mojaobec.statistics.sk/html/sk.html>

In 2022, of the total population, 14.17% were in pre-productive age (i.e. children and youth from 0 to 14 years), 64.64% in productive age (15-64 years) and 21.19% in post-productive age (seniors for 65 years) (source: <https://mojaobec.statistics.sk/html/sk.html>). The unemployment rate (12/2022) was 4.47% in the Nitra Region, and only 2.58% in the of Nitra (source: <https://lnk.sk/dhbm>). The employment rate in Nitra is relatively high, and the city has a lower unemployment rate than many other areas in Slovakia. However, like many other regions in the country, Nitra also faces issues with poverty and social inequality.

Nitra has a diverse economy, with industries such as food processing, machinery, and electronics playing a significant role. Some of the largest employers in the city include companies such as Continental Automotive Systems, Whirlpool Slovakia, and Samsung Electronics Slovakia.

In Nitra, there are two industrial parks located with the main employers of the region:

- Industrial park Nitra NORTH, Dolné Hony, Nitra
  - JAGUAR LAND ROVER NITRA – automobile industry, GU SLOVENSKO, Ltd. – the production of window and door entry systems, Visteon Interiors Slovakia, Ltd. – production of plastic frames for TV screens, FARGUELL NITRA, Ltd. – production of metal skeletons for LCD TVs, STEEP PLAST Slovakia, Ltd. – production of plastic components for car industry, etc.
- Industrial park Nitra SOUTH
  - Enipo Ltd. – fire security of buildings, Meuhlbauer Technologies – science-technological park, machines and devices for the production of plastic cards, etc.

## Nitra Self-governing Region

Nitra is also a Seat of the Nitra self-governing region: NSR (Nitriansky samosprávny kraj, NSK). The Nitra self-governing region is one of the eight self-governing regions of Slovakia. Administrative and organizational matters of the regional Council, Chairman and other bodies formed by the Council are ensured by the NSR Office. Personnel issues and job responsibilities are determined by the Council. The head of the region is the Chairman of the region, and the Regional Council consists of 31 councillors.

The Nitra self-governing region is a region with a rich history, many thermal springs and high-quality wine varieties. It belongs to the warmest areas and the most productive agricultural centers of the Slovak Republic. As the center of the self-governing region, the of Nitra has a rich industrial, road and social infrastructure.

## City of Nitra: local authority

According to Act no. 369/1990 Coll. on municipal establishment (§1), the basic task of the municipality in the exercise of governance functions is to take care of the all-round development of its territory and the needs of its inhabitants.



## Municipal office in Nitra – organisational structure

Source: City of Nitra

## Main competences of the City Office of Nitra

The city office (mestský úrad, MsÚ) in Nitra is the executive body of the mayor of Nitra and the municipal council in Nitra, consisting of city employees. It ensures the organizational and administrative matters of the city mayor and the municipal council, as well as other established organs.

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The city office is responsible for:

- a) handling the written agenda of the city and is the mailbox and dispatcher of the city's documents,
- b) providing professional background and other documents for the meetings of the council, city council, and committees,
- c) preparing written documentation for all decisions made by the mayor in administrative proceedings,
- d) carrying out the regulations and resolutions of the Council, decisions of the mayor, and resolutions of the city council
- e) handling other activities related to the original activities of the Office, such as managing the city's property and finances, personnel administration, and public procurement.

The work of the municipal office is managed and organized by the head of the office. The mayor appoints and dismisses the head of the office for an indefinite period of time.

### **Implementation of the CAF model at the Municipal Office in Nitra**

Since March 2021, the introduction of quality management through the CAF model has been underway at the Municipal Office in Nitra. The goal of implementation is a high-quality self-government built on continuous processes, whose services are evaluated mainly according to their impact on people's quality of life.

Model CAF (Common Assessment Framework) uses quality tools to focus on:

- developing the quality of public administration,
- increasing its efficiency and own performance,
- solving their tasks for the benefit of the citizen,
- simplifying residents' contact with the office,
- employees' own development,
- support for continuous improvement.

