



Slovenia

VET in Europe - Country Report

2011

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The preparation of this report has been co-financed by the European Community

Title: Slovenia. VET in Europe - Country Report 2010

Author: ReferNet Slovenia

Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Slovenia. Information is presented according to the following themes:

- 1: General context - framework for the knowledge society
- 2: Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
- 3: VET to support recovery from the crisis
- 4: Historical background, legislative and institutional framework
- 5: Initial vocational education and training
- 6: Continuing vocational education and training
- 7: Training VET teachers and trainers
- 8: Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
- 9: Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
- 10: Financing: investment in human resources
- 11: Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and its reference year is 2010. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/detailed-thematic-analyses.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Slovenia

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1. GENERAL CONTEXT – FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Slovenia is a democratic republic. The head of state is the President of the Republic, whose power is mainly symbolic. Parliament consists of the National Assembly (*Državni zbor*) with 90 members (elected in a general election every four years), which is the highest legislative authority, and the National Council (*Državni svet*), which is mainly an advisory body comprising representatives of different social interests. The Government comprises the prime minister and 15 ministers. It is accountable to the National Assembly for its policies. Slovenia became a Member State of the EU in 2004.

Slovenia is divided into 212¹ municipalities, which are local self-governing communities. They are established by law following a referendum of the residents in a given territory. As a consequence, the number of municipalities grows over time. The tasks of government at the local level are performed by 58 administrative units. As of February 2007, there are 12 statistical regions ([NUTS](#)-2 level), which are grouped into two cohesion regions (NUTS-1 level).

In 2005, the Government adopted the Slovenian development strategy (see 2.1.),² which defined objectives, development priorities, and corresponding action plans. The priorities include improving the quality of education and promoting lifelong learning.

1.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 1: TOTAL POPULATION (ON JANUARY 1), 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011					
GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010	2011
EU-27	486647831	493210397	499705496p	501105661(p)	502489143p
SI	1995033	2003358	2032362	2046976	2050189

Source: Eurostat (Demographic Statistics). Accessed: 19 July 2011.

The territory of Slovenia covers 20,273 km². Its population as at 1 January 2011 was 2,050,189³, of which 4.0% were foreign citizens. The official state language is Slovenian. In areas with Italian and Hungarian ethnic minorities, Italian and Hungarian are additional official languages.

¹ Two new municipalities were created in 2011.

² IMAD, 2005.

³ According to the new, EU-compatible statistical definition of population, since December 2008 the population of Slovenia consists of persons with permanent or temporary residence in Slovenia for one year or more who are not temporarily absent from Slovenia for one year or more. Under the previous definition, used from 1995 to 2008, the population of Slovenia consisted of persons who live in Slovenia for more than three months in a year. As at 1 January 2008, Slovenia's population was 2,010,269 persons under the new definition, which is 15,597 or 0.8% less than under the previous definition, which also included foreign citizens living in Slovenia for less than a year.

The population of Slovenia further increased in 2010, while net migration, which had been the main cause of population growth in the past, fell to almost 0. Since 1999, the population of Slovenia has grown each year, mainly due to rising net migration, which increased substantially after Slovenia joined the EU. Under the good employment conditions of 2008, it reached 9.2 per 1,000 inhabitants (under the new definition of migration⁴), and remained high (5.7 per 1,000) even under the crisis conditions of 2009. Natural population growth, which had been negative in 1997–2005, has been positive again since 2006 (1.52 per 1,000 in 2009 and 2010). The fertility rate, in almost continuous decline since 1980, has been increasing since 2004. In 2010 it exceeded 1.5 for the third consecutive year. Life expectancy continues to increase (76.3 years for men and 82.7 years for women in 2010). Consequently, Slovenia's population is ageing. Though the old-age dependency ratio is still lower than the EU average, the situation will worsen in the future (see Table 2). Given the assumptions of relatively moderate future fertility and migration rates and high improvement of mortality rates, the shares of the young (0–24) as well as prime-age (25–64) population will fall (as will the corresponding cohorts in education), while the share of the population older than 65 will increase.

TABLE 2: PROJECTED OLD-AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO, 2010-2060							
GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
SI	23.91	26.25	31.21	40.83	49.4	59.4	62.19

Source: Eurostat (EUROPOP2008 – Convergence scenario, national level (proj_08c)).

Date of extraction: 19 May 2011; last update: 16 May 2011

Description: Population aged 65+ divided by population aged 15-64 (projections)

1.3 ECONOMY AND LABOUR-MARKET INDICATORS

The economic crisis hit Slovenia significantly more than the EU average. Since 1993, Slovenia's GDP has grown at an annual rate of around 4%, with a peak of 6.8% in 2007. In 2008, Slovenia reached around 90% of the EU-27 average GDP per capita at PPS (purchasing power standard). Due to falling foreign demand in 2008 and 2009, GDP growth was negative from the last quarter of 2008 to the first quarter of 2010. It reached -8.1% in 2009. Driven by stronger foreign demand, and with a relative high contribution of inventory changes, GDP growth recovered in 2010 to 1.2%, though per-capita GDP compared with the EU average in 2010 (86.5%, equal to the level of 2004) fell by another 1.6 percentage points compared to 2009. Favourable labour market conditions, resulting from rapid economic growth after 2004, when Slovenia joined the EU, ended in the last quarter of 2008 and have yet to recover. Otherwise, the economic structure of employment continues to shift towards a more service-based economy, although this process is still relatively slow.

⁴ In 2008, SORS also changed the definition of permanent migration, which now excludes migrants who are present in the country or absent from it for less than a year. According to the old definition, which included seasonal migrants, the migration ratio in 2008 was higher, at 13.9 per 1,000 inhabitants.

TABLE 3: EMPLOYED PERSONS AGED 15+ BY ECONOMIC SECTOR OF ACTIVITY (IN 000s AND AS % OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT), 2010

GEO	PRIMARY SECTOR AND UTILITIES		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORT		BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES		NON MARKETED SERVICES	
	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%
EU-27	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
SI	106.2	11.0	234.0	24.2	58.1	6.0	247.0	25.6	124.4	12.9	192.2	19.9

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); extracted on: 19 May 2011; last update: 12 May 2011.

Labour market conditions continued to deteriorate in 2010. After dropping by 1.8% in 2009 (national account data) employment continued to decline, falling a further 2.0% in 2010. It would have dropped even more had the Government not taken certain emergency measures in the labour market.⁵ Registered unemployment was 13.8% higher in December 2010 than a year before, and as much as 85.5% higher than September 2008, when it was at its lowest since 1991. Registered unemployment reached 11.8% in December 2010, up 5.5 percentage points since September 2008. The internationally comparable unemployment rate rose from 4.1% in the third quarter of 2008 to 7.8% in the last quarter of 2010. Employment rates, which had been increasing since 2004, have fallen since 2009. The employment rate for the 15-64 age group fell to 66.3 in 2010, moving further from the Development Strategy goal of 70%. The employment rate for the 20-64 age group, for which Slovenia set a goal of 75% by 2020 (under the EU 2020 Strategy), was 70.3% in 2010, down by 2.7 percentage points since 2008.

The unemployment rate, which fell under the good employment conditions of 2008 to an average of 4.4%, rose to 5.9% in 2009, and 7.2% in 2010. Slovenia's male employment rate has continually been slightly below the EU average, largely a consequence of lower employment in older age groups. Meanwhile, the female employment rate is slightly higher than the EU average, due to a pre-existing culture enabled by a relatively good system of child-care services.

⁵ To offset high unemployment and dismissal costs for businesses as a result of falling orders and lower demand, the government passed two intervention acts (The Partial Subsidising of Full-Time Work Act, ULRS 5/2009, and the Partial Reimbursement of Payment Compensation Act, ULRS 42/2009), covering approximately 10% of the active population in subsidized schemes, which expired at the start of 2011. The fall in the number of people in employment was further eased by extensive active employment-policy measures. In 2009 and 2010, about 15% of unemployed persons found work under employment and self-employment schemes and public works.

TABLE 4: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%),
2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU-27	0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	21.5	62.8	43.1
	3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	45.0	79.7	59.6
	5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	57.1	87.4	74.5
	No A.	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.2	72.8	62.2
	TOTAL	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	34.1	78.1	56.7
SI	0-2	7.7(u)	72.9	30.9	14.9	72.8	39.3	17.1	67.5	37.8
	3-4	43.4	86.8	40.3	48.9	86.4	47.1	45.4	84.8	50.0
	5-6	69.6 (u)	92.7	64.9	69.0 (u)	94.0	72.1	60.0 (u)	92.8	71.4
	No A.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	28.6	85.6	40.9	35.0	86.3	49.1	34.1	85.0	50.5

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey); extracted on 19 May 2011; last update: 12 May 2011.

In 2009 and 2010, labour-market conditions deteriorated most for young people (who had the highest proportion in flexible forms of employment) and the low-skilled. Employment conditions for older people remain poor. The employment rate of the 55-64 age group remains low. It rose to 35.6% in 2009, but remained nearly unchanged in 2010. Due to the pension reforms of 2000, the average retirement age is slowly increasing, but remains lower than the EU average. In 2009, the female unemployment rate was lower than the male. Though they fell up to 2008, unemployment rates remain high for young people and people with no qualifications.

TABLE 5. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%),
2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU-27	0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	27.4	16.3	10.2
	3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	18.1	8.2	6.7
	5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	16.2	5.3	3.6
	No A.	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	:	8.2	:
	TOTAL	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	20.8	8.9	6.9
SI	0-2	26.1 (u)	10.9	6.8 (u)	17.2 (u)	8.1 (u)	5.0 (u)	19.7 (u)	14.2 (u)	6.4 (u)
	3-4	13.8	5.3	3.8 (u)	12.9	5.9	4.5 (u)	12.9 (u)	7.4	5.5 (u)
	5-6	:	4.0 (u)	:	:	3.4 (u)	:	:	4.7 (u)	:
	No A.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	15.3	5.9	4.2 (u)	13.9	5.5	3.9 (u)	14.7	7.3	4.8

Source: Eurostat (LFS); extracted on: 19 May 2011; last update: 12 May 2011.

Total public expenditure on secondary education was 1.15%⁶ of GDP in 2008. The percentage fell in 2002–2008, due to a marked decrease in the number of people enrolled in upper secondary schools, as a consequence of demographic changes (smaller enrolment in upper secondary schools).

TABLE 6: TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP, AT SECONDARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008

Geo	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27	2.32 (s)	2.35 (s)	2.29 (s)	2.25 (s)	2.23 (s)	2.20 (s)	:
SI	1.42 (i)	1.41 (i)	1.34 (i)	1.38	1.42 (i)	1.16 (i)	1.15 (i)

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19 May 2011; last update: 12 Apr 2011

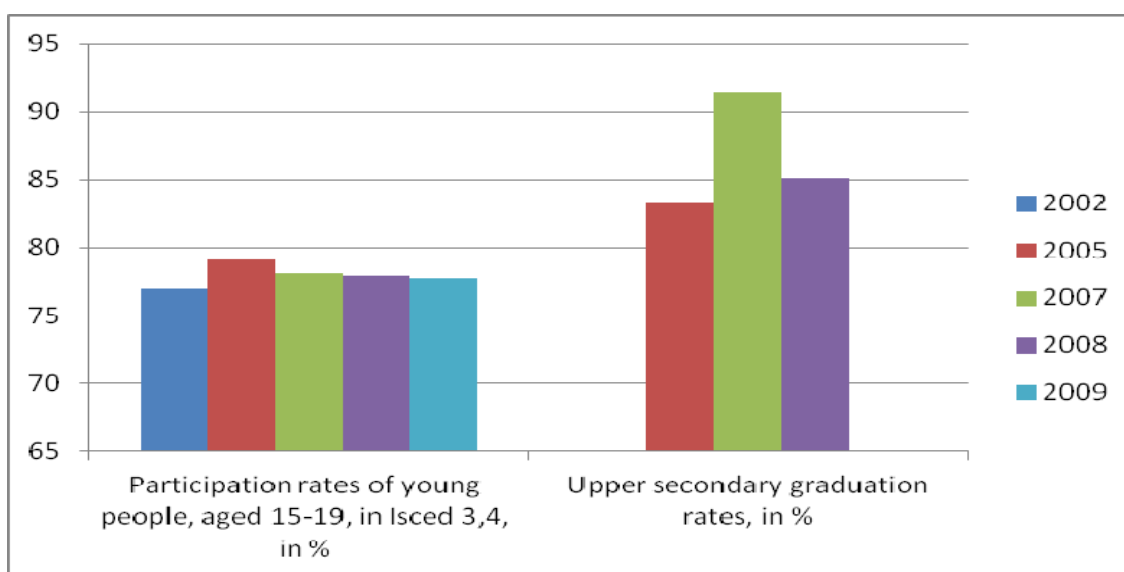
⁶ Expenditure on lower-secondary education in Slovenia is reported under primary education.

1.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

The participation of young people and adults in formal education, and the level of formal education attained, are important factors for employability and reducing unemployment in Slovenia. The average employment rate for people with higher levels of formal education is generally higher, and the unemployment rate lower. Those with the least education (people with at most completed primary school) are at risk of social exclusion and poverty. After the economic crisis, the unemployment rate for people aged 15-64 years increased fastest for those with the lowest education levels.

The educational structure of the population aged 25-64 years improved in 2002-2009. The proportion of people with low education fell, while the proportion with tertiary education increased. The improving education structure of the adult population is a consequence of high participation rates of young people in education and the ageing of younger, better-educated people (age cohort effect). In 2002-2009, the education structure of adults improved among younger and older age groups. The education structure of younger people remains much better.

GRAPH 1: Participation rates of young people, aged 15-19, in Isced 3,4 level of education and upper secondary graduation rates, Slovenia, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009, in %



Source: Eurostat(UOE); OECD, *Education at a Glance (2007-2010)*

Note: Data for upper secondary graduation rates are available for Slovenia from 2005. The most recent data are for 2008.

The proportion of young people aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education who are not in further education and training is relatively low. However, this is a consequence of the high participation rate of young people aged 15-19 in upper secondary education, and the high completion rate for upper secondary education (see Graph 1). This contributes to the low proportion of young people with low education attainment. Several factors and policy measures contribute to the low proportion of dropouts. People who fail to complete primary school have the opportunity to participate in primary education as adults free of charge. Those who fail to complete upper secondary education have the opportunity to participate as adults. Such education is free of charge if they are registered unemployed.

All these factors contribute to the low proportion of the 25-34 age group with low education, and the proportion continued to fall in 2002-2009. Among middle (45-54 years) and older (55-64 years) age groups, the proportion of people with lower levels of education remains relatively high, despite decreasing. In 2011, a new White paper on education⁷ in Slovenia was published, establishing the opportunity for all adults to enrol in upper secondary education free of charge as an important goal for adult education. It is assumed this will increase adult participation in upper secondary education and thus reduce the proportion of adults with low education.

TABLE 7: EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS (%), 2002-2009								
GEO/TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU-27	17.0	16.6 (B)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4
SI	5.1	4.6 (u)	4.3 (u)	4.9 (u)	5.6	4.1 (u)	5.1 (u)	5.3 (u)

Source of data Eurostat (LFS); extracted: 19 May 2011; last update 01 Apr 2011

Description: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education who are not in further education or training

GRADUATES IN ISCED 3–6 BY FIELD OF EDUCATION AND SEX

In 2009, there were a total of 24,863 graduates of upper secondary programmes (ISCED level 3), showing a further decline from 2007, 2005 and 2002. The fall in the number of graduates of upper secondary education is a consequence of fewer people enrolled in upper secondary programmes (a fall of 19.5% in 2002-2009), and hence of demographic changes (fewer young people of the theoretical age for enrolment in upper secondary education). We expect the number of young people of the theoretical age for enrolment in upper secondary education to fall further in coming years, with a consequent fall in the number of young people enrolled in upper secondary education. The numbers of enrolments⁸ and graduates in ISCED level 4 programmes that come under this level and are designed for those who have already completed upper secondary education, but who want to change their educational profile, are much lower.

⁷ The first was published in 1995.

⁸ Individuals that enroll in matura course and vocational course, are counted under ISCED 4. Individuals who completed gimnazija (general upper secondary school) may acquire vocational qualifications if they complete a 1-year vocational course. Alternatively, those who completed middle vocational or middle technical and other professional programmes can take the general matura examination. Those who passed foreman, head clerk or master craftsman exams, are included in ISCED 4 among graduates.

TABLE 8 A: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME ORIENTATION AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009													
Year		2007						2009					
Geo	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
SI	T	8923	:	18592	347	:	493	8376	:	16487	247	0	497
	M	3666	:	9823	107	:	237	3294	:	8979	99	:	225
	F	5257	:	8769	240	:	256	5082	:	7508	148	0	272
EU-27*	T	2393291	:	2595569	49493	:	424537	2319746	:	2480373	:	:	394682
	M	1022202	:	1400317	23958	:	194372	995733	:	1344532	:	:	188195
	F	1371089	:	1195251	25535	:	230165	1324013	:	1135842	:	:	206487

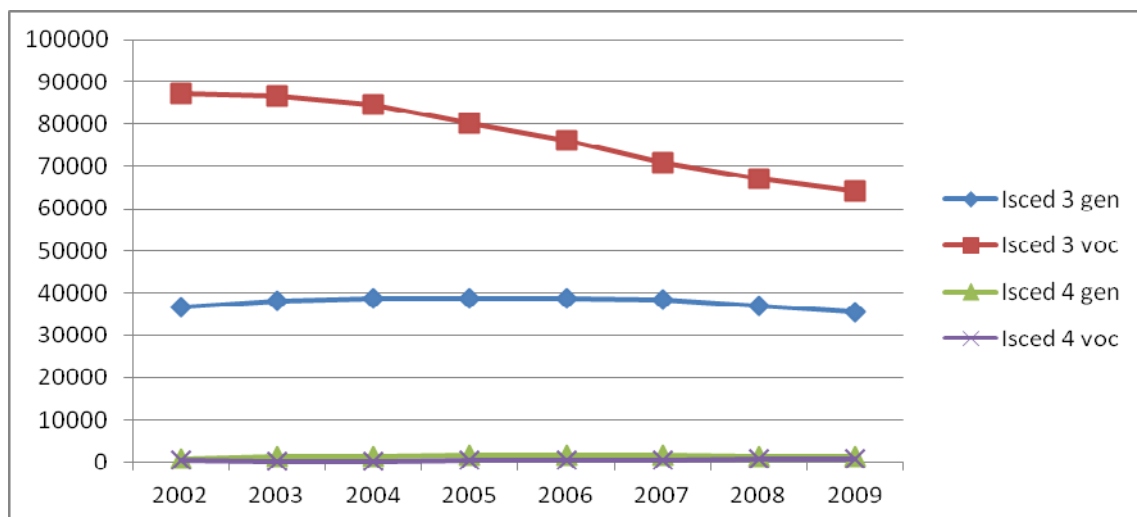
Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection); extracted: 19 May 2011; last update: 29 Apr 2011.

* Available total - calculated by Cedefop;

S= sex; T= total; M=males; F=females; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

The structure of graduates and enrolments in ISCED 3, 4 by educationa and training programme changed significantly in 2002-2009, with a move towards general programmes, and falling interest in vocationally oriented programmes. Both the proportion and number of people enrolled in Isced 3 vocational programmes fell significantly (see Graph 2). In particular, demand is falling for 2-year lower and 3-year middle vocational programmes that do not provide direct access to tertiary education. Also, the generally low wages and low social status for occupations that require 2- or 3-year vocational education discourage individuals from enrolling in such programmes.

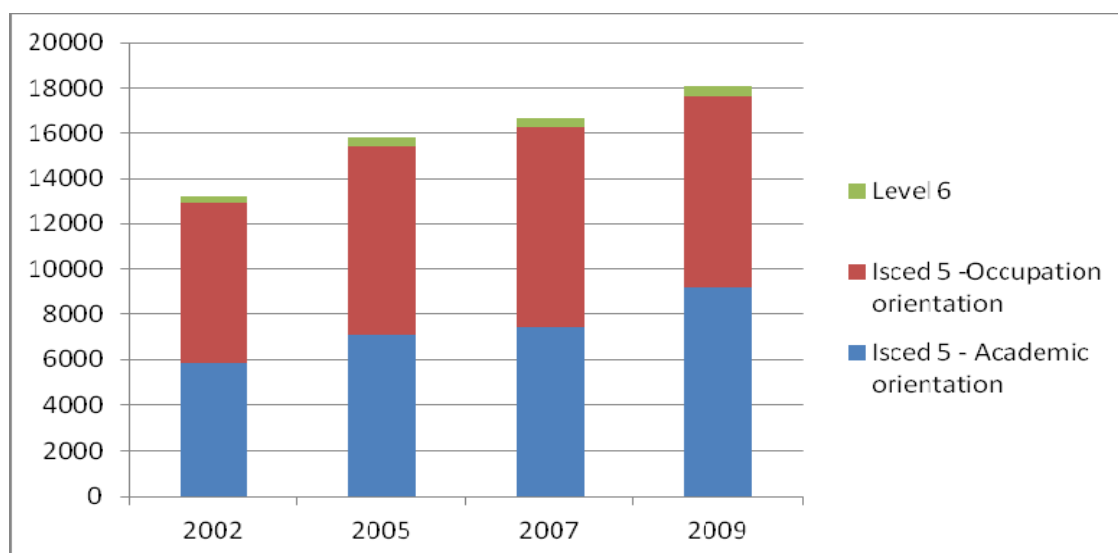
GRAPH 2: Number of students, participating in programmes at ISCED level 3 and 4, 2002-2009



Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection)

For graduates in upper secondary education, the proportion in programmes designed to provide access to tertiary education increased markedly in 2002-2009. Combined with an increasing number of places and the high value of public transfers to households, this helped increase participation in tertiary education. Student numbers increased by 15.3% in 2002-2009, reaching 114,391 in 2009. The number of graduates in tertiary education increased markedly (by 26.8%) in 2002-2009 and totalled 18.103 in 2009. Approximately half of all graduates are graduates in Isced 5A programmes (see Graph 3).

