

## The Role of Character Education and its Equivalent Subjects in the School Curriculum in Slovakia and Selected European Countries

### Abstract

The authors present results from the project APVV-0372-06: *Conceptual approaches to Character Education as a school subject in Slovakia and in selected European countries*. The literal translation of its Slovak name is *Ethical Education*. The aim of the methodology used in the project—the analysis and comparison of current conceptions of Character Education or its equivalent subjects in Slovakia with the selected European countries—was to design a new study programme for future teachers of the course. This article focuses in more detail on the results of the comparison of approaches and trends in various European countries towards Character Education as part of state school curricula. The question was whether this subject was compulsory, optional, or substitutive for Religious Education. This article compares the position of Religious Education versus Character Education in selected regions in order to understand the purposes and goals for the respective courses.

**Key words:** *character education, ethics, European countries, Slovakia, Religious Education.*

### Introduction

The need to consider perceptions of Character Education in European countries has naturally accompanied the process of implementing this school subject called *Etická výchova* (literal translation *Ethical Education*) in Slovakia since the programme began in 1991. Of course, the transformation of the Slovak school