The model also resulted in the creation of a questionnaire "Perception of the Municipal Office in Nitra from the point of view of a client or resident", where citizens commented on the perception of the institution and possible suggestions for improving its functioning. (source: <https://nitra.sk/model-caf/>). The implementation of this model is a sign that the office has an active interest in improving the quality of the services it provides to citizens, as well as in its own institutional development.

### **The educational and culture infrastructure**

The city of Nitra is home to several schools and education institutions, making it a center for education in Slovakia. The city also has a rich cultural heritage, with several museums, galleries, and historical sites.

In Nitra there are:

- 30 preeschools (27 administered by the City of Nitra, 2 administered by the church, 1 administered by a private owner),

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- 20 primary schools (14 administered by the City of Nitra, 4 administered by the church, 2 administered by the private owner),
- 24 secondary grammar schools, vocational schools and training institutions (16 administered by the the Nitra self-governing region, 2 administered by the church, 6 administered by the private owner), which are specialized for example on areas such as technology, engineering, healthcare, food industry, veterinary, beautician, etc.
- 2 universities
  - The Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra is a leading agricultural university in the country, offering degree programs in fields such as agriculture, horticulture, and environmental sciences. The university has a strong research focus and collaborates with other universities and research institutions both nationally and internationally.
  - The Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra is another prominent higher education institution in the city, offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs in fields such as education, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. The university also has a strong focus on research and innovation.
- There is a unique NiceEdu centre that was established as a Nitra centre of support and education for all actors involved in education, children as well as parents. Its activities have recently been extended to a centre supporting the school curriculum reform.

Overall, the education system in Nitra offers a diverse range of opportunities for students at various levels and in different fields of study.

The City supports culture, sport and renovation of monuments and sights by grants. There are institutions, such as museums, galleries and theatres with different focus:

- Slovak Agricultural Museum – History of the agriculture in Slovakia,
- Nitra Museum – objects brought by missionaries from all over the world,
- Museum of Jewish Culture in Synagogue – the permanent exhibition The Fates of the Slovak Jews,
- Diocesan Museum of the Nitra Diocese – church and art monuments and the treasury with the Cathedral Liturgical Treasure,
- Nitra Gallery – established in 1965,
- Foyer Gallery,
- Synagogue – Nitras exhibition and concert hall,
- Youth Forum – school of rock, fotoclub, Zumba, aerobic,
- Theatre of Andrej Bagar – great hall with 578 seats, studio with 143 seats,
- Old Theatre of Karol Spišák in Nitra – great hall with 309 seats, studio with 150 seats.

There are also cultural institutions, such as:

- Cinemax, Mlyny Cinemas, Film club UKF, Cinemaclub Tatra,
- Regional cultural and awareness-raising center in Nitra,
- NGOs, for example Nitra Community Foundation, Civic Association DOMOVINKA, Regional Animal Freedom Center, Civic Association - Happy Children in Nitra, Diocesan Charity Nitra, Club of Parents of Autistic Children in Nitra, Physical Education Unity AC Nitra, etc.

## 2 Planning the city development

### The development documents

The basic strategic document of the City of Nitra, which defines the vision and development strategy of the city, is the **Program of Economic and Social Development of the City of Nitra** (hereinafter referred to as "PHSR") for the period 2015-2023. The PHSR conceptually and systematically analyzes the current state of the territory and determines the future development through specifically local interventions of key investment and non-investment projects in the economic, social, environmental, and institutional areas. It creates a content, financial, and institutional framework for fulfilling the vision and strategic objectives. Its strategic part takes into account the internal specifics of the City of Nitra as a leader of the urban functional area, defines the main development goals of the city and indicators for achieving the planned outcomes in order to achieve a balanced and sustainable development of the territory in this vision: "Nitra is a modern and open city for all."