GRAPH 3: Number of graduates in Isced 5, 6 programmes, by programme destination, 2002-2009



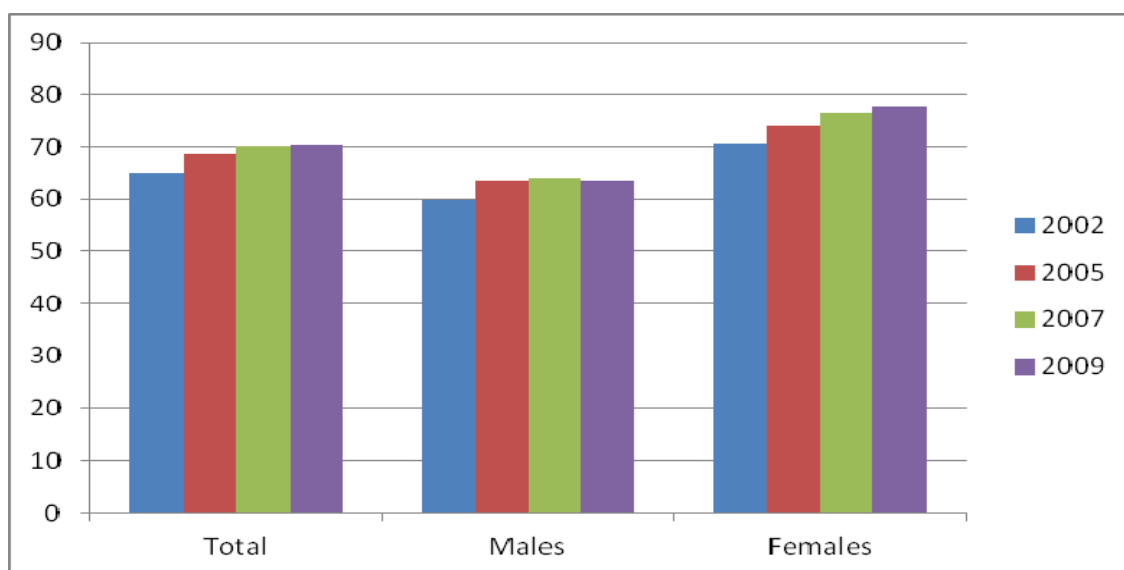
Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection)

In the structure of students and in the structure of graduates in tertiary education women prevail. In 2009 the share of women among students totalled 58,0% and the share is relatively constant over the period 2002-2009. Among graduates this share totalled 61,8% in 2009. High share of women in total number of students is linked to high share of women that complete the upper secondary programmes that provide access to tertiary education. The share of women in total number of graduates (men and women) is higher in Isced 5A programmes (2009: 66.3 %) than in Isced 5B (57.8 %).

UPPER SECONDARY COMPLETION

The share of young people, aged 20-24 who had completed at least upper secondary education is high, which is linked to high participation rate of young people, aged 15-19 years in upper secondary education (in 2009: 77,7%), high upper secondary graduation rate and low share of early school leavers (see above). Also, participation rate of young people, aged 20-24 years in tertiary education is high and significantly increased in 2002-2009. All these contribute to high participation rate of young people, aged 15-24 years in all levels of formal education (see Graph 4), which also increased in 2002-2009. However, there are significant differences in the proportions of youth education attainment level by sex (women have a better profile), as a consequence of the higher participation rate of women aged 15-24 in formal education, and lower proportion of early school leavers among women.

GRAPH 4: Students (ISCED 1-6) by sex aged 15-24 years - as % of corresponding age population



Source: Eurostat (UOE Data collection)

time	2002			2005			2009		
geo	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU-27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.6	81.4	75.9
SI	90.7	93.3	88.3	90.5	93.2	88.0	89.4	93.1	86.2

Source: Eurostat (LFS); extracted: 19 May 2011; last update: 01 Apr 2011.

Description: Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education

LIFELONG LEARNING

Adult participation in lifelong learning is an important factor in improving employability. In Slovenia, adult participation in lifelong learning is higher than the EU-27 average. However, there are huge differences in participation depending on age and attained level of education. Participation by older people lags markedly behind participation by young people, while participation by the least educated people lags markedly behind participation by people with upper secondary and tertiary education (see Graph 5). The new White paper on education in the Republic of Slovenia (2011) emphasises the need to increase participation by under-represented groups in education, including less-educated and older people. Upper secondary education should be provided free of charge, and new programmes for under-represented groups should be developed. This would enhance their participation in education. (see 2.1)

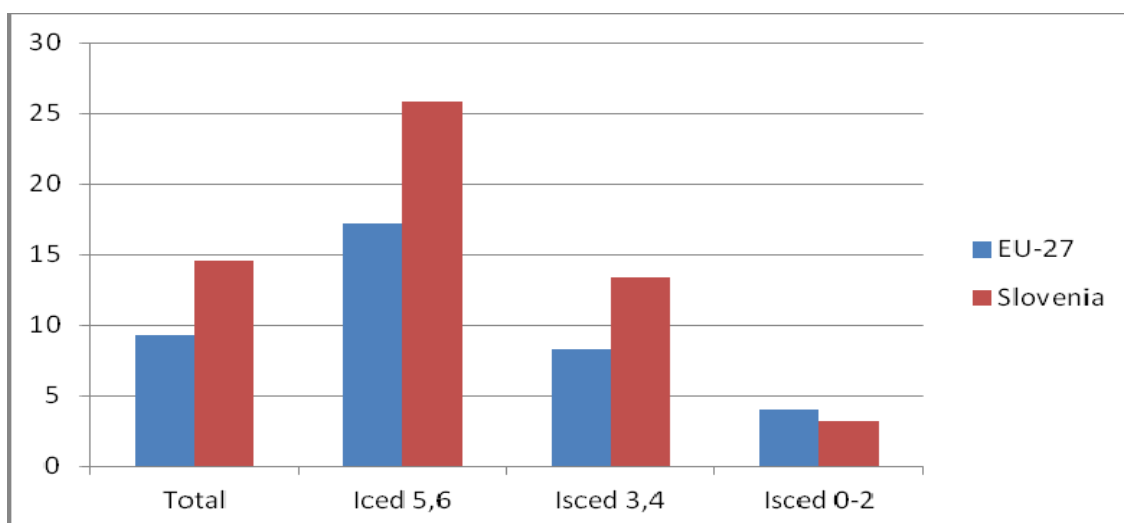
TABLE 10: LIFELONG LEARNING-ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY SEX (%), 2002, 2005, 2009									
time	2002			2005			2009		
geo	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU-27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.3 (p)	10.2 (p)	8.5 (p)
SI	8.4	8.9	7.9	15.3	17.2	13.6	14.6	16.4	12.9

Source: Eurostat (LFS); extracted on: 19 May 2011; last update: 01 Apr 2011.

(b) - break in series (p) - provisional value (u) - unreliable/uncertain data

Description: Lifelong learning (adult participation in education and training) - Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey

GRAPH 5: Participation of adults, aged 25-64 years in lifelong learning, total and by attained formal education, EU-27 and Slovenia, 2009, in %



Source: Eurostat (LFS)

1.5 DEFINITIONS

ALTERNANCE TRAINING/ALTERNACIJA

Alternance training is a system of vocational education and training combining formal education with work experience. It is a system of formal vocational education in which part of the practical education takes place directly in the work place.

APPRENTICESHIP/VAJENISTVO

Apprenticeship is a special form of education in which young people can start to undertake the work involved in a profession at the end of secondary education. In Slovenia, the term apprenticeship is mostly used in connection with vocational upper secondary education in the dual system; otherwise, the term is rarely used. Apprenticeships are usually offered by employers, and in most cases are wholly or partly financed by the Government. Apprentices receive compensation or another form of incentive. The employer provides education, training involving work experience, and in some cases employment at the end of the apprenticeship. Practical education can be provided as in-service education, as day release, or as a combination of the two.

COMPETENCE/KOMPETENCA

A competence is the ability or capability to do something, and to do it well or efficiently. It is also the ability to meet the demands for a specific area of employment (to meet the terms of employment).

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)/NADALJEVALNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

Continuing vocational education and training updates and extends knowledge gained during basic education. It is undertaken when an individual needs to acquire the knowledge required for a particular profession. The aim of CVET can be to improve existing competences or acquire new competences needed for mobility or promotion.

FIRST STAGE OF TERTIARY OR HIGHER EDUCATION (ISCED 5)/VIŠJE STROKOVNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE, VISOKOŠOLSKO IZOBRAŽEVANJE PRVE IN DRUGE STOPNJE

First stage of tertiary education (ISCED 5) follows upper secondary education or its equivalent. It comprises:

- short cycle tertiary educational programmes (higher vocational programmes),
- higher professional programmes (1st cycle),
- higher academic programmes (1st cycle),
- masters and uniform masters programmes (2nd cycle).

The first stage of tertiary education, ISCED level 5, covers:

Level 5A, comprising largely theoretical programmes intended to provide sufficient qualifications for entry to advanced research programmes and professions with high skill requirements. Level 5A comprises higher professional programmes, higher academic programmes and masters and uniform master's programmes.

Level 5B, in which programmes are generally more practical, technical and/or occupationally specific. short tertiary educational programmes (higher vocational programmes).

GENERAL EDUCATION/SPLOSNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

General education should prepare students for higher academic education, stimulate creativity, and develop the knowledge and personal skills needed for success in a professional career and life. It provides a broad general education and establishes knowledge which is a common basis for all streams of academic higher education. It also fosters the development of critical thinking and judgement, based on understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships of natural and social phenomena through space and time. General education serves as the basis for all primary and secondary education.

In Slovenia it by definition includes primary school and general secondary school education, but is also a basic component of most VET programmes.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)/ZAČETNO (TEMELJNO) POKLICNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

IVET is a form of education undertaken before first employment or profession. Students enrol after finishing primary school, usually for two to four years. The main goal of IVET is to prepare an individual for a specific profession or field of work. It usually comprises both formal education and practical training.

LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ISCED 2)/OSNOVNOŠOLSKO IZOBRAŽEVANJE VIŠJE STOPNJE

Lower secondary education and training (ISCED 2) includes education in the last triad of basic education. Slovenia has a single structure of primary (ISCED level 1) and lower secondary (ISCED level 2) education. It lasts 9 years and overlaps with compulsory education. The same institution provides education in all 9 years.

OCCUPATION

The basic unit of occupation is work defined as a collection of tasks and duties that can be performed by one person. Work is similar in terms of content and difficulty.

POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION (ISCED 4)/POSTSEKUNDARNA PREDTERCIARNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

Post-secondary non tertiary education is considered as upper secondary level in a national context. It is designed to prepare students for studies at level 5 or for labour market.

It comprises vocational matura courses and general matura courses. Both last up to one year.

PRE-VOCATIONAL OR PRE-TECHNICAL EDUCATION /PREDPOKLICNO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

Pre-vocational education is a form of education and training whose goal is to introduce individuals to working life. It should equip participants with initial information on work, availability and type of work, introduce key competences and show a route to a profession. It supports students in choosing a more specific education. Pre-vocational education is not to be mistaken for general education. It has never really become established in the Slovenian system. It is usually part of secondary education programmes connected with the transition from education to work.

PROFESSION

Professional activity or professional activities that are linked to one professional field (medicine, teaching, hairdresser). Specific education is required to perform an individual profession.

QUALIFICATION/KVALIFIKACIJA

A qualification can be the educational attainment, experience or training of an individual. It can also be a formal certificate proving that an individual has successfully completed education, but this use has never been common in Slovenia, where expressions such as certificate, school report and diploma are more often used.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES/ŠOLSKA OBLIKA IZOBRAŽEVANJA

Typically school-based programmes are provided in schools with a shorter or longer period spent with an employer.

SKILLS/SPRETNOSTI

Skills are experiences or acquired abilities required to perform specific work or tasks. It is also a result of education or training that, together with the required knowledge, represents a competent, skilled worker. Skills usually refer to the systematic activity, mental or physical, or methods or strategies required for performing a task. It can be applied to either the demands of work or the ability of an individual to perform a task.

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (ISCED 3)/SREDNJEŠOLSKO IZOBRAŽEVANJE

In Slovenia upper secondary education comprises:

a) Short vocational upper secondary education or lower vocational programmes (*nižje poklicno izobraževanje*)

Students who have completed at least year 7 of the 9-year elementary school (*osnovna šola*), thus meeting the requirements for elementary school, can only continue their education in short vocational upper secondary education (lower vocational programmes). In these programmes, the educational objectives are to refresh and update general education in the core subjects from elementary school that should serve as the basis for a successful life and career. Vocational education should equip the holder independently to undertake work operations following technical documentation, global instructions and work procedure regulations. The emphasis is on the development of abilities to identify technological problems in work processes.

b) Vocational upper secondary education or middle vocational programmes (*srednje poklicno izobraževanje*)

Students who have successfully completed finished elementary school (*osnovna šola*) or a short-term vocational education programme can enrol in upper secondary vocational education. Upper secondary vocational education emphasises the development of skills to transfer vocational knowledge to atypical situations, together with problem solving, and mastering different work techniques and different technological procedures.

c) Professional and other technical upper secondary education (*srednje strokovno izobraževanje*)

Students who have successfully completed elementary school or upper secondary vocational education can enrol in professional and other technical education. The main objective of this education is to systematically upgrade general education in all basic general subjects typical of secondary education. Teaching of general subjects allows awareness of appropriate scientific disciplines and in particular examples allows a deepening of the theoretical principles underlying understanding of a profession. Professional and other technical upper secondary education may also be provided in a one-year vocational course (*poklicni tečaj*)(ISCED 4B), which prepares students for the vocational *matura*. Vocational courses are designed for those who did not pass the *matura* and who wish to obtain a vocational qualification, and for those who wish to obtain another qualification. Professional and other technical education may also be acquired by passing foreman, head clerk or master craftsman exams.

d) Vocational-technical upper secondary education (*Poklicno-tehniško izobraževanje*)

Students who have completed upper secondary vocational education and who meet the other conditions for a particular educational programme can enrol in vocational technical education. The main objective of vocational technical education is to systematically upgrade upper secondary vocational education. Vocational technical education provides students of upper secondary vocational education with upper secondary technical education. The characteristics, objectives and level of education in vocational technical education are equivalent to those in upper secondary technical education. Vocational technical education enables students to enrol in higher vocational education.

e) General upper secondary education

General upper secondary education (*gimnazija*) provides students with general education, which upgrades and broadens the knowledge acquired in elementary schools. In addition to achieving general education outcomes, *gimnazije* also have certain other responsibilities: to provide the knowledge required for students to continue their studies at university and other tertiary institutions; and to develop independent critical judgement and general cultural values. General education also includes the one-year *matura* course (ISCED 4A) which prepares students for the *matura*. This programme is aimed at students who have not finished *gimnazija* but who wish to take the *matura* examination in order to continue their education at university.

2. MODERNIZING VET TO SUPPORT LLL, INTERNATIONALIZATION, AND MOBILITY

2.1 VET POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PRIORITIES IN SUPPORTING LLL

Improving the quality of education and fostering LLL is a core objective of the Slovenian development strategy (hereinafter: SDS) (2005). The second development priority concentrates on efficient production and application of knowledge to improve economic development and generate quality jobs, and includes promoting individual demand for LLL and encouraging employers to invest in education, implementing European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and European Credit system for VET (ECVET) following the Copenhagen process etc. (p. 29-30).⁹

Under the SDS, a detailed plan of action was prepared: the National Development Programme of the Republic of Slovenia for 2007–2013 (hereinafter: NDP).¹⁰ The success indicators listed include the following: increasing the proportion of the population with tertiary education from 20% (2005) to 30.2%, and increasing the average years of education of the active population from 11.8 (2005) to 12.6 (NDP, p. 25). Among priority areas of development, emphasis is placed on quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning (NDP, p. 38).

In 2007, Slovenia unveiled a Lifelong Learning strategy¹¹, summarizing the established principles for the development of the lifelong learning, such as: creating various opportunities in the broadest sense of the word; diversity and flexibility of provision; learning tailored to the individual's needs; key competences for learning and personal development; learning for successful professional careers and quality work; learning as a source and driver of community development; opportunities to validate and certify all knowledge and competences, however obtained etc.

Another document that has been developed is the Resolution on the Adult Education Master Plan (hereinafter ReNAEMP)¹² implemented through the Annual Adult Education Programme¹³ (hereinafter AAEP) adopted by the government. Annual plans set out education and training programmes, adult participation, basic infrastructure and the funds, as well as priorities for individual years (improving literacy, raising educational levels, implementing validation and recognition of non-formal learning, developing networks of public providers of AE).

The Operational Programme for Human resources development for the Period 2007-2013¹⁴ (hereinafter OP-HRD) is based on SDS and NDP. Its development priorities are:

- fostering entrepreneurial abilities and adaptability,

⁹ Slovenian Development Strategy [Strategija razvoja Slovenije], Government of the Republic of Slovenia (23 June 2005). Ljubljana: The Government of the Republic of Slovenia. (http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/projekti/02_StrategijarazvojaSlovenije.pdf)

¹⁰ Državni razvojni programke Slovenije za obdobje 2007-2013 (<http://www.svlr.gov.si/index.php?id=1182>)

¹¹ Strategija vseživljenjskosti učenja v Sloveniji, MŠŠ: 2007, (http://www.mss.gov.si/fileadmin/mss.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/razvoj_solstva/IU2010/Strategija_VZU.pdf)

¹² Resolution on the Master Plan for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia until 2010 (Official Gazette 70/2004 http://zakonodaja.gov.si/rpsi/r04/predpis_RESO34.html)

¹³ Annual Adult Education Programme (http://www.mss.gov.si/fileadmin/mss.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/odrasli/LPIO_2011.pdf)

¹⁴ Operational programme of development of human resource development for the period 2007-2013 (Operativni programskih virov za obdobje 2007-2013). Ljubljana: Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy. http://www.svlr.gov.si/fileadmin/svlrsvr.gov.si/pageuploads/KOHEZIJA/kohezija-200207/op-ess_vlada-150207_koncno.pdf

- promoting the employability of job-seekers and the economically inactive,
- development of human resources and lifelong learning, and
- to strengthen social inclusion.

As far as VET is concerned, OP-HRD is managed by MoES, MoLFSA and the Employment Service of Slovenia (hereinafter: ESS) and is co-financed by European Social Fund (ESF) (p. 26).

Different LLL programmes are under the responsibility of MoES and MoLFSA in the following areas : quality and quality assurance of education and training, counselling, learning networks, accreditation of non-formal education, co-operation of education and training providers with stakeholders ect. Ministry of Education and Sport (hereinafter MoES) is responsible for developing programmes, while Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (hereinafter MoLFSA), through ESS, funds programmes that are supporting and stimulating continuing education and training for those with a low level of education and the unemployed, especially for those with no vocational qualifications and for retraining.¹⁵

In all these development project and programmes the following actors cooperate:

- VET and Adult Education (hereinafter AE) providers,
- Educational institutes:
 - Institute of the Republic of Slovenia For VET (hereinafter CPI),
 - Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (hereinafter SIAE),
 - National Examination Centre (hereinafter RIC),
 - National School of Leadership in Education (hereinafter NSLE)
 - Educational Research Institute
 - The National Education Institute of the RS (hereinafter NEIS)
- other public centres (ESS, libraries, regional development centres, chambers ipd.).

Cooperation with the work sphere in Slovenia is traditionally weaker, but lately slowly rising awareness of employers about the importance of cooperation with educational institutions has been slowly on the rise

This year sees the tenth anniversary of the creation of the Starting points for the preparation of VET programmes, which resulted in extensive modernization of VET, in particular reformation of the structure and content of education and training programmes.

Education and training programmes have been reformed (modularisation, credit-transfer system, core competences, individualisation, 20% of curricula opened up to providers to adjust to regional employers' needs, more practical training with employers, school curriculum¹⁶, integration of education and certification system, facultative elements of the curriculum), teachers' continuing education is being adapted to these changes and further developments (school rules, quality-assurance, assessment plans, individual educational approaches, final examination, etc.), and much is being done in the field of promoting VET (Euroskills, short films on national TV presenting occupations) and quality assurance at the provider level (approximately 78% of VET providers are developing quality-assurance systems).