The city's development goals are divided into 4 priority areas:

**Priority 1:** Nature and Culture in the City of Nitra - focuses on utilizing the cultural and natural potential of the City of Nitra and its surroundings, green initiatives and adaptation measures to climate change, promoting tourism, creative economy, cultural and creative industries.

**Priority 2:** Mobility in the City of Nitra - focuses on promoting ecological urban mobility, improving the safety of all road users, and taking a systemic approach to addressing static traffic.

**Priority 3:** Nitra, a City for Living - focuses on supporting housing for all population groups, social services and education, supporting young entrepreneurship and other public services in the city.

**Priority 4:** Partnership in the City of Nitra - focuses on supporting cooperation, coordination, and partnerships at the local, national, and international levels, including cooperation between the public and private sectors and building effective public administration.

The long-term priorities of the city, summarized in the approved PHSR of the City of Nitra, are specified in the City Action Plan, which includes specific goals, project plans, and activities. The action plan is created for a period of 2 years, and individual plans are divided into the same priority areas as in the PHSR.

Other important strategic documents of the city include, for example:

- Territorial development plan,
- General green plan for the city of Nitra,
- Low-carbon strategy for the city of Nitra,
- Plan for sustainable mobility,
- NK31 – Strategy for the development of culture and creative industry 2021-203,
- Situational analysis of migration and the possibility of integration of foreigners in the city of Nitra,
- Program of active aging in Nitra for the years 2023-2030 and beyond (source <https://nitra.sk/organizacna-struktura/>).

The city of Nitra has drawn up several strategic documents that reflect the development of the city in the horizon of several years, including in the field of education and development of its residents. We studied the following documents in order to define the scope of the education and training activities for adults:

### **PHSR (2015-2023)**

Among the problems related to the lives of citizens, the city includes, among others, in this strategic document:

- insufficiently used potential of young and educated young people,
- lack of public spaces enabling social development (meeting of citizens of different ages, implementation of joint activities, etc.) especially in housing estates,
- insufficient technical and personnel provision of sports facilities (some types of sports facilities are absent, public spaces allowing individual/independent physical activities) for different groups of the population.

The upbringing and education of children and youth in the city of Nitra is one of the separate but interconnected priority topics, among the program areas of the development of the city of Nitra. In the area of education, the city understands that the financial resources for education are undersized, that the focus of school education provided may not be appropriately focused with regard to the labor market, and the city is also struggling with the outflow of human capital. It is for these reasons that he realizes how it is necessary to invest in the infrastructure of education and support of gifted and talented people.

The city of Nitra is gradually reconstructing and modernizing the educational infrastructure of schools. Thanks to the established special classes, modern equipment and innovative educational programs, the schools apply an individual approach to the education and upbringing of children in kindergartens, pupils in primary schools, gifted children and children with special educational needs. The educational process is ensured by high-quality and qualified employees.

The city reflects the area of education in a wider context, especially in Priority no. 3: Nitra – a city for life, which focuses on supporting all population groups in the city. In the field of lifelong learning, the document mentions only the professional group of social workers for whom the city plans to create a modular program of education with the aim of increasing the quality of services provided for recipients (seniors) and increasing the professional competences of employees and the professional group of employees of the city office, who are to be educated in such a way as to provide citizens with better services (further training of local authority staff).

In the field of economy, the city of Nitra plans to complete the construction of industrial parks or the creation of new industrial/commercial zones in the city as part of the revitalization of selected city districts (coworking centers, technology incubators and business incubators/centers, innovation centers) and appropriately supplement large investments in industry and technology with public infrastructure supporting further education, innovation and research as well in collaboration with existing research institutions and universities.