¹⁵ Presentation of the ESF programmes on the ZZS website

http://www.ess.gov.si/storitve/evropski_socialni_sklad/aktualni_programi_ess, The Educational Programme for Unemployed Persons

http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/prog_ibo_08_09.pdf

¹⁶ Also known as implementing curriculum.

At the same time, a new method was introduced to finance state schools, per-capita funding, and there have been new developments in AE, higher education and the system of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). These changes are always accompanied by evaluations, and tools and guidelines for new forms of work in schools are continually being developed.

Since the first White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia was published fifteen years ago, there have been major changes in all subsystems of education, and the time has come for a comprehensive review of the regulatory framework. Among the general objectives of the new White Paper (1.4.), lifelong learning was defined as "Developing skills for lifelong learning and continuing personal and professional development:

- develop the ability to learn and acquire knowledge
- developing communication skills in Slovenian and, in ethnically mixed areas, also in Italian and Hungarian, as well as foreign languages
- development of work habits and responsibilities for personal development,
- develop responsibility for personal health, environmental protection and individual involvement in securing a sustainable society,
- encourage everyone to continue their education (formal and informal)." (p. 4)

The proponents of proposals for further development of VET strongly support the development of a social partnership, lifelong learning, and the principle of different pathways to the same goal¹⁷ (p. 26-28).

Among the various strategic challenges and directions, particular attention has been paid to lifelong development and continuous professional development. The educational system must support AE in which both occupational and general education is treated equally. LLL is considered both a necessity and an individual's responsibility. "If they want to survive in the labour market at times of rapid social, economic and technological change, [individuals] constantly adapt their knowledge and skills to the unpredictable demands of this market." (p. 23) The importance of good conditions for the development of AE, quality, and the integration of special-needs individuals is emphasized. The authors of the White Paper advocate accessible lifelong career guidance for every citizen. Those proposing the further development of VET in particular support the development of a social partnership, lifelong learning and the principle of different pathways to the same goal (p. 26-28).

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN TOOLS AND PRINCIPLES

The National Qualifications Framework

The main objectives of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Slovenia are consistent with EQF objectives.

In January 2010, a national steering committee for referencing NQF levels in relation to the EQF was appointed by the Government. It consists of representatives of the MoES (chair), the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MoHEST), MoLFSA, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS), CPI and social partners. CPI has been designated the national contact point (NCP) for the EQF and the provider of the Slovenian NQF (2009-12) project, which is co-financed by the national budget and European social funds, under the aegis of the MoLFSA.

¹⁷ *White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia 2011, Vocational and Professional Education*, (<http://www.belaknjiga2011.si/pdf/resitve%20pss%20za%20poklicno%20izobrazevanje.pdf>)

A proposal for a single comprehensive Slovenian qualifications framework (hereinafter SQF) was developed by the steering committee in April 2011. It includes qualifications from VET, Higher Education, general education and adult education, as well as non-formal learning (e.g. NVQ). The proposal involved a broad and inclusive consultation process with all relevant education and labour-market stakeholders in spring 2011.

SQF has 10 levels. This proposal builds on Klasius¹⁸, which has an eight-level structure with two sublevels (at levels 6 and 8). The proposal argues that 10 levels strike an appropriate balance between the education and qualification systems. The level descriptors for NQF are defined in terms of outcome criteria: knowledge, skills and competences.

A referencing report is expected by September 2012.

Credit system

In 2006, the Vocational Education Act established the legal framework for implementation of the credit system. Since then, Slovenian VET credit system has been a credit-transfer system designed for (formal) vocational education and training education. It enables systematic description of educational programmes and their units. Each unit has a relative value against the whole educational programme, expressed in terms of credit points. (see 4.1, 5.7)

According to the Vocational Education Act, which regulates upper secondary vocational and technical education, 60 credit points are allocated for 1 year of formal education. That means that we have:

- 120 credit points for Short-term vocational education (two and a half years);
- 180 to 240 credit points for Vocational secondary education (three years);
- 240 to 300 credit points for technical secondary education (four years);
- 120 credit points for vocational-technical secondary education (two years after vocational secondary education);

The Council of Experts for Vocational Education, following a proposal from the designers of educational programmes, allocates a precise number of credit points to educational programmes. One credit point is equivalent to 25 hours of student learning activities. Student learning activities are: learning in school, practical training at work, individual learning work (regular work, literature studies, seminars, project work, and research work), and preparation for exams and other forms of assessment. Students gain credit points by meeting learning requirements set in the educational programme or in units of the educational programme.

Quality assurance¹⁹

Slovenian VET providers of formal education must be verified and registered as public providers. Accreditation for the implementation of formal education programmes is based on the education of the staff as well as on the working environment, which, together with the implementation of statutory provisions, is the responsibility of the Schools Inspectorate or rather MoES. Education programmes are verified by the Council of Experts for Vocational Education (see 4.3). Education programmes (initial and continuous/pre-service and in-service) for most teachers, trainers and other VET professionals are university level programmes and are verified by NAKVIS (see 7.2.1) and MoES.

¹⁸ Decree on the introduction and use of standard classification of education (KLASIUS) was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, 46/2006, available at <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=73174>.

¹⁹ Website of Slovenian Centre for Quality Assurance in PSI (<http://www.siqa-vet.si/>).

CPI, NSLE, NEIS, Educational Research Institute, SIAE and RIC are public professional institutions which assist VET providers through education, development projects and consultancy with regard to the quality of the educational process.

The results of VET are assessed by the final and external examination. The body responsible for the Vocational *Matura* is RIC (for general subjects) and the VET provider (for vocational subjects). The final exam for lower vocational education is generally the responsibility of the VET provider. Evaluation of VET (programmes, curricula etc.) is directed by the Evaluation Council and undertaken by CPI and other public institutions mentioned above. Under the Vocational Education Act (2006), Slovenia introduced further quality-assurance mechanisms.

On the VET-providers' level, applying a quality management approach and regularly performing self-evaluation are mandatory. Organising a quality assurance commission with relevant stakeholders, and publishing an annual quality assurance report are also mandatory.

On the system level, the Council of Experts for Vocational Education (see 4.3) defined quality indicators in line with European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF). CPI is gradually developing a methodology for collecting data on quality indicators, and prepares an annual quality report. The first two reports showed significant development. Approximately 78% of VET providers are developing quality assurance systems, mostly as a result of years of various development and educational projects on quality assurance.

Europass²⁰

In Slovenia, the National Europass Centre (hereinafter NEC) was established on 1 May 2005 within the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET.

This has a particular influence on the very good implementation of the Certificate Supplement (hereinafter CS), a document issued at the end of successfully completed VET educational programmes. National implementation of this document has been particularly intense since 2007, and will reach full fruition in 2012, when all pupils will receive their CS. A specific feature of CS in Slovenia is that pupils receive individualised CSs, which means that shared information about the educational programme is supplemented by data on the individual's specific learning pathway.

It is mandatory to issue a Diploma Supplement (hereinafter DS) in Slovenia, but only in professionally oriented higher education does the DS mention Europass, while the DS for academic higher education makes no mention of the Europass framework.

The most common and successful Europass document in Slovenia is Europass CV - its use grows every year (65% growth in CVs completed online in Slovenian language from 2009 to 2010). Much less well-known is the Europass Language Passport (only about 1% of CVs issued), although its use is also on the rise.

The last of five Europass documents, Europass Mobility (issued for learning and work experience abroad), is mostly issued for experience linked to the Leonardo da Vinci exchange programme (85% of cases in 2010). This document has continually become more common since 2007, with the fastest growth in 2010 (50% growth from 2009 to 2010).

In terms of contact with social partners, in 2010 NEC had outstanding cooperation with EURES and EUROGUIDANCE, resulting among other things in a joint promotional campaign in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

²⁰ Website of the National Europass Centre (<http://www.europass.si/>).

2.3 INTERNATIONALISATION (21) AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET (22)

2.3.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

The recent White Paper on Education promotes internationalization, global education and multicultural education as a strategic general priority, challenge and direction for the Slovenian educational system. It also emphasises the principle of lifelong learning, where the Lifelong Learning programmes, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Study visits, play an important role in promoting transnational mobility of educators and trainers, as well as students and pupils in general and VET schools, workers, recent graduates, and jobseekers.

OP-HRD, already mentioned in section 2.1, views LLL as means of development, and it complements EU programmes. Transnational mobility is considered a tool for promoting enterprise, flexibility, adaptability and skills improvements. With national complementary funds, this priority among other things supports dissemination of best practice in internationalisation and transnational mobility.

Due to the reform and modernisation of VET education in Slovenia, in recent times there have been many international partnerships and mobility projects with Finland, because of its quality educational system. Germany remains a strategic country for Slovenian schools, with its technology, dual system of education and long tradition of practical training, followed by neighbouring Austria and Italy, then the UK, France and Spain as partners for linguistic, cultural or sectoral reasons.

Particular emphasis is placed on facilitating project promoters through application procedures in the form of workshops, training days and information events. The Slovenian National Agency for Lifelong Learning Programme called Centre of the RS for Mobility and European Educational and Training programmes (hereinafter CMEPIUS) has heavily promoted integration of transnational mobility into VET school curricula, resulting in the vast majority of cases in student Initial Vocational Training (hereinafter IVT) mobility being recognised and appropriately accredited. In addition, most IVT participants received a Europass mobility document to further certify their transnational experience.

Given European priorities in promoting IVT mobility, Slovenia will increase funding in 2012 for this specific target group, whom we believe benefit most from transnational mobility in terms of their personal and professional development. IVT projects are of very good quality, and demand from applicants and participants is high, so we believe shifting funds to this target group will achieve much more added value and mobility.

2.3.2 TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES IN VET

The main transnational mobility programme in Slovenia for VET is the Leonardo da Vinci mobility programme. Around 600 participants are supported each year under the programme. For many, particularly in the IVT target group, it is the only way to access transnational mobility during their secondary education.

²¹ *Internationalization of education is understood as the process of integrating an international, intercultural and/or global dimension into the goals, functions (teaching/learning, research, services) and delivery of education (adapted from Internationalization of Higher Education: New Directions, New Challenges, IAU 2005 Survey).*

²² *Transnational mobility in VET is understood as any period that a worker, jobseeker, VET student, teacher or trainer spends abroad in an education or training institution, a company or any other organisation for learning or teaching purposes. Comment: knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the period spent abroad may be validated and lead to certification. (Cedefop definition).*

National schemes and funding programmes complement the Leonardo da Vinci programme, with the difference that they are meant to fund regular education of students, while the Leonardo programme emphasises practical, work-related experience abroad. There is also a difference in the level of funding, with the Leonardo da Vinci programme providing greater funding for a shorter period (average funding for national schemes is €180 per month, while a Leonardo da Vinci monthly grant is 4-5 times higher).

Based on experience, reports and data provided, transnational mobility enabled IVT participants to gain important personal, professional, behavioural, linguistic and cultural competences and skills that would otherwise not have been achieved, at least not in the same way. Their self esteem, self confidence, motivation, tolerance and cooperation have much improved thanks to the weeks spent training in another country.

While participants themselves benefited most from IVT mobility, it was observed that VET professionals' mobility led to new ideas, methods and tools for education and training. It also helped improve quality, attractiveness and innovation in VET practices and systems; it promoted cross-curricular cooperation, modularisation and reform of the vocational education. Transnational mobility of teachers, mentors and trainers also increased internationalization at the level of schools and school centres. VET Professional (hereinafter VET PRO) mobility of VET professionals from companies, training centres and chambers contributed to local development, sectoral cooperation and social partnership.

A significant proportion of mobility participants are from IVT and VET PRO target groups, with people in the labour market (hereinafter PLM) increasing in recent years.

So far 40% of the annual budget has been allocated to IVT, 40% to PLM and 20% to VET PRO; however, this will change in 2012, with an additional 10% of total funding allocated to the IVT target group. Funding for individual mobility costs will also increase in 2012.

In most cases, IVET mobility lasts 2 or 3 weeks. More participants are trained in schools (65%) than in the workplace (35%), but schools are increasingly building partnerships with companies, thereby providing students with more real work experience.

Most IVT placements abroad are recognized and accredited, with mobility being an integral part of participants' regular training. All participants receive some certification in the form of a confirmation letter, evaluation form or Europass document.

The Europass Mobility document is heavily promoted, and most IVT students (60% in 2009, 80% in 2010) receive it at the end of their transnational mobility experience. It is also recommended for PLM participants (rising from 16% in 2009 to 30% in 2010).

2.3.3 ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE WORK PLACEMENTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

Companies have always had a special role in Leonardo da Vinci programme, particularly mobility. Every year micro and small businesses involved in the programme are given extra priority points due to national priorities.

In order to raise awareness of transnational mobility and the Lifelong Learning Programme, the national agency CMEPIUS works closely with the Slovenian Chamber of Craft and Small Business and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote transnational mobility opportunities as the receiving or sending organization.

This year CMEPIUS organized the first themed workshop dedicated to companies involved in the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes as receiving or sending organizations. It gave companies the opportunity to exchange practices and experience, and promote transnational mobility and its benefits for participants, companies and sectors.

A special database was prepared for the English website of the national agency in which Slovenian companies are invited to post their interest in receiving foreign participants, and a special leaflet was highlighting best practices and opportunities for companies willing to submit a mobility project.

Through these information and dissemination activities, Slovenian companies have been well represented in Lifelong Learning Programmes, particularly Leonardo da Vinci (in 2009, 21% of PLM participants were from companies and 34% of VET professionals were from enterprises, with the 2010 figures even higher - 26% in PLM).

Recognition of a work placement by people in the labour market or VET professionals from companies is mainly done on the basis of recognition of informal and non-formal knowledge. Finalisation of the NQF will enable and promote the recognition of training performed outside the regular educational system.

Work placement mobility is heavily promoted among the IVT target group, and schools are encouraged to send students directly to work-based training, but this is almost essential in the PLM target group, since graduates, and unemployed or employed people need concrete, practical experience. Last but not least, VET professionals, particularly those from educational or training organizations, are encouraged to involve companies in their mobility exchange programme in order to get a better understanding of the needs of companies and the labour market in general.

Data about Slovenian companies involved in Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects is available in rap4leo system (<http://si.rap4leo.org/>)

TABLE 11: Overview of VET transnational mobility programmes and schemes

Title of programme/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding ⁽²³⁾ and corresponding level of funding for the programming period	Start - end date (programming period)	Target groups ⁽²⁴⁾	Average duration of mobility per target group (in months)	Number of participants ⁽²⁵⁾	Implementation mechanisms ⁽²⁶⁾	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad	Support (i.e. evaluation)
EU programmes									
1. Leonardo da Vinci	CMEPIUS - Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Education and Training Programmes	EU programmes €1.3m per Call for mobility	1 Jun 2009 - 31 May 2011 (2009 mobility projects)	IVT, P LM (people in the labour market) and VET professionals	IVET Students*..... 2 weeks Apprentices** VET Professionals***... 1 week Others (please specify)..... PLM	IVET Students*..... 292 Apprentices** VET Professionals***... 219 Others (please specify)..... PLM	Standard procedure is applied, with additional administrative rules (1 application per applicant) and priorities (SMEs, vulnerable groups, new applicants)	Europass Mobility issued along with certificates, evaluation reports or confirmation letters from the host organizations. Mobility period is recognised as integral part of students'	Support to CM

²³ EU programmes, EU Structural Funds (e.g. ESF), National budget, Employer contribution, Individuals' funds/savings, etc.

²⁴ E.g. students, apprentices, VET professionals, etc.

²⁵ The number of students who have spent a period abroad in one single year (please specify year). If statistics are collected differently, please specify.

²⁶ Please outline the application procedure & the eligibility requirements for applicants. For EU programmes, please indicate if the standard procedure is applied. If not, please briefly describe.

					3 months	114		education and training.	
2.									
Multi-country programmes (between several countries, including your country)									
1.					IVET Students*.....	IVET Students*.....			
					Apprentices**	Apprentices**			
					VET Professionals*** ...	VET Professionals*** ...			
					Others (please specify).....	Others (please specify).....			

Bilateral programmes (between your country and another country)									
1.					IVET Students*.....	IVET Students*.....			
					Apprentices**.....	Apprentices**....			
					VET Professionals***...	VET Professionals***.			
					Others (please specify).....	Others (please specify).....			
2.									
National programmes/schemes (not targeted at specific destination countries)									
1. Zois Scholarship	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund	€44,460	School Year 2010/2011	IVT and general secondary education students	IVET Students*..... 15	IVET Students*.....	National procedure and criteria.	Transnational mobility is an integral part of their education, so transnational mobility period is completely recognised.	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship
					Apprentices**.....	Apprentices**....			
					VET Professionals***...	VET Professionals***.			

					Others (please specify).....	..			Fund
						Others (please specify).....			
2.National Scholarships	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund	€152,000	School Year 2010/2011	IVT and general secondary education students	IVET Students*..... 81 Apprentices**..... VET Professionals***... Others (please specify).....	IVET Students*..... Apprentices**.... .. VET Professionals***. .. Others (please specify).....	National procedure and criteria.	Transnational mobility is an integral part of their education, so transnational mobility period is completely recognised.	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund
3.HR Scholarships	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund	€1,740	School Year 2010/2011	IVT and general secondary education students	IVET Students*..... 1 Apprentices**..... VET Professionals***... Others (please	IVET Students*..... Apprentices**.... .. VET Professionals***. ..	National procedure and criteria.	Transnational mobility is an integral part of their education, so transnational mobility period is completely recognised.	Slovenian Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund

					specify).....	Others (please specify).....			
Regional programmes/schemes (between administrative regions in your country and foreign regions and/or countries)									
1.					IVET Students*.....	IVET Students*.....			
					Apprentices**.....	Apprentices**.... ..			
					VET Professionals***...	VET Professionals***. ..			
					Others (please specify).....	Others (please specify).....			

* IVET students in school-based programmes;

** IVET students in apprenticeship

*** Teachers, and trainers

3. VET TO SUPPORT RECOVERY FROM THE CRISIS

3.1 OVERVIEW

At the end of 2010, SORS data recorded 749,697 employed, 86,384 self-employed and 99,591 unemployed individuals in Slovenia. Employment rates fell steadily throughout 2010, with 100,504 unemployed persons registered at the end of the year, more than 10% of the active population. Unemployment continued to rise during the first two months of 2011, peaking at 115,370 in February before falling back to just over 111,000 in July. Slovenia was one of the EU countries worst affected by the crisis in terms of real GDP fall. In 2009, real GDP fell by 8.1% y-o-y, as opposed to 4.2% in the EU-27. In 2010, Slovenia recorded a slower recovery than the eurozone as a whole. Annual GDP growth reached 1.2% (1.8% in EU-27 and the eurozone). However, GDP is still significantly lower than in 2008. The crisis continued as positive growth was too small to have a significant impact on employment. In 2010, unemployment rose for workers with all levels of education, for all age groups and both genders. Unemployment in July 2011 is almost twice as high than in July 2008, when the unemployment rate was 6.5% or 61,550 registered unemployed, and most of the jobs lost in manufacturing are permanent losses which will not be replaced at the end of the crisis.

Education in general, and vocational education and training in particular, is considered the most important means of improving employment prospects and ease the impact of the crisis. The Slovenian upper secondary education system performs well by international standards, and Slovenia has one of the highest proportions of the 25-64 age group who have completed at least upper secondary education. The upper secondary education system provides a flexible transition from vocational to academic tracks, and consequently offers direct access to higher education to the majority of students.

But the market value of vocational qualifications has been falling, and so interest in vocational programmes has been declining. Most students aim to obtain an academic qualification. This could create a long-term skills shortage. In order to encourage students to enrol in vocational programmes, employment opportunities should be widened; employers should offer better working conditions and higher wages. Unfortunately, nothing of the kind happened in 2010, with the crisis exacerbating the existing income gap between the public and private sectors. Wages fell in the private sector, while those in the public sector remained stable, thus making jobs in industry even less attractive.

The main priorities of the National Reform Programme 2011-12 are smart growth, inclusive growth and sustainable growth. This involves increasing investment in Research activities & Development (R&D) , supporting enterprise at all levels, and reforms in energy, transport and environmental policies. All of these will have an indirect impact on employment opportunities for VET. Direct measures in education include: further informatisation of educational institutions and systems, regular investments at all levels of the education system, measures to promote adult education, particularly computer literacy, language courses, and programmes aimed at reducing the educational deficit.

Much attention is paid to educational staff education as a prerequisite for quality in education. In response to the need to better match skills to labour market needs, we plan to strengthen career guidance services in the whole cycle of education. In March 2011, The Scholarship Act was passed with a view to enable equal opportunities for secondary school pupils and other students in all social categories. Through the system of company scholarships, education institutions and employers will form closer ties, and it will also serve to attract students to occupations with shortages.

In 2010, there were 25,423 places in secondary education, 219 fewer than in 2009. MoES tried to encourage pupils to enrol in more vocational and technical programmes by providing 672 places in short upper secondary education and training, 12 more than in 2009, and 6862 places, 203 more than the previous year, in vocational upper secondary programmes. There were 9320 places, 122 fewer than the previous year, in technical upper vocational (4-year) programmes and 8569 places in general upper secondary education. Actual enrolment was a little lower, with 21,266 enrolled in all branches and levels of secondary education. Numbers for particular categories are as follows: Short upper secondary vocational 442, upper secondary vocational 4428, upper secondary technical 8249 and general upper secondary 8147. The latest available data (2011) shows that around 20,000 people enrolled in secondary education this year. The steady fall in numbers is not a result of the economic crisis, but has demographic causes. Nevertheless, it poses a problem for secondary institutions, as it means a total lack of work for 51 teachers, and partial loss for a further 12. Secondary schools are increasingly turning to adult education as an additional source of work and income.