### **3rd Community plan of social services of the city of Nitra**

The first community plan for social services in the city of Nitra was developed for the period 2013-2018. The goal of the document is to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups of the population - the greatest emphasis is placed on helping seniors (supporting active aging so that seniors can live as long as possible in their natural environment), furthermore, people with disabilities, families with children from a weaker social environment and homeless people. In the current plan, the emphasis is placed on the field of education especially for:

#### **Target group: SENIORS**

- strategic objective 1 "Support of active aging and support of seniors dependent on assistance with the aim of keeping them in a natural environment for as long as possible"
- development of informal lifelong education for seniors and organization of activities to support the overall personal development of a person (€2,466.00)
- educational activities in the field of digital and financial literacy (implemented 11-12/2022, total number of participants: 18, total number of teaching hours: 40 h.)
- activities in the field of overall personal development

#### **Target group: MARGINALIZED ROMA COMMUNITIES**

- expansion and improvement of field and community social work in the city of Nitra: Improvement of field social work as part of "Take away" in localities with the presence of a marginalized Roma community
- educational activities

#### **Target group: SUBJECTS IN THE SOCIAL AREA**

- cooperation and networking of entities providing social services in the city.

### **Program of active aging in Nitra for the years 2023-2030**

The program of active aging in Nitra is the first document of its kind for the purpose of securing obligations arising from the National Program of Active Aging in the Slovak Republic. Emphasis is placed on education in the following areas:

- realization of educational events with the aim of activating seniors;
- implementation of activities to support the lifelong education of seniors;
- implementation of educational events on the topics - Legal protection of seniors aimed at increasing the legal literacy of seniors and defending their rights and increasing the safety of seniors;
- introduction of free counseling for older people on the possibilities and conditions of further education and development in the field of financial literacy of people 50+;
- ensuring broad public sensitization aimed at the internalization of attitudes towards active aging as a life strategy important for individuals, families, groups, communities and communities (regular education of employees of the city office in Nitra).

## **NK31 – Strategy for the development of culture and creative industry 2021-2031**

The strategy for the development of culture and creative industry in Nitra for the years 2021-2031 is a document that describes solutions for the city's development activities and is a "red thread" for key actors in the city. The goals and visions of the strategy are linked to Nitra's candidacy for European Capital of Culture 2026, but the strategy is independent of the success of the candidacy. Here, the city of Nitra aims to:

- building the Creative Center of Nitra and actively participating in the development of networks of actors of the cultural and creative industries at the local, national and international level by improving the quality of management and strengthening the capacities of the city for the development of culture and the cultural-creative industry in accordance with current trends,
- systematic and coordinated development of the audience: developing the education of the audience from kindergartens and primary schools, through secondary schools and universities to lifelong learning, support of creative potential,
- supporting the cooperation of cultural and educational institutions and actors,
- education of cultural and creative industry actors for the purpose of developing their know-how,
- development and introduction of a system of continuous education for employees of the Ministry of Culture's department of culture (training, workshops, orientation on the current international cultural market),
- educating the owners of national cultural monuments and landmarks about restoration possibilities.

### **Other initiatives**

#### **Climate change adaptation measures strategy for the city of Nitra**

A key element of climate change adaptation strategies is using less water and saving water. European countries have put in place adaptation strategies and plans and carried out vulnerability and risk assessments to help them address the impacts of climate change. These global efforts have a long-term nature, which is why the city of Nitra has committed to 2025 in the field of education:

- support awareness and education of the public in the field of climate change,
- support activities leading to an increase in the environmental awareness of residents and ecologically friendly behavior,
- supporting public education, especially in the area of careful management of drinking and rainwater, and also in terms of preventing damage to private property in floodplains.

#### **Low-carbon strategy of the city of Nitra for the years 2021-2040**

The low-carbon strategy of the city of Nitra is an initiative to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to a higher extent than the European Union has committed to. The result of this initiative should be the implementation of individual measures to increase the energy efficiency of individual sectors,

as well as the reduction of emission production. The proposed measures for SMART CITY in the city of Nitra are:

- intelligent office (electronicization of citizen services)
- parking and transport (intelligent parking, intelligent bus stops, cycle tower)
- area of services (contactless payments at offices, in public transport, public Wi-fi, intelligent waste management)
- the field of energy (support for electric vehicles, energy management and intelligent management of public buildings)
- security area (automated observation/camera system)
- area of social services (intelligent care - monitoring and remote help for seniors in the home environment)

In the area of planning, regulation and the public, the strategic document states that the city plans to develop a communication strategy for the purpose of raising the awareness of citizens of the city of Nitra in the area of energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which would be focused on counseling; communication using available communication channels, preparation of promotional materials, or informing about energy-efficient solutions, education (educational campaigns for pupils, employees aimed at efficient operation or use of public buildings, as well as in the field of renewable energy sources).

### **Strategy for the development of tourism in the city of Nitra for the years 2021-2031**

The document contains key starting points for the sustainable development of tourism in the city of Nitra in the long-term horizon 2021-2031:

- Strategic area 2: Sustainable lifelong education of tourism actors with regard to the needs of tourism development:
  - a systemic and sustainable solution for continuous lifelong learning of customer-oriented behavior in businesses and tourism establishments, for operators of tourist attractions, experience providers and regional producers in the city,
  - educating the local population to support tourism in the city,
  - training of employees of local government and public institutions with competences that overlap with the tourism industry about the specifics of the tourism industry and the functioning of the destination's information system.

### **Nitra city accessibility strategy for all**

The city has developed an accessibility strategy in the city for all target groups for the years 2020-2028, which supports the systematic development of the cultural-community offer for all target groups, has broad support in the office, in the council and among actors, and is being fulfilled. Education and outreach in the field of accessibility is included in the following goals:

- professionalization of workers working within civic amenities institutions - sensitizing the staff of the city office to work with persons with disabilities, training of workers working in the client service center who are in direct contact with citizens (focused on communication with persons with specific needs and their assistants),

- raising the general awareness of citizens about individual types of disability and types of disadvantage (seniors, parents, etc.) - educational and awareness-raising activities in the area of accessibility for all and universal design (cooperation with experts and representatives of organizations that professionally deal with accessibility issues and design them through systematic and permanent trainings, lectures and guided discussions intended for managers).

### **Risk behavior solution strategy**

The strategy for solving risky behavior with a focus on the issue of drugs and the elimination of domestic violence, violence against women and children in the territory of the city of Nitra was created for the years 2022-2025. Its need arises on the basis of years of proven practice and the demand for a systematic solution to these serious topics. In the field of education, it is essential to have:

- long-term and complex prevention in schools (topics such as drugs, bullying, discrimination, human trafficking,...),
- special pedagogue and school psychologist in primary schools (detection of potentially risky behavior, provision of professional advice for pupils, parents and teachers),
- a specific prevention program in various risk communities (prevention in risk communities, creation of a tailor-made long-term program for these target groups),
- a program of informative lectures and education for parents.

### **Situational analysis of migration and the possibilities of integration of foreigners in the city of Nitra**

The preparation of the situational analysis is part of the project of the city of Nitra COMIN – Community center for work and knowledge mobility in Nitra. It provides a description of the situation in the city, as well as suggestions for possible solutions. Recommendations in the field of education of foreigners in the city of Nitra are as follows:

- systematic language education of children in schools, creation of an effective way of financing and providing support to primary schools in overcoming the language barrier of children,
- in the case of adults, the possibility of language education, retraining courses or other options for further education,
- specific preparation of teachers for the education of children of foreigners, both in the area of "educational content" (methodology), i.e. how to teach children from a different linguistic and cultural environment, but also in the area of intercultural education - how to help children adapt to a new environment, how to identify specific needs of these children and respond to them,
- education of employees of the social department, social service providers and collaborating organizations in the social field on the topic of social work with foreigners.

The presented overview in the field of strategies and analyzes of the city of Nitra with a focus on the field of education testifies to its active interest in improving the quality of the services it offers to its citizens, as well as the overall life in one of the oldest cities in Slovakia.