Unfortunately, there is no data on adult enrolment in the first year of secondary education, but there is data on adult graduation. We do however have data on the number of adults enrolled in the first year of secondary education under Active Employment Policy (hereinafter AEP) measures, so the numbers are not fully comparable, but we can estimate AEP's share in adult enrolment, and the share of other sources that could conditionally be called "free market". In 2010 a total of 4021 adults graduated from upper secondary education, of whom 1131 graduated from vocational education, only 4 from lower vocational education, 2762 from professional and technical secondary education, and 124 from general secondary education.

Enrolment figures under AEP measures are as follows: 1546 in total, of whom 61 discontinued education during the year. These involved 825 in vocational upper secondary, 5 in short upper secondary education and training, 711 in technical upper secondary, and 5 in general upper secondary. From these figures we can conclude that vocational and technical education is considerably more popular among adults than among young people. Moreover, there is evidence that, despite the crisis, approximately two-thirds of enrolment involves sources independent of AEP, which is encouraging, although there are few grounds reason for satisfaction, as the absolute numbers are still too low. On the other hand, we can conclude that enrolment in education under AEP is relatively efficient, which justifies the investment.

One important element of the MoES strategy remains improving attitudes towards learning and Lifelong Learning (see 1.4 and 2.1) Employees and employers must be included in the process of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning enables individuals to increase creativity and enterprise, while also improving knowledge, skills and competences required for active participation in economic and social life, and for flexibility in the labour market. An important tool in achieving these goals is the LLL programme, both in developing new approaches to lifelong learning through projects (data for 2010 not yet available) and by providing opportunities for learning abroad through individual mobility.

Within mobility, probably the most important factor in terms of both quality of education and modern teaching methods, the most important aspect is probably educational staff mobility. It peaked in 2008, with 2017 mobile educational professionals, of whom 353 were from vocational institutions. The number fell sharply in 2009, then increased slightly in 2010 to 1594, of whom only 210 were from VET. This decrease could be attributed to the economic crisis, but no in-depth analysis has been done, so it is not conclusive. The situation is better for student mobility, with the lower share of Erasmus students in 2010 more than compensated by the increase of VET-related mobility. Student mobility thus fell from 1353 in 2009 to 1322 in 2010, but at the same time practical training abroad for both secondary and tertiary students increased from 424 to 490.

Another important strategy is improving the quality of vocational education (see 2.2) to meet the needs and expectations of participants in the education process. By improving quality, VET schools strive to attract and motivate students for vocational streams. Enrolment data and student interviews show that renewal of VET curricula, which was completed in 2009/10, made a substantial contribution to this objective, although this was not sufficient to reverse the general trend caused by the labour market crisis and prevailing values. Innovative learning approaches such as “Learning Outcomes Portfolio”, recognised as a European example of good practice in formative measurement of competences, and practical project work as part of the final exam, were particularly successful.

3.2 EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

As a result of declining industry, falling employment opportunities and wage reductions, the reputation of VET has been declining in recent years among young people. Slovenia has yet to develop new job opportunities and make VET programmes more attractive to overcome the crisis. 2010 has not been particularly successful in this regard, but the National Reform programme adopted this year introduces major restructuring towards a “green economy”, with changes in the structure of the energy sector and manufacturing, and the possibility of using traditional industrial skills in a new context.

The Document on Structural Adjustments in 2010 and 2011 and the Slovenian Exit Strategy 2010-2013 are still in force, but have previously been explained in the 2009 report.

In addition to formal education, various forms of training and competence assessment were introduced as parts of the active employment strategy. The most commonly used was trial work (a measure that provides one month of subsidised work for a jobseeker with prospective employer). 6544 individuals were tested in 2010. The second most common was in-service training, which provides short-term subsidies for on the job training, in which the employer should train the jobseeker in the specific skills required, with regular employment ensuing. 4886 persons were trained in this way. Skills assessment and acquisition of qualifications under the NVQ scheme also form an important part of improving individual employability. 1278 qualifications were acquired this way in 2010, while a further 1737 individuals were involved in preparatory activities.

One of the most promising ways out of unemployment in a crisis is self-employment. It accords with the entrepreneurial spirit, which is the only remedy for the present structural crisis and contains opportunities for both innovative solutions and future jobs. Much attention is therefore paid to promoting self-employment in the AEP. In 2010, 14,337 individuals received various forms of guidance or training for self-employment, with 5148 receiving subsidies. A further increase in funding is planned in 2011 to promote and support self-employment.

The economic crisis has resulted in falling participation by employees in formal and non-formal education. Training has become shorter, and employers have significantly cut their financial contributions to VET (LFS, 2007, 2008, 2009). Managers reported that their first cost-cutting measure involved reducing funding for training. In 2009, spending on and participation in education rose slightly, thanks to state support and a fundamental increase in in-house training to replace external training (Mirčeva, 2010).

However, in learning-oriented organisations, where education and training form part of employment contracts, training was treated as an important development factor. Some organisations (exceptionally) even increased their involvement in education (Mirčeva, 2010).

The role of the Intercompany training centre (MIC) network remains unchanged, but the deteriorating financial position threatens to jeopardise the very existence of some partners in the long term.

Another fact is that enrolment in vocational education is declining. Most young people who complete upper secondary vocational education continue to higher levels of education. The trend towards providing tertiary education for the whole generation has global roots. Certificates and degrees no longer guarantee the employment. Remaining in education is a better guarantor of social security. The nature of the problem is not so much educational as economic and social (Muršak and Medveš, 2010). School authorities are relying on the new White Paper, which will outline the ways in which the school system should and could respond to the present challenges, but it is already clear that it will not provide answers to all outstanding questions.

These are well-known and unsurprising facts. What is new is that, despite a determination to ensure that the crisis will not exacerbate the operating conditions for education, the first long-term effects are showing. Although the crisis has not directly led to major reductions in educational activity, associated activities such as investments and in-service staff training show some signs of slowing down. On its own, this could leave a lasting mark on the future performance of education and jeopardise the objectives set out in the National Reform Programme. It is still not clear what further cost-cutting measures will be needed to maintain public finances. We can therefore conclude that although the crisis has not yet affected the standards or scope of education, its prolongation could have a profound and lasting negative impact.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

VET in Slovenia was exclusively undertaken in the schools in the former Yugoslavia. The system was financed entirely by the state, which also planned its scope, determined the programmes and provided conditions for its implementation.

In the late 70s, "career-oriented education" was introduced at the level of upper secondary education. The model introduced a special model of a common secondary school deriving from two general principles (Skubic Ermenc 2007):

1. To enable the entire population to obtain a common basis for further education, personal growth and higher cultural standard;
2. To direct students towards work or towards the appropriate branch of education.

This was an advanced model in terms of its principles; however, its implementation was plagued with many problems leading to its abolition. After consideration of and reflection on the experience accumulated from career-oriented education, a conceptual design for a new VET system in Slovenia was created in 1992. The concept was published in the Proceedings System Regulation of VET (ed. Medveš, Muršak, 1992). The proceedings reflected research efforts and debates held at the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s in which a large number of experts from various fields took part (Skubic Ermenc 2007).

The new concept for the development of the VET system rested on the following basic principles (Medveš, Muršak in Skubic Ermenc 2007):

- Gradual transformation of the system;
- Social partnership;
- Basic VET for all;
- Development of alternative paths;
- Compatibility with European systems;
- Elaboration of programmes in line with the content of qualifications and the needs of the vocational field;
- Development of a complete vertical system;
- Transferability between vocational and general education.

The concept elaborated in the document is based on the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia and also on the Vocational Education and Training Act (1996). The White paper is a programme document which served as the basis for new systematic and legislative changes prepared between 1993 and 1996. It set forth the principles defining the general theoretical framework for restructuring the public education system, based on human rights and the rule of law (Skubic Ermenc 2007).

At the end of the 90s, Slovenia performed numerous evaluations of the results achieved to date (they were mostly conducted as part of the international Phare Mocca project). Evaluations brought to light some deficiencies of the reforms. The numerous weak links between theoretical and practical learning were highlighted as a particularly burning issue. To overcome these barriers, new conceptual material was published in 2001 i.e. the Guidelines for Elaboration of Educational Programmes in Lower and Secondary VET (hereinafter: "Guidelines"). The Guidelines marked the second wave of VET reform in Slovenia, which was in full swing in 2004. The process reached its peak in 2006 as the new Vocational Education Act was passed (Pevac Grm and Skubic Ermenc 2007).

Having designed occupational standards, Slovenia's intention is to respond to economic, technological and social changes, new forms of work organisation and further use of IT in professional life. In addition to these factors, the principle of lifelong learning and learning for life in a globalised and multicultural society confronting a number of environmental challenges and challenges arising from sustainable development is taken into account when educational programmes are drawn up. This process, modelled on the reformed Guidelines, describes the strategic orientation of VET in the state, and above all introduces a new concept for developing VET programmes.

Since these developments, Slovenia has been introducing modularly structured programmes with credit points and a bigger share of elective contents. This is a response to the call for increased flexibility and responsiveness of VET. In parallel, efforts have been stepped up to open up opportunities for adults to acquire National Vocational Qualifications (through a certification system)(see 6) and acquire education through various pathways. The modular approach gradually puts an end to a subject-based structure of programmes with the intention of reinforcing the links between general, professional and practical knowledge. These links are also visible in the drafting of the catalogue of knowledge, in which the authors attempt to formulate training objectives by bringing together vocational and key competences - integration of general into vocational knowledge (Pevac Grm and Skubic Ermenc 2007).

4.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IVET

Slovenian educational legislation is based on a number of types of educational institutions and sets objectives, students' rights and responsibilities, organisation, content, evaluation, certification, levels of education, teaching staff, alternative forms of education, data collection and protection of personal data and punitive provisions.

Common administrative and financial matters of the schools are governed by The Organisation and Financing of Education Act (*Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja*). It sets out conditions for the conduct of educational activities and the ways in which education is organised, managed, and funded. It also stipulates the compulsory components of the educational programmes.

Specific and individual matters are regulated by:

- The Vocational Education Act (*Zakon o poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju*) regulates upper secondary vocational education and technical education.
- The Matura Examination Act (*Zakon o Maturi*), which stipulates everything about the Vocational Matura (*poklicna matura*) - upon completion of technical secondary education or vocational-technical secondary education.
- The Post-Secondary Vocational Education Act (*Zakon o višjem strokovnem izobraževanju*), which regulates Higher Vocational Education.
- The Higher Education Act (*Zakon o visokem šolstvu*), which regulates higher education (academic and professionally oriented).
- The Special Rights of the Italian and Hungarian Ethnic Groups in Education Act (*Zakon o posebnih pravicah italijanske in madžarske narodne skupnosti na področju vzgoje in izobraževanja*), which regulates the implementation of the special rights given to these ethnic groups in education, including in upper secondary education.
- The Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (*Zakon o usmerjanju otrok s posebnimi potrebami*), which regulates education and training of children, youth and junior adults with special needs, and regulates the placement of students with special needs and specifies the approaches to and form of education.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IVET AND ORGANIGRAM

The responsibility for the administration of education is divided among national authorities, local authorities and schools.

General administration of the education system at the national level is provided by the ministries: the MoES and the MoHEST. These ministries co-operate with the Ministry of Finance (general financial rules, budgets and payments), the MoLFSA (occupational profiles in vocational education) and other ministries.

The MoES carries out most of the necessary financial, administrative and expert tasks. It prepares concepts and strategies, legislation and regulations on the basis of expert opinions. Its responsibilities also include the creation of policies for the admission of pupils and students into schools and colleges, financing of schools and colleges, and the supervision of staffing and employment procedures. Feedback on the work of the education system is collected through statistics, targeted evaluation and research studies, state-wide examinations, and international research.

There are two mostly independent internal bodies within the MoES:

- The Inspectorate for Education and Sport, which oversees the implementation of legislation in pre-university institutions and in the area of sport,
- The Office for Youth, devoted to activities and services for young people.

The MoHEST is responsible for higher education (academic and professionally oriented).

The MoLFSA shares partial responsibility with the MoES for vocational education and training, including the system for certification of national vocational qualifications and the agreements on educational policies with social partners.

To support expert decision-making in pre-tertiary education, the Government has established councils of experts for relevant fields: the Council of Experts for General Education, the Council of Experts for Vocational Education and the Council of Experts for Adult Education. The responsibilities of these councils of experts include decision-making powers: approval of certain types of programmes or development of proposals for programmes, development of syllabuses and curricula, confirmation of textbooks, and accreditation of educational programmes provided by private schools. The expert body for higher education appointed by the Government is the Council of Experts for Higher Education. Its responsibilities include accreditation, evaluation and habilitation, as well as providing advice to the Government on the development of higher education policies and strategies.

In vocational education and training, part of the educational programme is by law determined by schools in consultation with social partners (the "open curricula" see 5.1.). The school council appoints a quality-assurance committee of teachers and representatives of employers, students and parents.

The social partners (chambers, business services, trade unions) are by law required to consult with ministries to devise proposals for occupational standards, to fine-tune the framework of qualifications for each industry, to appoint members to final examination committees, to organise practical training in a work environment, to co-operate with schools in vocational orientation programmes, to allocate educational programmes, to determine the enrolment numbers, and to define open curricula.

The Chambers (The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia), business associations and companies authorised by the minister can:

- conduct master-craftsman examinations,
- accredit employers to provide practical training, and
- facilitate the practical part of the final examinations and of the vocational Matura in partnership with schools.

Trade unions ensure that pupils' rights in practical training are respected in accordance with the relevant act, collective agreements, and the apprenticeship contract. Trade unions nominate representatives to examination bodies.

In partnership with the MoES, there are four national institutes supporting the Ministry's work and are subordinated to the ministry:

- The National Education Institute (Zavod RS za šolstvo) responsible for general education,
- The Institute of the RS for Vocational Education and Training (Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje - CPI) responsible for VET education,

- The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (Andragoški center Slovenije - SIAE) responsible for adult education,
- The National Examinations Centre (Državni izpitni center - RIC) responsible for external assessment of pupils and students in education (through provision of organisation and expertise).

Each institute's role is similar, but each operates in their own field. They prepare expert materials that serve as the basis for decision-making. They draw up national curricula for basic, upper secondary and higher vocational education, which are discussed and adopted by the National Councils of Experts and the Minister. They assist in evaluation of schools and contribute to the preparation of state-wide examinations. They promote and encourage the further development of schools, offer expert advice to teachers and initiate education-related projects.

CPI is the key institute on the field of VET. It has been established and financed by the MoES, the MoLFSA, and chambers. The Institute is engaged in development, research and consultation in vocational and education and training.

The following are the Institute's main areas of operation:

- studying development trends in the labour market and preparation of occupation profiles as well as competently conceived occupational standards;
- development of methodologies and preparation of modern, module-based education programmes for pre-secondary and secondary vocational education and secondary and college expert education;
- monitoring the process of the introduction of education programmes, evaluation of final examinations and vocational matura and development of new methodical and didactical concepts of knowledge, learning and teaching;
- training and improvement of knowledge in teachers, professionals and mentors in the framework of vocational and technical education, and provision of professional support and counselling to providers of vocational and technical education;
- stimulation and coordination of various development and innovation projects in vocational and technical schools;
- development of modern education tools and education technology;
- participation in professional organisations and EU networks dealing with vocational and technical education.

Schools councils act autonomously at local levels. They play an important role in the process of administrative decentralisation.

See also Figure 1 and 2 under 4.5.

4.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

The Constitution guarantees the right to education for all. Formal vocational education and training is uniform and is the same in both IVET and CVET. Apart from formal education adults can also obtain qualifications through National Vocational Qualifications system.

CVET for adult education is regulated by the Adult Education Act, National Professional Qualifications Act:

- The Adult Education Act (*Zakon o izobraževanju odraslih*) defines educational programmes for adults, the rights of adults in accredited educational programmes, the management of public educational institutions for adults, the obligation to develop ReNAEMP is implemented by the Annual Adult Education Plan (see 2,1), annual programmes in adult education, and relevant financing.
- The National Professional Qualifications Act (*Zakon o nacionalnih poklicnih kvalifikacijah*) regulates the bodies, institutions, organisations competent for the preparation and adoption of professional standards and catalogues of knowledge, skills and competences, and also conditions and procedures for the acquisition of national professional qualifications. The National Professional Qualifications Act enables acquiring NVQ, but not level of education.

CVET is also regulated by laws and their articles related to IVET (see also chapter 4.2 - Legislative framework for IVET):

- The Organisation and Financing of Education Act,
- The Vocational Education Act,
- The Matura Act,
- The Post-Secondary Vocational Education Act,
- The Higher Education Act.

CVET for adult education is also included in the labour and social legislation for specific sectors of activity. The rights and responsibilities in education for specific target groups are regulated by the labour and social legislation. The Employment Relationship Act (*Zakon o delovnih razmerjih*) lays down the right to education for employees and the right to study leave for the relevant type of education; collective agreements put this right into practice.

The Pension and Disability Insurance Act (*Zakon o pokojninskem in invalidskem zavarovanju*) stipulates the right to vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities. The Employment and Insurance against Unemployment Act (*Zakon o zaposlovanju in zavarovanju za primer brezposelnosti*) regulates the rights of unemployed people to education and training, and the obligations arising from these rights. These rights and responsibilities are defined more specifically in the programmes of active employment policy and in the Programme of Education for Unemployed Persons. CVET is also regulated by special acts in the areas of health, environment, agriculture, culture and others, which stipulate the requirements of these occupations and the requirements for permanent training of the employees.

4.5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

Responsibility for management of CVET is shared by:

- The Ministry of Education and Sport (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport), which is responsible for pre-university education (short higher education included),
- The Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology (Ministrstvo za višje šolstvo, znanost in tehnologijo), which is responsible for traditional tertiary education (academic and professionally oriented),
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (Ministrstvo za delo, družino in socialne zadeve), which is co-responsible for vocational education and training.

Within the MoES, education at different levels is the responsibility of specific directorates. Adult education is under the Directorate for Upper Secondary and Short Higher Vocational, within which is the Sector for Adult Education.

The Council of Experts for Adult Education, established by the Government, monitors and evaluates the situation and development of adult education. It prepares proposals for the minister of education on which adult-education programmes should be accredited, and addresses other relevant questions in the field of adult education.

The SIAE is an independent research institute that conducts developmental and research projects related to the development of adult-education theory and practice. It provides expertise for decision-making under the authority of the Council of Experts for Adult Education, and is an advisory service for organisations involved in adult education.

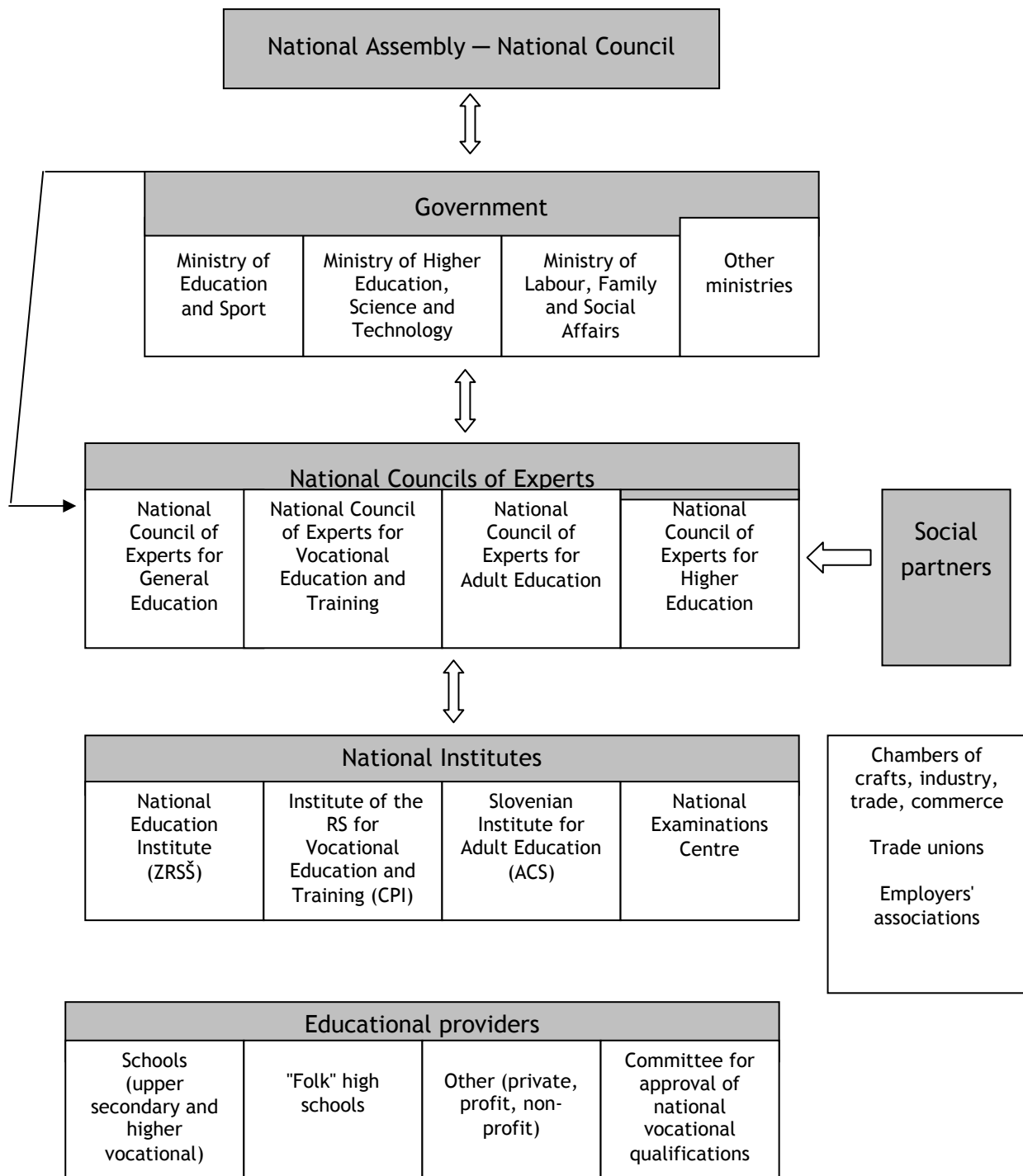
The MoLFSA is also involved in CVET. The responsibility for adult education lies with the Directorate for the Labour Market and Employment in the Sector for Lifelong Learning and Scholarships. The sector is responsible for the education and training of unemployed people and other vulnerable groups in the labour market. The executive agency, the Employment Service of Slovenia, is responsible for the implementation of the right to education of vulnerable groups.

The role of social partners (chambers, business services, trade unions) in CVET and adult education is co-ordinated by the MoLFSA. The chambers are employers' organisations that represent employers in social dialogue and carry out technical, developmental and counselling work in vocational education. They prepare the standards of knowledge, skills and competences for the certification system. Master-craftsman, foreman and managerial exams, which represent the most common forms of CVET, take place under their authority. They organise testing and certification of qualifications for craft-related activities that do not require a master-craftsmen examination. Both chambers (The Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Crafts) also function as organisers and providers of non-formal vocational education and training, which do not offer nationally valid certificates. Trade unions are legally limited to being a partner in the procedure of certification of national vocational qualifications. They independently organise and provide education and training for trade-union activists.

With the introduction of the social partnerships in vocational education and training, the representatives of employers and employees play an increasingly important role, and they are also represented in national bodies.

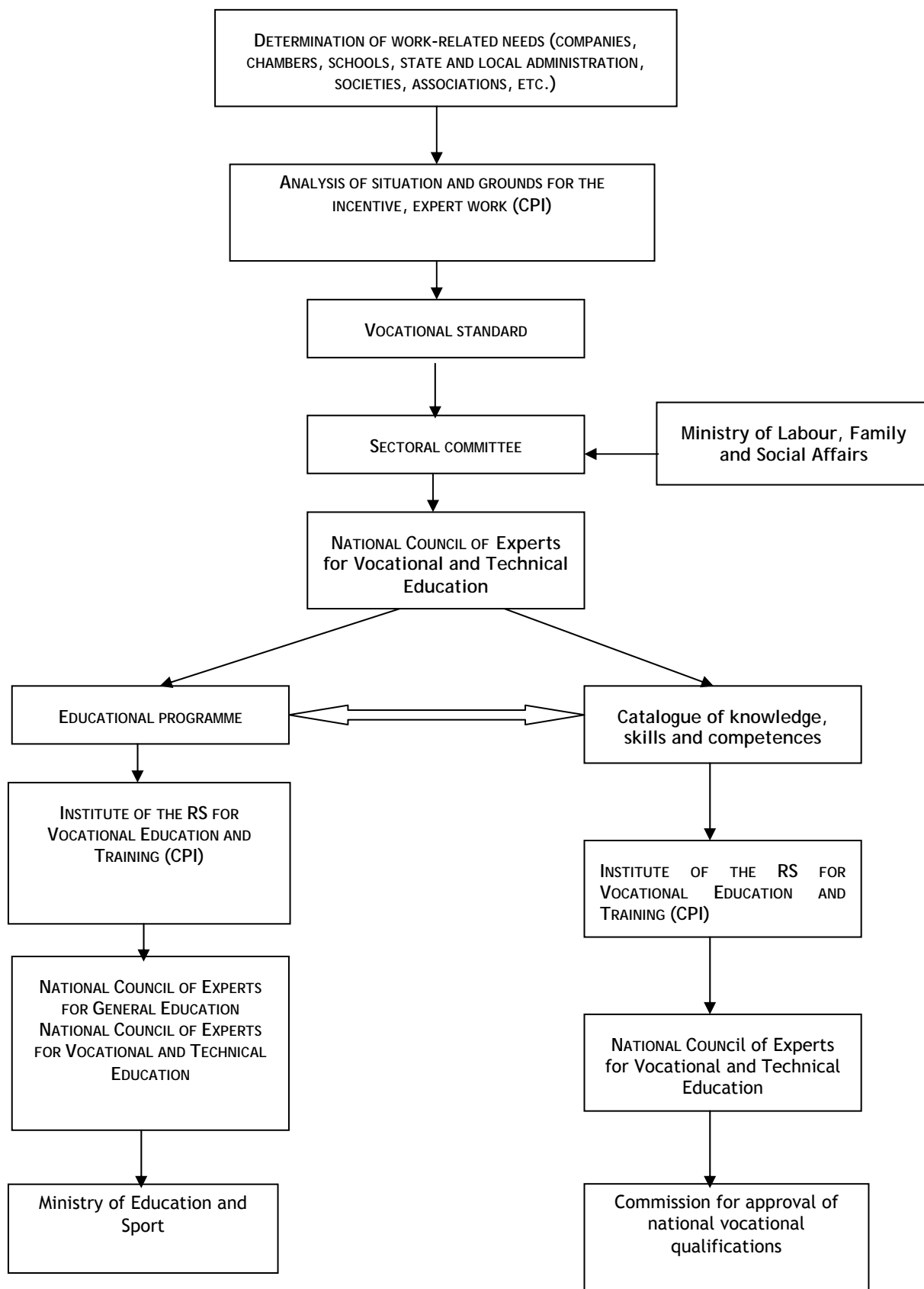
See also Figure 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Administration of education and training in Slovenia



Source: ReferNet, 2009.

Figure 2: Decision-making process for content of education in Slovenia



5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 BACKGROUND TO THE INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM, AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

The Slovenian education system includes pre-school education, compulsory primary education (a single structure of primary and lower-secondary education), upper secondary education, higher vocational education, and higher education (see Figure x on the next page).

Secondary education is provided in upper secondary schools. Schools can specialise in the provision of a single type of education, e.g. general upper secondary schools (*gimnazija*), or can provide several types of education programmes by becoming a school centre combining various types of upper secondary schools.

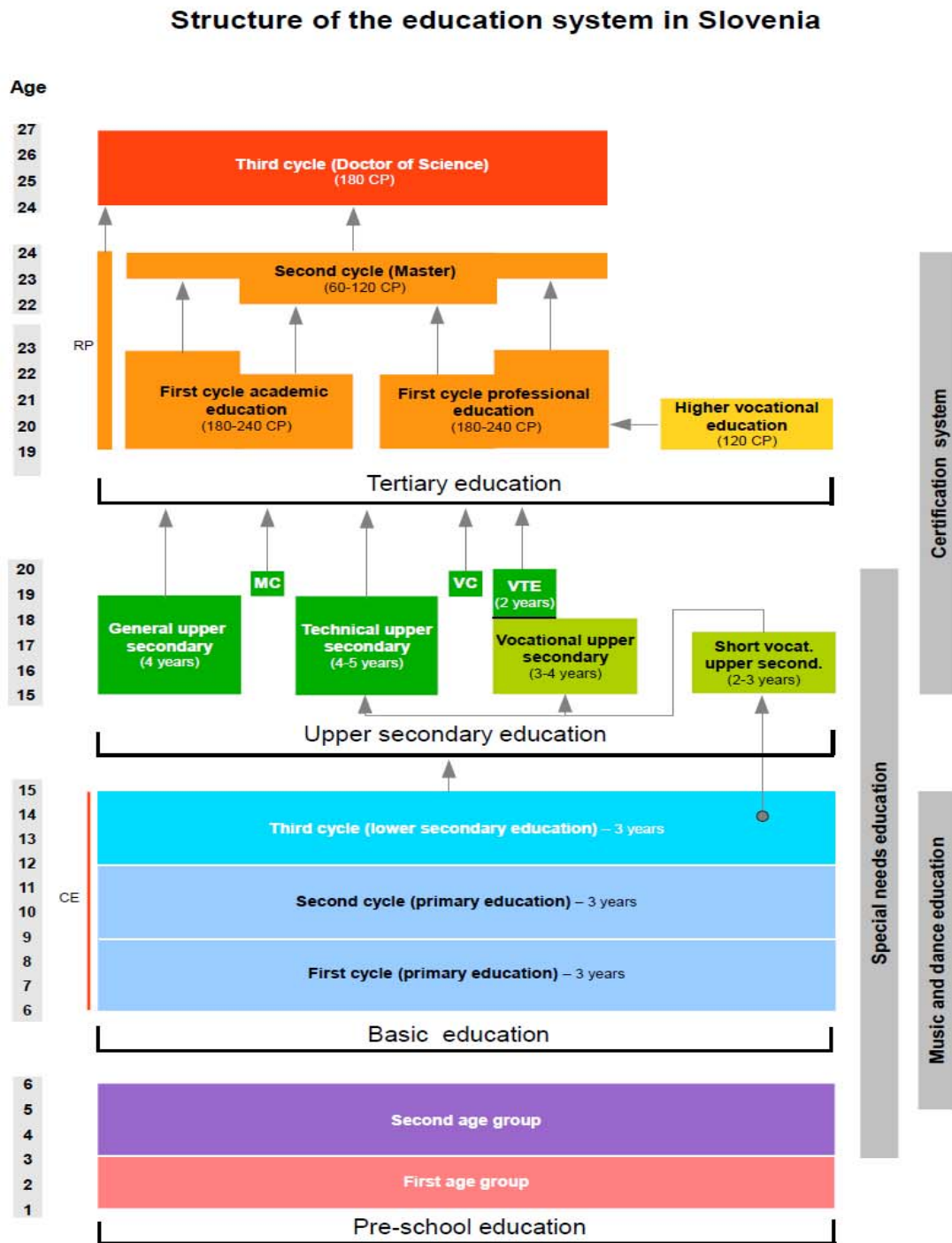
Approximately 98% of students continue their education at upper secondary level. A total of 40% of students enrol in general upper secondary education courses (*gimnazija*). Others enrol in technical upper secondary education (approx. 37%) or vocational upper secondary education (approx. 21%). A small percentage of students (less than 2%), who do not enrol in upper secondary education courses after completing compulsory education, choose to enrol in vocational training courses, to enter the labour market, or to repeat the last year of primary school to improve their overall marks.

The main objectives of vocational education and training in Slovenia are:

- To provide vocational qualifications to as many young people as possible with the possibility of further education;
- To develop key competences, skills and vocational qualifications at an internationally comparable level, and to provide knowledge and skills for employment;
- To link education with the labour market;
- To improve employability and lifelong learning.

Much of the organisation of upper secondary education in Slovenia is centralised. The most important decisions concerning upper secondary education (e.g. content and structure of programmes, staffing requirements and salaries, etc.) are taken at a national level. Schools do, however, have a certain degree of autonomy in implementing core national curricula, the choice of teaching methods, staffing and employment matters, and admission procedures.

Figure 3: Structure of education system in Slovenia



CE Compulsory education **MC** *Matura* course (general upper secondary second chance education)
VC Vocational courses (technical upper secondary retraining)
VTE Vocational-technical education (2 years of technical upper secondary education built on previously completed programme)
RP Regulated professions (5-6 years long higher education programmes leading directly to a Master degree)
CP Credit points **Certification system** Recognition of non-formal learning scheme

Version: 1.6 (2 July 2008)

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS/ROUTES AT THE END OF SCHOOLING

COMPULSORY BASIC EDUCATION

All children living in Slovenia have the right to compulsory primary education under equal and non-discriminatory conditions. Compulsory education lasts nine years. It is divided into three cycles:

- First cycle (6–9 years of age, grades 1–3),
- Second cycle (9–12 years of age, grades 4–6),
- Third cycle (12–15 years of age, grades 7–9).

Entry into compulsory education is compulsory for all children whose sixth birthday occurs in the calendar year of entry to first grade. Parents have a statutory duty and right to choose a public or private school or home schooling. The school located in their catchment area is required to enrol their children; however, parents are free to choose another primary school with the school's agreement. Upon passing compulsory basic education, pupils can enrol in vocational upper secondary education or technical upper secondary education, as well as in general upper secondary education. Pupils who successfully complete at least seven classes and complete compulsory education at the same time can continue their education in short-term vocational education.

There is no initial vocational education at lower-secondary level.

UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON TERTIARY EDUCATION

Most upper secondary education is public (free for students) and caters for young people aged 15 to 19. Types of upper secondary education are:

- General upper secondary education or *gimnazija* (four years) - 15-19 years of age;
- Short-term vocational education (two or three years) - 15-18 years of age;
- Vocational upper secondary education (three years) - 15-18 years of age;
- Vocational-technical upper secondary education (two years after vocational secondary education) - 18-20 years of age;
- Technical upper secondary education (four years) – 15–19 years of age.

Post-secondary non-tertiary courses - ISCED 4, including *matura* courses (*maturitetni tečaji*) and vocational courses (*poklicni tečaji*), last one year (see 5.6).

The educational reforms of the mid-90s made a clear distinction between general, technical and vocational upper secondary education. *Gimnazija* were reintroduced, initially providing only general and classical programmes in preparation for further studies. Students complete *gimnazija* by passing an external examination in five subjects, known as the *matura*. The *matura* was introduced in 1995, replacing the previous final examinations. The *matura* also serves as an entrance examination to all types of tertiary education. Those *gimnazija* students, who do not wish to continue their education can enter the labour market by attending a vocational course and obtaining a qualification in their chosen occupation.

Vocational and technical upper secondary education comprises: programmes of short-term vocational education (two or three years programmes); vocational upper secondary education (three-year programmes); technical upper secondary education (four-year programmes); vocational/technical upper secondary education (two years after vocational secondary education); and post-secondary non-tertiary vocational courses (up to one year).

Programmes of short-term vocational education and vocational upper secondary education programmes both end with an internal final exam based on modules and competences.

Technical upper secondary education, vocational-technical upper secondary education and post-secondary non-tertiary vocational courses end with a *vocational matura*. The *vocational matura* comprises four units, with the possibility of adding a fifth unit from the general *matura*.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tertiary education in Slovenia is divided into traditional higher education (ISCED 5A-6) and the newly developed higher vocational educational sector (ISCED 5B). Higher education is administered by the Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology (established in 2005), while higher vocational education remains the responsibility of Ministry of Education and Sport.

The two sub-sectors are guided by separate legislation: the Higher Education Act (last revised 2009) and the Post-secondary Vocational Education Act (2004). (see 4.2.)

HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Higher vocational education is provided at higher vocational colleges (*višje strokovne šole*), which offer two-year higher vocational education at sub-degree level (short-term, ISCED 5B). The Post-Secondary Vocational Education Act (2004) regulates the organisation of higher vocational colleges as part of tertiary education, establishing links with further professional studies at degree level through the possibility of a vertical 120 credits, which can be used towards a higher-education qualification. Higher vocational colleges issue a diploma, stating the nature of education, and a diploma supplement in Slovenian and another EU language.

The entrance requirement for higher vocational colleges is a pass in the general *matura* or the vocational *matura*. It is also possible to enrol with a combination of passing the master-craftsman/foreman/shop-manager exam, three years of work experience, and a pass in the general subjects of the vocational *matura*.

In vocational colleges, studies end with a diploma exam (*diplomski izpit*). Graduates can then start work in specific occupations. Since 1998/99, it has been possible to transfer to the second year of a professionally oriented higher-education course.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is offered by universities and independent higher-education institutions: faculties and professional colleges. Universities and independent faculties usually offer academic as well as professionally oriented courses, while professional colleges mainly offer professionally oriented courses. If they meet academic standards relating to staff and equipment, they may also be accredited to offer doctorate programmes; otherwise such programmes must be provided in partnership with universities. Under the amended Post-Secondary Vocational Education Act (2004), the new structure for higher education was fully implemented in accordance with the Bologna process for students enrolled in 2009/2010. The new structure is no longer classified as binary. It includes a first cycle (equivalent to a bachelor programme), three to four years of theoretically or professionally oriented studies, both of which lead to second-cycle masters programmes. In principle, all masters' courses provide opportunities to study for a doctorate.

Specialisation programmes no longer have a place within the new structure. The general *matura* certificate is required for entry to academic higher education. A vocational *matura* examination, with an additional exam at the end of technical secondary education, is an alternative route to entry to academic programmes. Candidates who pass the vocational *matura* have access to professionally oriented higher education. Professional higher education is also open to general *matura* candidates. If specific abilities are required for certain courses, the results of specialised tests of skills or aptitudes are also taken into account.

In 2009/10 there were:

- three public universities with fifty-three member institutions;
- two private universities with seven member institutions; and
- twenty-six independent higher education institutions, of which twelve receive subsidies.

PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN IVET

Various campaigns have been implemented to promote vocational education among young people (www.mojaizbira.si). In many cases, these projects are delivered in partnership between primary schools, employers, an appropriate vocational school, and other institutions (see 3.2)

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE VET INSTITUTIONS

The existing public education programme can be implemented by both state and private schools. Both types must provide appropriate personnel and material conditions, and must be listed in the education ministry's register of schools. Private schools can construct their own educational programmes, but the standards contained must be comparable to the public programme. Education and training providers that do not provide a certified public education programme are not legally regulated.

There are no privately owned vocational or technical upper secondary schools in Slovenia for young people, but there are a number of privately owned pre-school educational institutions (in 2009/10 there were 863 pre-school educational institutions, 30 of which were private). There was only one privately owned primary school in Slovenia in 2007 (the Waldorf School). The first Catholic primary school (<http://www.stanislav.si/>) opened in 2008. In upper secondary education, only six *gimnazija* are privately owned (four Catholic, the Waldorf School, and the European school). However, private institutions account for a much higher proportion of higher vocational colleges (in 2009/10 there were 60 higher vocational colleges, of which 30 are public, 2 are state-subsidised private colleges, and the remaining 28 are private or independent).

In Initial Vocational Education (IVET) for young people, only state schools are currently available, although the law does not prohibit private schools. In adult education (technical four-year schools), there are a number of private schools.

THE CURRICULUM-DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Curricula are continually updated and revised. The latest revision, which has been underway since 2004, reflects changes that have arisen from developments within individual disciplines. A common feature of curricula is that inter-curricular boundaries are being removed, while new areas of specialisation are constantly emerging.

The main aims of curricular renewal are to improve quality, to achieve internationally comparable standards, to integrate special needs students, to differentiate education according to actual course requirements and students' interests within the so-called "open curriculum", to integrate key competences, to promote lifelong learning, to reduce the number of students repeating years, and to improve student mobility between different courses through improved links between curriculum contents and the implementation of the credit-point system.

Course curricula are adopted by schools working with social partners, national educational institutes, councils of experts, ministries and ministers. The ground rules for course curricula are established by educational experts working in broad expert working groups organised by the CPI; they must take account of the guidelines of the council of experts, the needs of social partners, international best practice, European Union directives, and traditions, along with vocational or professional standards. Course curricula are then officially adopted by the minister of education in consultation with the Council of Experts for Vocational and Technical Education.

Occupational standards, which serve as the basis for courses, are adopted by the Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs on the basis of proposals of the Council of Experts for Vocational and Technical Education. A vocational standard is a statutory document, which has a number of prescribed elements: name and code of profession, level of education, vocational/professional competences and description of areas of work derived from the vocational profile. (See 4, 8)

Courses may lead to a single or several vocational qualifications. If they are based on a higher number of vocational standards, they are divided into several modules. Each module corresponds to a specific vocational standard and contains objectives, practical and theoretical content, and specific key competences, along with all the other required course elements. Students who pass a single module but do not complete the whole course, and therefore cannot acquire a formal level of education, can acquire a certificate for a national vocational qualification. This allows them to perform certain work tasks or a particular job within an occupation.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS/ELEMENTS OF CURRICULA

Course elements adopted at the national level are divided into structural and content elements.

Structural elements of each curriculum include:

- The name of the course;
- The duration of the course;
- The name of the vocational or technical qualification;
- The course objectives;
- Compulsory forms of testing and assessment of knowledge;
- Entrance requirements, progression and completion requirements.

Specific elements of the curriculum include:

- The syllabus;
- Knowledge required by teachers of specific subjects;
- Subject catalogues of knowledge or a framework subject curriculum for individual subjects;
- Examination schedules for the final exam or the vocational matriculation examination;
- Extra-curricular activities.

Under the new Vocational Education Act (enacted in 2006), each school must prepare an implementation curriculum on the basis of the core curriculum, which specifies the coursework for a specific subject. This school curriculum (also known as implementation curriculum) is adopted by the school council as a part of the school's annual work plan. The plan also includes team coordination of teachers, the content of the elective curriculum, the allocation of coursework into modules, the organisation of classes (in groups or classrooms), and flexible differentiation (additional lessons, supplementary lessons, project work and team work), as well as links with the environment.

Curricula are structured with 80% prescribed compulsory content and 20% elective content (otherwise known as *open curriculum*, see 4.3.) specified by the school in cooperation with regional and sector partners.

The law (2006) stipulates that the compulsory part of the technical-education curriculum includes general subjects (approximately 50%), and technical-theoretical subjects and practice. Compulsory general subjects include Slovenian, a foreign language, mathematics, arts, social sciences (history, geography, sociology, and psychology), information science, natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology) and sport. In lower years, objectives and general contents are the same for all curricula. However, in later years of study, there are a wider range of elective subjects available and specific contents that allow vocational orientation and specialisation in a particular field. In the final year, the course finishes with practical training. Coursework in the first two years emphasises the development of motivation and transferable practical competences. To encourage enterprise, autonomy and team work, practice in senior years is planned as team work. In future, as this structure is fully implemented, it will improve mobility between courses, pre-qualifications, and a rationalisation of education.

TEACHING METHODS AND MATERIALS

A course syllabus consists of general subjects, technical-theoretical subjects, practical training and extra-curricular activities. Practical training includes practical lessons at school, in school workshops, specialised school classrooms or laboratories, or within school sites or work activities, while practical training on some courses also includes work experience. Practical training under the dual organisation of education comprises practical lessons at school and workplace training. Practical training in schools is provided in line with the catalogues of knowledge, while employers provide workplace practice in accordance with the examination catalogue.

Catalogues of knowledge are adopted at the national level and comprise the name of the subject, the number of hours per year, the forms of coursework, the guiding and operational objectives of the subject, all compulsory forms of testing and assessment of knowledge and specifications concerning testing and assessment of knowledge, the framework list of study literature, and inter-curricular content.

Assessment catalogues are also adopted at the national level and specify the relevant content, objectives, assessment criteria and study materials. Extra-curricular activities, which form part of each course syllabus, aim to provide students with a free choice, and to enhance their knowledge and develop their talents and interests.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

An institution can become an education provider only if it is certified by the MoES. Only certified providers can award valid diplomas. The Vocational Education Act requires every school to have a quality-assurance committee. Self-evaluation is the main staple for quality assurance. In addition, external evaluation by the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training is carried out in accordance with the criteria set by the Council of Experts.

5.2 IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

There is no IVET at lower-secondary level in Slovenia.

5.3 IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (MAINLY SCHOOL-BASED)

Initial vocational and technical education at upper secondary level comprises:

- Short-term vocational education (two or three years programmes);
- Vocational upper secondary education (three-year programmes);
- Technical upper secondary education (four-year programmes);
- Vocational-technical upper secondary education (two years after vocational upper secondary education).

Short-term vocational programmes admit applicants who have successfully completed primary school or completed a modified education programme for children with special needs, as well as applicants who, although attending primary school for nine years, have failed to complete it successfully. As a rule, these programmes last for two or three years, ending with an internal final examination. Students' general knowledge acquired in the final years of primary school is developed, while new general and vocational knowledge and qualifications for simple jobs are gained. The final examination certificate enables students to enter the labour market or to enter the first year in any other (upper) secondary school.

Pupils who have successfully completed primary school can enrol in three-year vocational programmes. These programmes can be provided by vocational schools or in partnership with employers as a dual system of apprenticeship and in-school education. They typically last for three years, ending with an internal final examination. The final-examination certificate enables students to enter the labour market or to continue education in two-year vocational-technical upper secondary education programmes, which end with a vocational *matura* examination, leading to a qualification at the level of a technical upper secondary education school. New education and training programmes in vocational upper secondary education include at least 24 weeks of practical training with employers, and are designed on the principles of modules and open curricula.

Two-year further technical programmes are also available for those who have completed three-year vocational upper secondary courses. These programmes are equivalent to a four-year technical upper secondary education course. This equivalence is provided by the content and quantity of general and technical subjects, and by the final examination.

However, graduates who find a job immediately after completing a three-year vocational upper secondary education programme can re-enter education after at least three years of employment to obtain a qualification at the level of a technical upper secondary education school by passing examinations.

In passing the master-craftsman/foreman/ shop manager examination, they demonstrate a higher level of competence in their occupation. If they also pass examinations in general subjects of the *vocational matura* examination, they may continue their studies in higher vocational education.

Technical programmes last for four years and are intended primarily as preparation for vocational higher education and professional higher education. Education ends with the *vocational matura* examination, a school-leaving examination in four subjects prepared in part externally but assessed internally. This course grants students access to professional higher education. By passing one additional subject in the general *matura* examination, students also have access to some academic programmes. The vocational and technical education system offers various paths to occupational qualifications. Transfers between vocational and technical programmes are allowed. Transfers from technical-education programmes to any academic higher-education programme are made possible by the *matura* course (see 5.6).

Two core aims are built into all curricula of four-year technical education courses:

- Preparation for professionally oriented higher education;
- Gaining sufficient knowledge to enter the labour market and to start to work in industry, trade or service activities.

These programmes are built on a modular structure and include the open curriculum.

TABLE 12: TYPES OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES						
TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS (PLEASE REFER TO FOOTNOTE 1)	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL/ ORIENTATION	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL-BASED AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
SHORT-TERM VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Transport and logistics; Business and other services; Non-marketed services	3C	30% general subjects 50% vocational subject	28 credit points school based practical training 4 weeks or 6 credit points work-based practical training	Two-and-a-half-year programmes	See description below
VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION	Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Transport and logistics; Business and other services; Non-marketed services	3C	30% general subject 50% vocational subject	24-30 credit points school based practical training 24 weeks or 36 credits points work-based practical training	Three-year programmes	See description below
TECHNICAL SECONDARY EDUCATION	Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Transport and logistics; Business and other services;	3B	40% general subject 40% vocational subject	24-30 credit points school based practical training Minimum 4 weeks or 6-12 credits points work-based practical	Four-year programmes	See description below

	Non-marketed services			training		
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SECONDARY EDUCATION	Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Transport and logistics; Business and other services; Non-marketed services	3B	50% general subject 30% vocational subject	12-16 credit points school based practical training 2 weeks or 4 credits points work-based practical training	Two years after vocational secondary education	See description below

The proportion of students enrolled in short-term vocational education and in vocational upper secondary education has been declining for the last four years, while the proportion enrolled in technical secondary education programmes is growing. The number of students enrolled in general secondary hasn't changed significantly.

The enrolment structure in VET has also been changing over this period. There is minimal demand in some fields of education and the labour market, such as the leather industry (no students in some years), the textile industry (a rapid fall in enrolment), agriculture and food-processing, and metallurgy (significant falls in enrolment).

Transfers between programmes and types of vocational and technical education are well established. Students who complete short-term vocational programmes can enter the labour market or enter the first year of any other (upper) secondary school.

Graduates of three-year vocational education programmes have various opportunities:

- Entering the labour market;
- Continuing education in special two-year vocational-technical upper secondary programmes (the "3+2" scheme) and, after passing a vocational *matura* examination, obtaining a upper secondary technical level of education;
- After a minimum of three years' work experience, re-entering education and obtaining a secondary technical level of education by passing the master-craftsman/foreman/managerial examinations, or sitting general subject exams in the *vocational matura*, or enrolling in the *matura* course (designed for pupils who have not completed *gimnazija* who wish to enter university to study an academic course).

Students completing four-year technical-education programmes have the following options: Entering the job market; continuing education in higher vocational education programmes or professional higher education; and, after completing a general *matura* exam in one subject in addition to the vocational *matura* examination, enrolling in undergraduate or university higher-education programmes that allow transfers of this kind.

5.4 ALTERNANCE TRAINING (INCL. APPRENTICESHIP)

Under the new Vocational Education Act, the dual system and school education were combined into a single form of apprenticeship. Practical training in vocational or technical education may be provided in schools, or it can take the form of intensive practical workplace training with an employer or in a business centre which provides workplace training for multiple enterprises. Schools which provide agricultural courses may provide practical experience on the school site.

Students in this area of education are entitled to a set number of weeks of practical training.

The student spends part of this practical education in the school, and part at an employer/business centre/school site. The length of training at an employer depends on the level of education:

- Short-term vocational programmes include 4 weeks of practical training;
- Vocational upper secondary-education programmes include 24 weeks of practical training;
- Technical upper secondary-education programmes include a minimum of 4 weeks of practical training
- Vocational-technical upper secondary-education programmes include two weeks of practical training.

Students may have an individual contract, which is signed by the employer, the student and the student's parents. The alternative is a collective contract, which is signed by the school and employer for multiple students. The Government provides funding for part of the practical training at the employer's request after the training has been completed.

5.5 PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Please see chapter 6.

5.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON-TERTIARY LEVEL) (MAINLY SCHOOL- BASED)

Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4) includes courses that aim to broaden students' knowledge base. Courses are not significantly more advanced than programmes at ISCED 3 and they are designed to prepare student for ISCED level 5 or work.

The *matura* course is designed for pupils who have not completed *gimnazija*, and who wish to enter university to study an academic course. This course lasts one year.

Vocational courses are designed for those who have not passed the *matura* or who wish to obtain a vocational qualification and employment. These courses also last for one year.

Master-craftsman exams are designed for those who have completed a three-year vocational secondary school and obtained a minimum of three years' work experience. By passing an exam of this kind, along with a short "bridging" exam for general-education subjects, master craftsmen can enrol in higher vocational colleges.

5.7 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL (MAINLY SCHOOL-BASED)

Higher vocational education is provided at higher vocational colleges (*višje strokovne šole*). These colleges offer two-year vocational education at sub-degree level (short-term, ISCED 5B). The Post - secondary Vocational Education Act (2004) regulates this level of vocational education separately from the upper secondary level. It clearly places higher vocational education within tertiary education, and establishes links with further professional studies at degree level, through accreditation with 120 credits that can be used towards a higher-education qualification.

Higher vocational education is undergoing changes imposed by the new legislation and the new "Starting points for higher vocational study programmes" (2006). The Bologna process has been extended to higher vocational education: programmes are modularised, made broader in terms of content, comprising compulsory and optional subjects, and described by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system (ECTS). The quality-assurance system for higher vocational education is being harmonised and linked with tertiary education systems.

The network of higher-vocational colleges has expanded substantially in recent years. There are currently 60 higher-vocational colleges (2009/10 - 30 public, 2 state-subsidized private colleges, and 28 private or independent). State schools are more likely to offer technical subjects, while private colleges are more likely to offer commercial and administrative courses.

The main feature of these programmes is that they aim to develop occupational skills. Approximately 40% of each curriculum is devoted to practical training in firms and companies. At the end of the study, students receive a diploma with the name of the programme and the title of vocational qualification, allowing them to start working in specific occupations and middle-management teams. This education usually lasts two years.

In addition to education leading to a higher vocational diploma, vocational colleges also provide short courses of 10-35 ECTS designed for workers in employment.

The general entrance requirement is successful completion of upper secondary education (equivalent to a technician qualification). The following applicants qualify for higher vocational studies: those who have passed the vocational *matura*, or those who have a vocational qualification of master craftsman or equivalent. In addition, master-craftsman applicants must have at least three years work experience, and must meet the standards for Slovenian language and mathematics at the level required for the vocational *matura*.

Applicants apply to higher vocational colleges through the joint national application system managed by the national higher-vocational registration service. The number of places is approved and published by the MoES. The specific criteria for student selection are set by the higher vocational colleges independently, and applied if the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places. Some vocational colleges also require entrance tests. Student selection is usually based on the student's previous study record or combined previous study record and admission test results. There is no age limitation.

Curricula and modules are based on professional standards and involve a certain proportion of optional content. Practical and independent work for students (e.g. project work, product reports, etc.) is also involved. The last term in the final year is devoted to a diploma project (diploma paper) carried out individually or in small groups.

On completion of all programme requirements, the student is awarded a diploma. The diploma document includes the name of the vocational qualification, derived from the name of the programme and regulated by the Act on the Names of Qualifications, and Professional and Academic titles (2006). Regardless of this rule, in technical disciplines, the name of the qualification is combined with the title engineer or technologist.

Full-time students in higher vocational colleges with a state-subsidised place pay no tuition fees, but do pay administrative fees (registration and certification costs). The level of tuition fee payable by part-time and/or non-state-subsidised students is determined by the institutions themselves.

If students take longer than the prescribed period to complete the course, they lose their eligibility for free study. Part-time and/or non-state-subsidised students contribute to tuition and administrative costs. Students may benefit from a range of financial support to cover the cost of living and/or to pay fees. Full-time students, who do not pay tuition fees, may receive a scholarship to cover living costs (see table 11) Scholarships are usually awarded on the basis of social criteria, but the level of funding is usually linked to the student's academic performance. They are also entitled to subsidised accommodation or a place in a public student hall of residence, and to meals at reduced prices. Other kinds of support may also be awarded in addition to financial assistance for their parents (tax allowances).

Programmes are offered in the areas of mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, electronics, photography, geotechnology and mining, building and civil engineering, informatics, wood, logistics, media, mechatronics, design, social work, networking, telecommunications, dental hygiene, environmental protection, economics, public administration, nutrition, horticulture, rural management, tourism and catering. Provisional data indicate there were 13,681 students enrolled in vocational colleges in 2009/10. Two-thirds of these are studying part time. The most popular programmes for students are in the sales, business secretarial and accountancy fields, while the most popular technical fields are mechanical engineering and mechatronics.

There are also professionally oriented higher vocational colleges (*visoka šola*) in Slovenia (First Bologna cycle). These colleges are either municipal or private, financed by the founders, with some co-financing provided by the government through public tenders. They usually offer degrees in a specific field or discipline. Students complete higher education degrees with a professional emphasis. Courses typically last for 3 years (180 ECTS). Access to further study from these colleges depends on the field of study, according to the individual programme transfer provisions and the criteria adopted by the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education.

The general entrance requirements are regulated by the Higher Education Act. Students must have completed general or technical upper secondary school. Candidates are required to have a *matura* or vocational *matura* examination certificate. Students apply to courses through the joint national application system. Where access is limited, the selection criteria are determined by the individual study programme. If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, a selection is made on the basis of upper secondary school grades and/or an aptitude test. Within this general framework, responsibility for the admission of students rests with the institutions.

Full-time students in state and private state-subsidised higher education institutions do not pay fees. They are however charged a small annual registration fee of €30.

5.8 LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IVET

Objectives of foreign language learning in all types of upper secondary education are set out in catalogues of knowledge. Language learning generally aims to develop a comprehensive capability for intercultural and inter-linguistic communication through English.

Depending on their ability, students acquire knowledge of all language dimensions: listening, speaking, reading and writing. At varying levels of instruction, students acquire competences in oral and written communications with other people speaking the same language, and autonomous use of the foreign language to obtain information from written

and other sources, and also learn about the culture and achievements of the language-speaking community.

Specific objectives of foreign language learning for different types of IVET are described below.

Learning foreign languages contributes to the development of general education and allows students to communicate with other people and their cultures. As a bridge to different cultures, learning a foreign language also contributes to the development of humanity and personal development. While training in linguistic interaction, students are also developing their ability to connect personal, social and intercultural relations.

Teaching methods are described in catalogues of knowledge as guidelines for teachers. In general, teaching methods and modes of delivery focus on students, providing many opportunities for cooperation and active learning. The basic approach in the learning process is a communicative approach based primarily on the development of abilities and skills, which students use to create grammatically correct sentences and to carry out everyday tasks.

Teachers guide students and give them opportunities to discover the meanings of new words in conjunction with the text or classmates. Various teaching aids and activities are recommended in the classroom to optimise understanding of the foreign language (developing oral, written communicational skills, and reading and listening skills).

Slovenian language is taught in every year of upper secondary education and is a compulsory subject of the final examination, and the *matura* and vocational *matura* examinations.

Education required for language teachers in IVET is described in Chapter 7.

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN ETHNICALLY MIXED AREA

Education in ethnically mixed areas in Slovenia is an integral part of the Slovenian educational system. There are two models of education, one in Slovenian Istria (Italian minority) and one in Prekmurje (Hungarian minority). Both are established to ensure equal treatment of the Hungarian and Italian communities, their language and culture. The models used represent two different implementations of a bilingual educational model, which in addition to general educational objectives also pursue specific educational and socialization goals:

- Preservation of the Italian and Hungarian language and culture of national minorities;
- Developing linguistic abilities and skills in the first and second language of the environment;
- Developing knowledge of historical, cultural and natural heritage of the Italian and Hungarian national minorities/communities and their original nation;
- Developing awareness of belonging to the Italian or Hungarian nationality and maintaining and developing their own cultural traditions;
- Education towards respect and understanding of national and cultural differences, to promote cooperation between members of the Slovenian nation and of the Italian or Hungarian national minorities, and developing skills for coexistence in ethnically and linguistically mixed areas;
- Learning about the Italian and Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries, and establishing links and cooperation with members and institutions of these communities.

The model in Slovenian Istria includes educational institutions in Slovenian and Italian language, with the provision that the other language is compulsory (compulsory second language is the language of the environment). In addition, in certain subjects students learn about the culture and the history of the national or ethnic communities that live in their area.

There are three kindergartens, three primary schools and three upper secondary schools in this area in which the language of instruction is Italian. They enrol all citizenships regardless of nationality. Italian as a compulsory second language is required in 17 primary schools and 7 upper secondary schools in ethnically mixed areas where the language of instruction is Slovenian. Students can choose Italian in vocational or general *matura* examinations, or a final examination as mother tongue or foreign language.

The model of bilingual education in Prekmurje region is a two-way model for equal preservation of both languages. Students attend a bilingual school regardless of their nationality (Slovenian or Hungarian). Both languages have the status of language of instruction and are taught as school subjects. Both languages are official languages used in schools, also outside the school and in the oral and written communications of the school.

In the bilingual model, programmes are specifically adapted. In IVET programmes, Slovenian and Hungarian are considered equal as school subjects and languages of instruction. Slovenian is taught at one level, Hungarian is taught on two levels: as mother tongue or as second language. Students of vocational upper secondary education can choose Slovenian or Hungarian for their final examinations. The catalogues of knowledge for art and social sciences are adapted. The syllabus can be extended by two hours per week, and the “open curriculum” is used less than in other programmes.

Students of vocational-technical education and technical upper secondary education can also choose to sit the vocational *matura* in Slovenian or Hungarian. There are certain adaptations in the catalogue of knowledge for history, geography and art. Extension of the syllabus is the same as in vocational secondary education.

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SHORT-TERM VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Modernized programmes in short-term vocational education do not include a foreign language in their syllabus, unlike the non-modernized programmes, which include one foreign language - English. The non-modernized programmes for special needs students are an exception.

The main objective in teaching English to students in lower vocational education is to fill gaps in their knowledge from primary education, which should enable them to integrate successfully into vocational secondary education. Professional English includes only the most basic terminology (description of products, tools, appliances and parts), which tends to increase pupils' motivation to learn a foreign language.

English courses in short-term vocational education cover 140 - 175 hours in two or three years (depending on programme), with written and oral examinations. The foreign language is not tested in the final examination.

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

Particularly in the final year of technical upper secondary education, students acquire professional language depending on the level of difficulty of the particular programme. In vocational upper secondary education, students acquire professional language in less complex contexts, while linking language proficiency to knowledge of the profession and its skills. By this means, students mostly acquire foreign language skills practically, and the skills are useful for their future work or further education.

There are some student books with professional English (accredited for 2009/2010), i.e. Tech Talk Pre-Intermediate and English for Hairdressers.

Most vocational secondary education offers one foreign language, English or German. It covers 130 - 164 hours throughout the programme. The foreign language is not tested in the final examination.

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN TECHNICAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

Particularly in the final year, professional language is taught as an upgrade of the general language through the provision of professional contents. Students thus recognize and comprehend the use of foreign language in their future profession.

Under the most recent revision of upper secondary vocational programmes, a general subject should provide theoretical professional knowledge. Evaluation of vocational *matura* for two experimentally introduced programmes (design technician and mechatronic technician) showed that some schools include very authentic professional content in the vocational *matura* examination.

A foreign language is required in this type of vocational education. Schools are free to choose a second foreign language depending on the specific needs of the profession, and the knowledge and interests of students. English, German, Italian and Hungarian can be taught as the first or second foreign language, while French and Spanish can only be taught as a second foreign language. The number of hours for languages varies between programmes. The vocational *matura* examination includes a foreign language.

A second foreign language or professional foreign language is often part of the 'open curriculum'. Some books for professional English are also available (Nursing 1, English for Nurses, Tech Talk Pre-Intermediate for electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, construction, chemical technology and computer science).

6. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Improving education and qualification levels and increasing participation by ensuring access to formal and non-formal education to develop social, cultural and human capital are priorities for national economic, social and sustainable development policies.

6.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

The main objectives of CVET and adult education (AE) are determined in school legislation, in the ReNAEMP (see 2), Active employment policy and measures, and in projects supported by the European Social Fund.

6.2 FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

Adults can obtain qualifications through the traditional/formal school system and through a certificate system designed specifically for adults. The two systems (school and certificate) have not yet been merged.

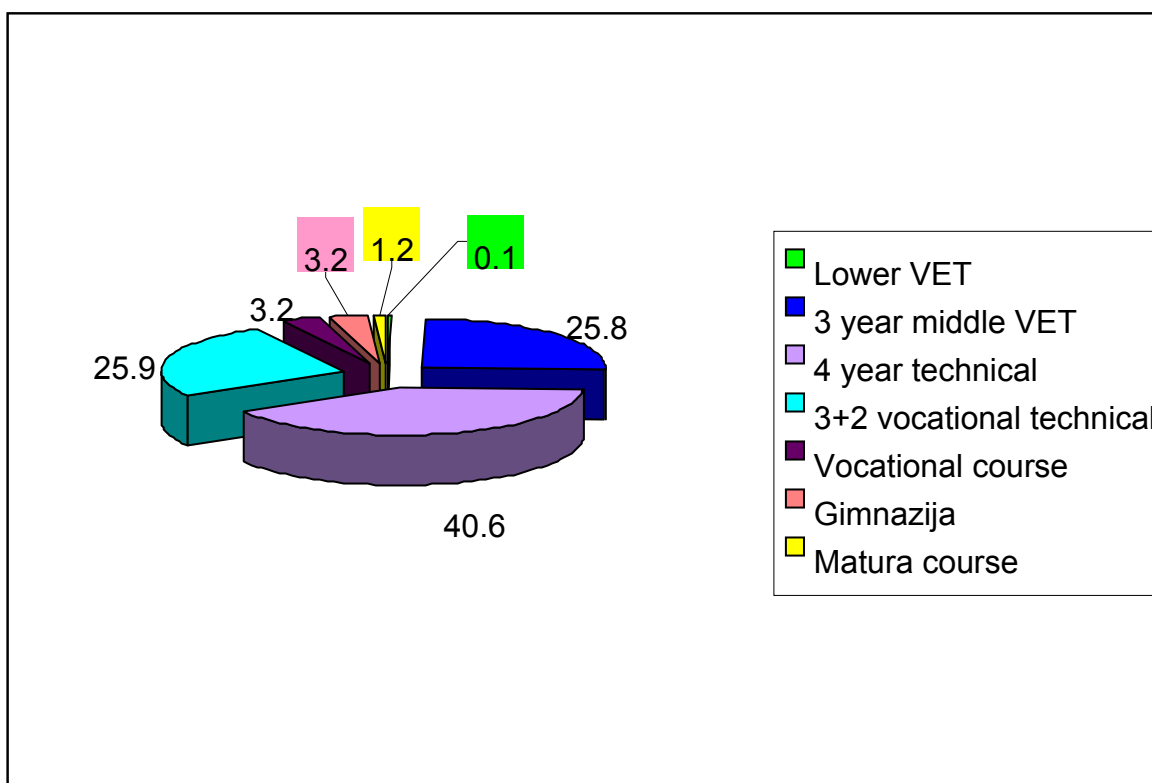
Formal school education

Qualifications in the school system define the level of education (primary, upper secondary and tertiary), the contents of a vocational qualification, and the type of general, professional and vocational knowledge, skills and competences. The levels, their role, main features and school-leaving certificates are the same as in IVET(see section 5).

Data on the provision of adult education programmes show growth in programmes leading to a certificate or diploma in formal school education, from 373 in 1999 to 953 in 2008/09 (18% of the total supply of adult education programmes) before falling back in 2010/11 to 834 (18% of total supply). (Source: Brenk, 2008:21 and 2011:19).

Statistical data show 14,039 adults enrolled in formal upper secondary education programmes. As shown in Figure 1, 66.4% of adults were enrolled in 4-year technical programmes and three-year middle VET programmes (Graph 6).

GRAPH 6: ADULT PARTICIPATION IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING, 2009/2010, %



Source: SORS. Upper secondary education of youth and adults, Slovenia, end of the school year

More than 90% of all participants in secondary education attend public educational institutions (2009/2010).

Table 13 shows that 60% of all enrolments in short-term VET were in agriculture, and mechanical engineering and metallurgy (30% each); 30.7% of all enrolments in 3-year VET were in wholesale and retail sale, while 4-year VET and 3+2-year vocational technical programmes accounted for 35% and 41.7 % of all enrolments.

TABLE 13: ADULT LEARNERS ENROLLED IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY FIELD OF STUDY AND TYPE OF PROGRAMME, 2009/2010, %

Field of study/Type of programme	Short term VET	3 years VET	4 years VET - technical	3+2 vocational technical	Gimnazija	Vocational and matura course	Total
Total number	20	3,618	5,695	3,630	450	626	14,039
Structure %	0.14	25.77	40.57	25.86	3.21	4.46	100
General programmes					100	27	
Education & Training for preschool teachers			11.5			56.7	
Audiovisual techniques and media production			1.7				
Design			2.7				
Craft skills		0.1					
Social science, business and law			35.0	41.7		14.7	

Wholesale and retail sales		30.7	0.0				
Secretarial and office work		6.5	0.0				
Computing science			2.4			1.1	
Engineering and engineering trades (broad programmes)		1.3					
Mechanical engineering and metallurgy	30.0	6.4	5.3	15.8			
Electricity and energy		4.9	0.7	7.6			
Electronics and automation		3.1	3.4	1.2			
Chemical and process technology			0.9				
Motor vehicles, ships and aircraft		3.3	0.1	0.3			
Food processing	5.0	8.5	0.7	2.2			
Textiles, clothes, footwear, leather		0.1		0.1			
Material (wood, paper, plastic, glass)	20.0	1.1	0.3	2.1			
Mining and extraction		0.3	0.0	0.2			
Architecture and building			0.4				
Building and civil engineering	15.0	3.0	2.7	3.3			
Agriculture	30,0	0.1	0.2	0.2			
Horticulture		4.0	0.9	2.7			
Forestry		0.2	0.2	0.0			
Veterinary			2.4	0.0			
Nursing and caring		14.2	8.4	7.7			
Medical Diagnostic and treatment technology			0.1				
Pharmacy			0.4				
Hospitality and catering		4.8	1.9	4.2			
Travel, tourism and leisure		0.0	5.8	0.0			
Domestic services		1.4	0.0	0.0			
Hair and beauty service		3.0	3.2	0.0			
Transport services		3.0	6.9	10.6		0.3	
Environmental protection technology			2.1	0.1			
Protection of persons and property							
Total, %	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Source: SORS. Upper secondary education of youth and adults, Slovenia, end of school year.

National certificate system

Adults can also obtain national vocational qualifications (NVQ) through the NVQ certification system (responsibility of the MoLFSA) for occupations not covered by formal education programmes. The NVQ defines the content of a vocational qualification and the type of general and professional knowledge skills and competences. There are some exceptions, where qualifications can be gained through both the certification system and secondary vocational education (cook's assistant and tyre repairman).

The number of national qualifications in the certification system increased from 4,258 in 2005 to 9,338 in 2007, 14,335 in 2008, and 15,357 in 2009, before falling back to 4,722 in 2010. The largest number were accredited in the field of transport.

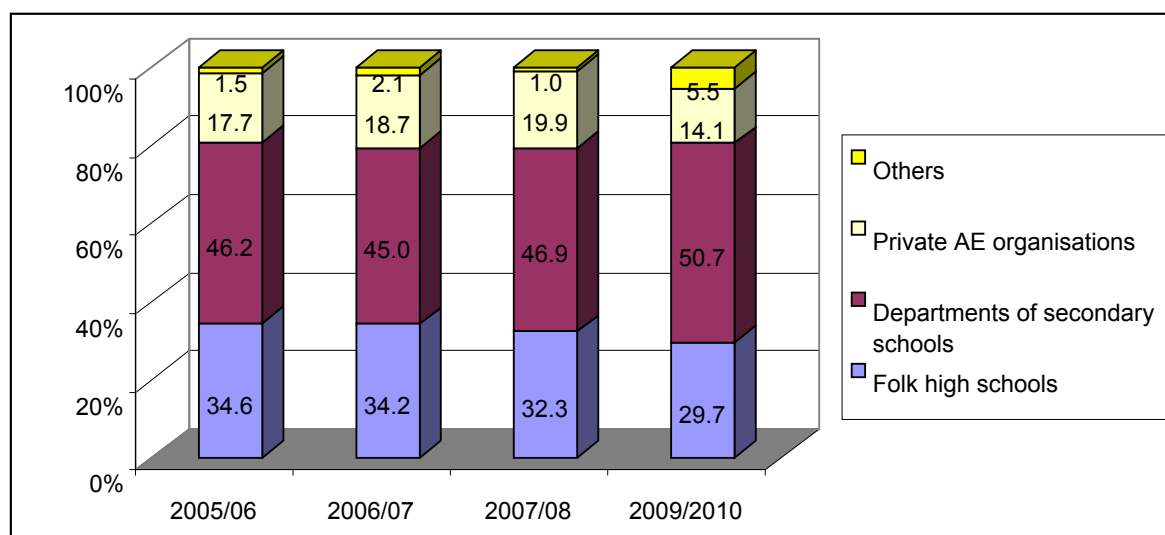
The decrease in 2010 is a result of changes in the regulation of accreditation in the field of transport (a basic certificate, the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport, is issued instead of the national certificate regulated by MoLFSA) (OECD 2006-2007, Recognition of Non Formal and Informal Learning, CPI 2007. National examination centre, 2008-2010).

MAIN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS/PROVIDERS

1,517 adults attended primary school programmes (2009/2010). Folk high schools are the main providers.

14,039 adults attended formal secondary education programmes (2009/2010). Public institutions are the main providers: departments of secondary schools and folk high schools (Graph 7).

GRAPH 7: PARTICIPANTS OF FORMAL CVET BY TYPE OF PROVIDER, SCHOOL YEARS 2005/2006 - 2009/2010, %



Source: SORS. Upper secondary education of youth and adults, Slovenia, end of the school.

Vocational education colleges (private and public) had 7,596 part-time students, a fall of 1,500 from the previous year, while there were 500 more full-time students. Public colleges enrolled 45% of all part-time students.

TABLE 14: STUDENT ENROLMENT IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES BY FOUNDER AND MODE OF STUDY, SLOVENIA 2010/2011						
	Total, number of students			%		
	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time
Vocational colleges - Total	15,595	7,999	7,596	100	51.3	48.7
Public vocational colleges¹⁾	11,414	7,999	3,415	45.0	70.1	29.9
Private vocational colleges	4,181	-	4,181	55.0	-	100

Source: SORS Student enrolment in tertiary education, 2010/11.

Universities and independent higher education institutions enrolled 19,806 part-time students (21.6 % of all higher education students) in 2010/2011 (SORS Student enrolment in tertiary education, 2010/11).

In 2008/2009, a large majority (82.5%) of part-time students studied at the public universities (University of Ljubljana 46%, University of Maribor 26%, and University of Primorska 11%), with the rest (17.5%) in private HE institutions (University of Nova Gorica and independent HE institutions) (SORS Student Enrolment in Tertiary Education, 2008/09).

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS/ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULA

Curricula at all educational levels are the same in IVET and CVET (see section 5). In special guidelines, the MoES sets out rules for the adaptation of programmes attended by adults. The adaptations are prepared by teachers

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

There are significant differences in the quality assurance systems between formal education and training (which results in a national certificate or diploma), publicly accredited non-formal training courses, and non-formal training without public accreditation (See section 6.2.1, non formal accredited programmes).

Quality assurance mechanisms in formal CVET do not differ from those in IVET (see section 2.).

Adult education providers of formal and non-formal accredited programmes must be accredited and listed in the national register maintained by the MoES. To be accredited, they need to prove their capacity (teachers, premises) to implement the programmes.

In addition, recent adult education projects supported by the European Social Fund have focused on self-evaluation by providers. A special award has been established by the SIAE for outstanding achievements by organizations and individuals in adult-education quality assurance.

MAIN FEATURES OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN FORMAL EDUCATION BY LEVEL OF QUALIFICATIONS

All training programmes in formal education, from secondary education level to university studies, are also provided for adults (see section 5); only the primary programme (lower secondary) is specifically designed for adults. Training programmes in CVET follow the same national curricula and objectives as IVET (see section 5).

Entrance criteria for formal education at all levels are the same as in IVET (see section 5). Adults also have to be of an age defined by law (16 if they are not employed or are unemployed for vocational and technical/professional secondary education, 18 for *gimnazija*).

Entrance criteria for *matura* courses: completed upper secondary vocational or technical programme, or the third year of *gimnazija* programme. In addition, at least one year must have passed between the adult achieving the relevant secondary programme and enrolment. In addition, adults who have completed primary education and pass an exam to test knowledge and competences in specific subjects at third-year *gimnazija* level are admitted to the *matura* course.

Entrance criteria for vocational courses are: completed 4 years of *gimnazija* or upper secondary technical programme, and requirements specific to the programme.

Entrance criteria for NVQ: generally, candidates have to be at least 18 years old, although younger candidates may exceptionally apply if they are not in the formal initial educational system and can prove their work experience.

ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS

Completion requirements in formal VET programmes are the same in IVET and CVET (see section 5). The only difference is in the mode of the *matura* examination - adults may sit the examination in two parts.

Assessment and progress in formal IVET and CVET programmes are regulated by regulations adapted to the needs of adult participants and issued by the minister.

Knowledge and competences of adults in primary education are assessed by numerical marks or by exams for individual subjects. Positive marks in at least 2/3 of all subjects are required in order to progress in the programme. Where adults can demonstrate that they have mastered an individual subject, they are exempt from marking or examination.

In upper secondary education, the programme provider determines the conditions, modes and procedures of assessment and progress in the programme in line with the ministerial regulations. Two instruments are mandatory in the assessment and progression process: initial interview (*uvodni intervjuuu*) and individual learning plan (*osebni izobraževalni načrt*). The AE leader or teachers' assembly assesses adult learners' competences set out in formal CVET programmes. Adults are allowed to sit parts of exams or final exams. Completion of all parts of exams is equivalent to passing final exam. Final exams cover knowledge and competences for a subject, either for an individual year or for several years combined. The knowledge and competences are assessed by teachers and subsequently (2nd and 3rd examination in the same subject) by an examination committee.

For higher vocational education programmes (ISCED 5B) and higher education programmes, see section 5.

VET POSSIBILITIES FOR ADULTS WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS BACKGROUND IN VET

There are three pathways to enter CVET for adults with academic education:

- Vocational courses (see entrance criteria above);
- Entrance to higher vocational programmes for adults who have completed general upper secondary programmes (*gimnazija*); and
- The system of NVQ: adults, including those without previous VET, are admitted to NVQ if they meet the requirements in terms of age and prior formal education, and prove their vocational competences (see sections 4 and 6.1.2).

MAIN DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROVIDER

A third of primary and secondary schools have developed ICT-based materials and use ICT tools in approaches to learning. There is no data on how the two are used in programmes attended by adults (Vehovar: XII, 2008). EU comparisons indicate that Slovenian schools, particularly secondary schools, lack PCs. In all surveys of teachers and head teachers, this is also cited as the major barrier to developing and implementing distance learning (Vehovar: 55). It is reasonable to assume that the situation in public AE institutions is even less favourable than in secondary schools.

Tertiary organizations are leading the way in providing distance-learning programmes. Some 25 of 86 have already developed some forms of eLearning in the tertiary sector (data for 2004/05) (Vehovar: 24).

- Faculty of Economics (<http://www.ef.uni-lj.si>) is the largest higher education institution in Slovenia, delivering whole degree/accredited distance education programmes with more than 1,600 students. It provides online support for the majority of its courses, particular those provided at multiple locations across the country;
- The Laboratory for Telecommunications at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana (<http://www.LTFE.org>) has developed its own virtual learning platform system, which was successfully implemented within the faculty as well as in various other public (e.g. Slovenian Army) and private commercial organizations (e.g. the largest Slovenian Bank, the largest mobile operator);
- Faculty of Management Koper at the University of Primorska (<http://www.fm-kp.si>) uses a blended learning approach for an increasing number of its courses, and it also offers services and consultancy to other organizations;
- Other tertiary education organizations implement certain forms of eLearning at various levels;
- The private Company Doba (<http://web.doba.si/>) has developed online distance education within a state-accredited higher vocational programme for Business Secretary and Sales. On completing the course, graduates are awarded a standard higher vocational diploma. In 2004/2005 904 learners studied online at Doba.

MAIN MEASURES/INSTRUMENTS FOSTERING ACCESS TO CVET AND EMPOWERING THE INDIVIDUAL IN THEIR FUTURE CAREER

There are three main state initiatives to foster access to CVET:

- The government Education Programme for the Unemployed (see 6.3)
- National Annual Adult Education Plan (see 2); and
- the NVQ system (see sections 6.2.2).

Activities in these programmes are further described in the Active Employment Policy Measures and the OP - HRD (see 2).

PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL EDUCATION

Adult participation by education attained and employment status shows uneven distribution of access to learning (tables 15 and 16).

TABLE 15: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU-27	2.5	5.7	12.2	6.3
SI (p)	2.1	8.9	13.6	8.7

Source: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 3 May 2010; Last update: 13 Jan 2010

TABLE 16: PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS	Employment	Inactive population	Total	Unemployment
EU-27	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.3
SI (p)	9.1	7.2	8.7	8.7

Source: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 3 May 2010; Last update: 13 Jan 2010

Slovenia has not succeeded in reducing differences in participation rates between the least and the most educated groups. The most educated groups are six times more likely to participate in education than those with an ISCED 0–2, though non-formal learning is considered one of the best opportunities to improve the work-related and social competences of less-educated people. Participation is primarily determined by level of education and age. National research on adult participation indicates that the participation rate of less-educated individuals has increased, but there is a persistent gap in access to education between those with the least and the most education. Given that adult enrolment in formal education programmes has not changed in the last few years, the main challenges facing education policies are to implement measures to redistribute limited funding in favour of less-qualified groups. Slovenia is well aware that more effective measures are urgently required to improve access to and the quality of formal education for the least educated. The new White Paper on Education (2011) proposed that the right for this group to raise their level of education to at least ISCED level 3B should be guaranteed by law.

Participation rates by employment status present a more equitable picture. Employees who have attained an appropriate educational level enter formal education as education is the primary selection criterion for hiring and reassigning employees. This is particularly true of the public sector, where employees mostly enter tertiary programmes as they view them as an opportunity to advance their careers and improve their employability in the external labour market. For the unemployed, Slovenia has developed a network of motivational and educational programmes to encourage unemployed to improve their educational level (see section 6.3).

6.3 NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

6.2.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

The main objectives of non formal education are laid down in ReNAEMP and pursued under the AAEP (see 2) adopted by the government and in labour market policies and measures. Non-formal learning opportunities are also developed in other non educational sectors, such as culture, health, agriculture, and social affairs.

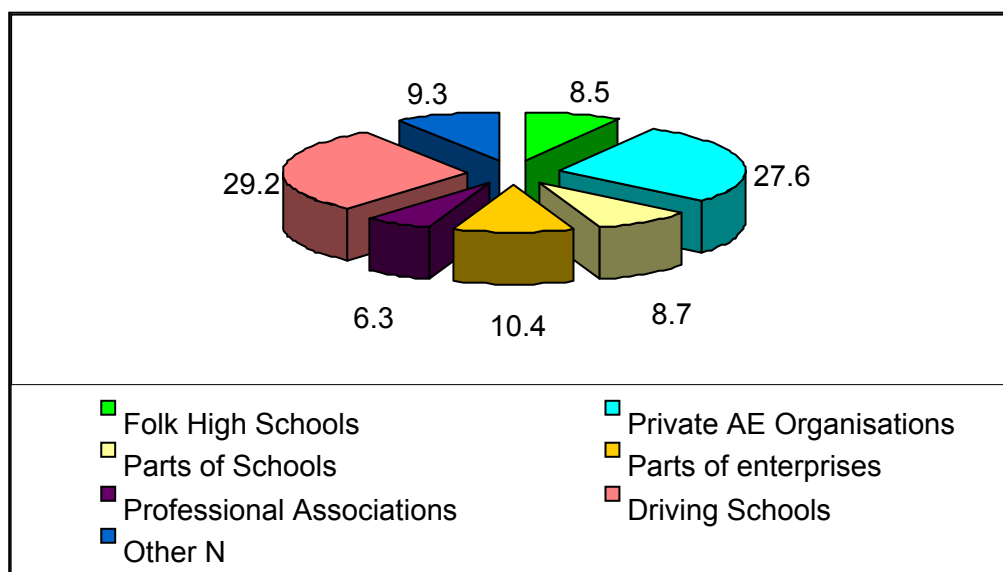
Several measures have been developed to bring learning closer to learners: special training programmes aimed at marginalized groups (see 6.3); a network of specialized teachers and mentors to implement these programmes; a network of local information and counselling centres (see 9) for adults; and e-learning strongly supported by the state.

6.2.2 MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-FORMAL CVET

The largest proportion of adult and continuing vocational education and training is provided in non-formal programmes and training. More than 80% of non-formal CVET is work related. Programmes do not lead to higher qualifications, nor do they open access to formal school programmes.

In 2009/2010, 366 AE providers offered non-formal CVET (Graph 8).

GRAPH 8: PROVIDERS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SLOVENIA, 2009/2010, %

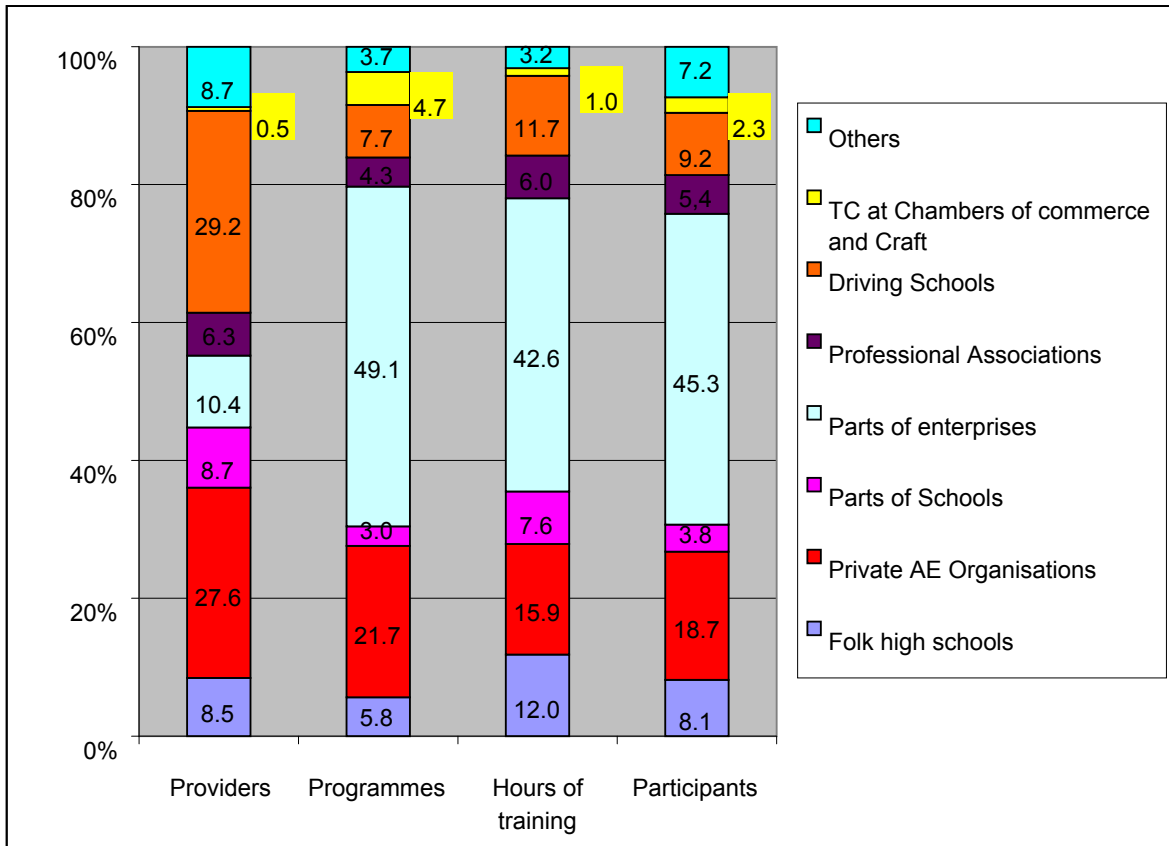


Source: SORS Continuing education, Slovenia, 2009/2010

In total, these providers trained 319,808 participants (2009/2010).

Units of businesses trained 45.3% of all participants in 49.1% of all programmes (Graph 9). Private AE educational organisations have the leading role in foreign-language teaching, enrolling 63% of the total of 22,962 participants.

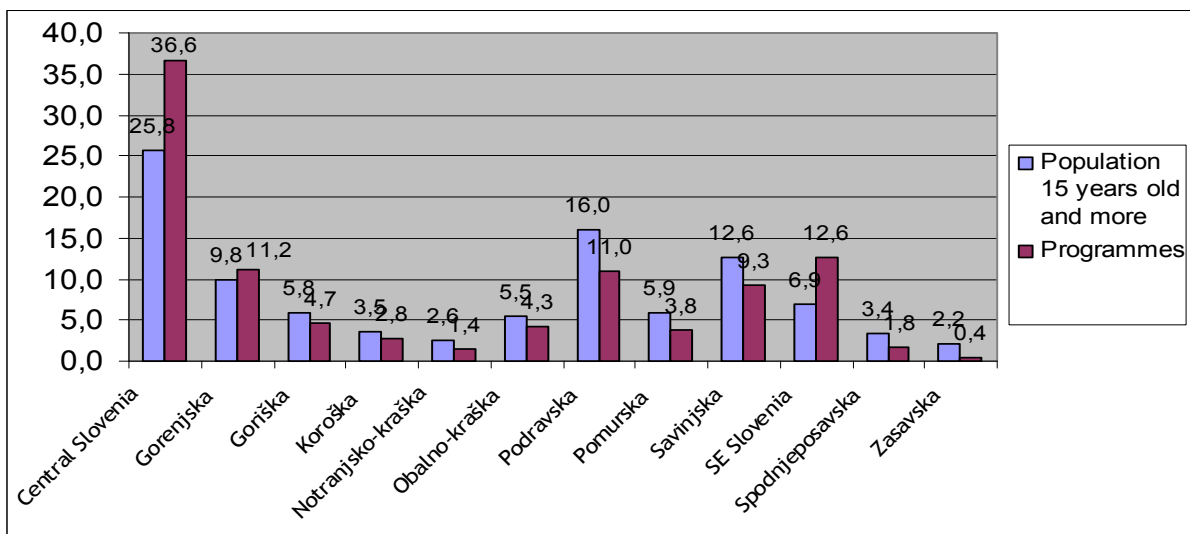
GRAPH 9: SHARES OF NON-FORMAL PROGRAMMES, HOURS OF TRAINING AND PARTICIPANTS BY PROVIDERS, 2009/2010, ACCREDITED AND NON-ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES, LANGUAGES EXCLUDED, %



Source: SORS Continuing education, Slovenia, 2009/2010

Three regions (Central Slovenia, Podravska and Savinjska) covering less than half of the population of Slovenia account for 65% of all programmes (Graph 10).

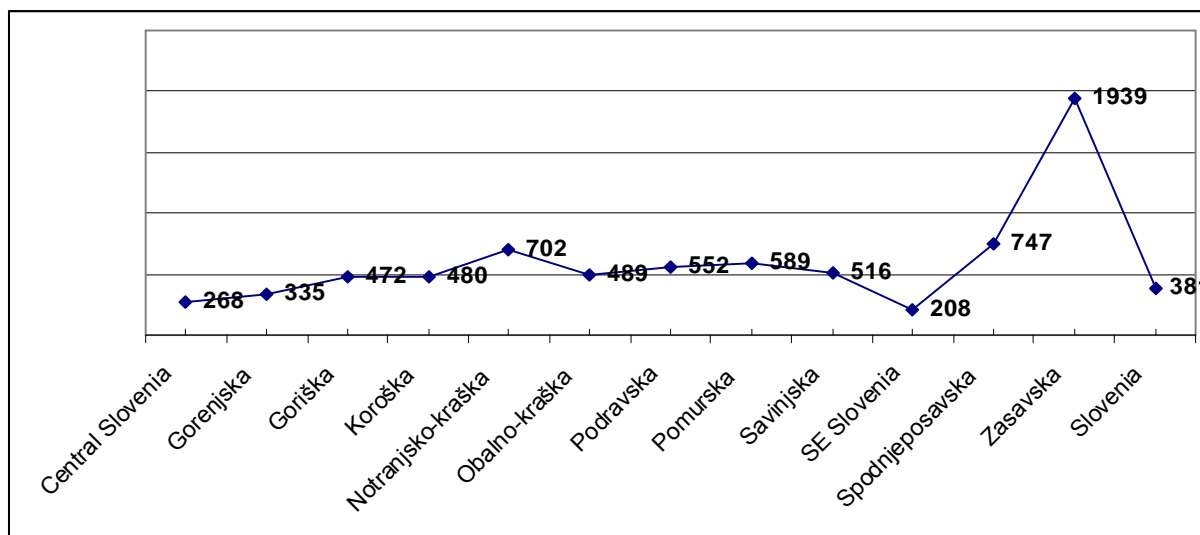
GRAPH 10: REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES, 2010/2011, SLOVENIA, %



Source: Brenk: 2011

Access to education measured in terms of number of programmes per inhabitant (15+ years) is well above the Slovenian average in two regions, while three regions (Notranjsko-Kraška, Pomurska and Zasavska), which are among the least developed regions in Slovenia, have the least access (Graph 11).

GRAPH 11: NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES PER INHABITANT, 2011/2011, SLOVENIA

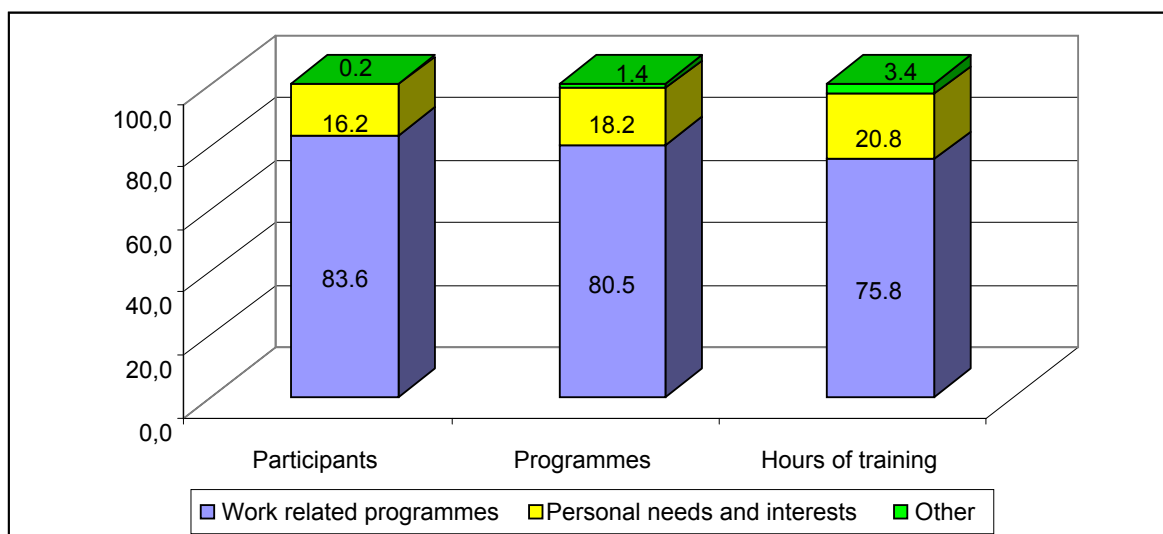


Source: Brenk, 2011.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAINING PROVISION IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

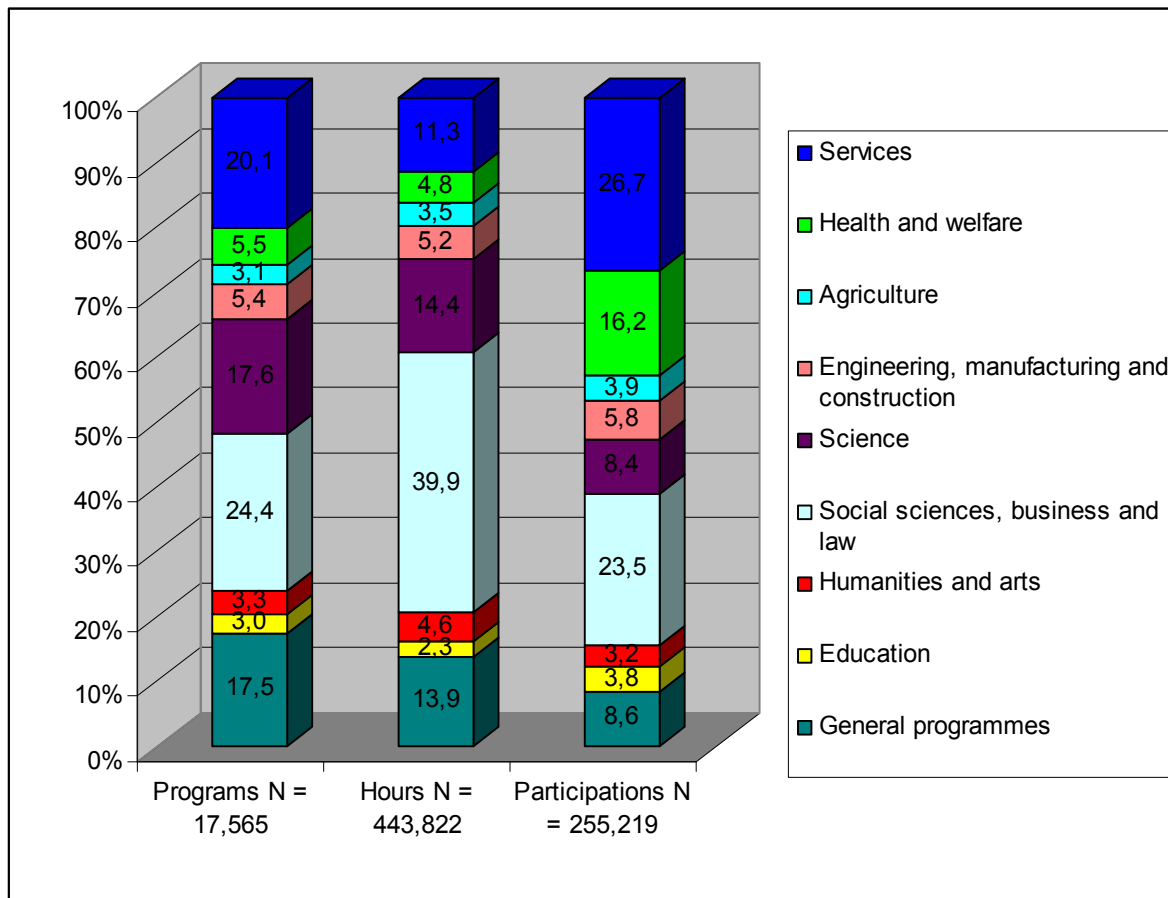
Most non-formal education is provided in non-accredited education and training programmes designed by providers as a response to individual and labour-market demand. 255, 274 adults attended non-accredited programmes, most of them work related (Graph 12).

GRAPH 12: NON-ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES, PARTICIPANTS AND HOURS OF TRAINING, 2009/2010, %



Source: SORS Continuing education, Slovenia 2009/2010

GRAPH 13: FIELDS OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMMES, REALISED HOURS AND PARTICIPANTS, NON-ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES 2008/09, %



Source: SORS, Statistical yearbook 2010

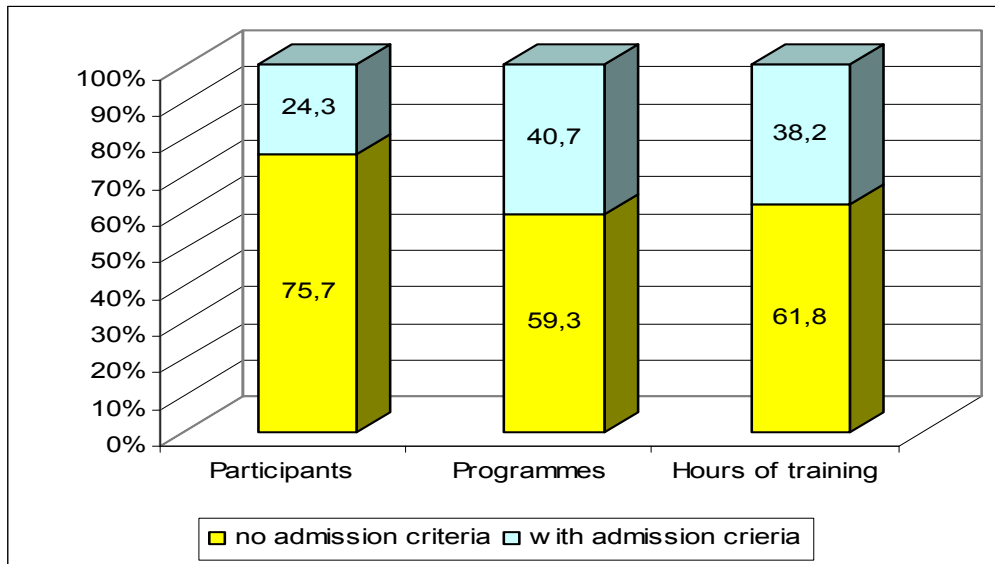
Social sciences, services, science and general programmes accounted for 80% of all programmes; more than half of all enrolments were in services and social sciences; and social sciences accounted for 40% of all hours (Graph 13).

Accredited educational programmes are part of the authorised ministries' educational programmes. They are divided into programmes of further vocational training and vocational training specialisation (except programmes of private schools adopted by the minister of labour in cooperation with the Council of Experts for Vocational Education (see section 5.3), literacy programmes for less-educated adults, foreign-language programmes (adopted by the minister of education in cooperation with the Council of Experts for Adult Education), and other educational programmes not regulated by educational legislation (e.g. driving schools) (Article 15 of the Organisation and Financing of Education Act, ULRS 12/1996). Participants in accredited programmes do not obtain a higher level of formal education. After completing an accredited programme, participants are awarded a verified education (*javno veljavno izobrazbo*), which is demonstrated by a public/national document (under Articles 7 and 8 of the Adult Education Act, ULRS 12/96; and Article 10 of the Vocational Education Act, ULRS 79/2006).

Accredited educational programmes are divided into those with entrance criteria (prior education is required to enrol in the programme) and those with no entrance criteria. Both types must meet guidelines laid down by education legislation and specific regulations of the Ministry of Education (as in 6.1.2). Programme providers must be accredited

In 2009/2010, 41,572 adults attended accredited programmes, 27,347 of them in driving schools; 7,280 adults attended accredited language programmes.

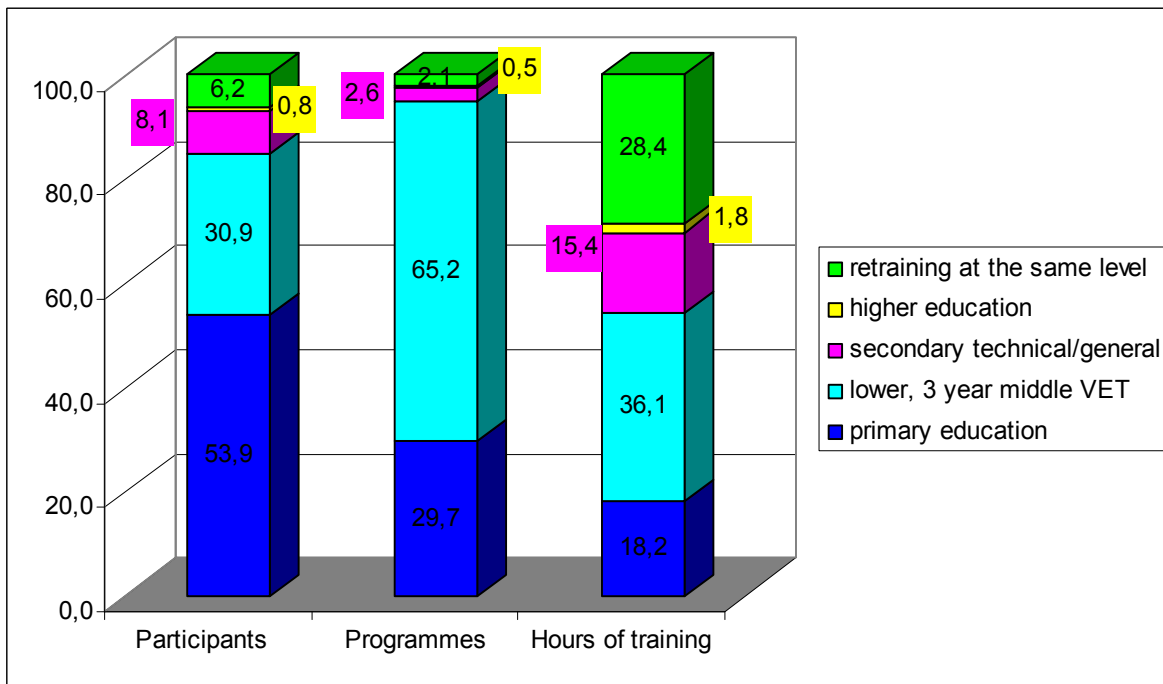
GRAPH 14: STRUCTURE OF NON-FORMAL PROGRAMMES BY ENTRANCE CRITERIA, 2009/2010, %



Source: SORS Continuing education, Slovenia 2009/2010

Most participants attended programmes with no entrance criteria (Graph 14).

GRAPH 15: STRUCTURE OF ACCREDITED PROGRAMMES WITH ENTRANCE CRITERIA, PARTICIPANTS AND HOURS OF TRAINING, BY LEVEL OF PRIOR EDUCATION, 2009/2010, %



Source: SORS Continuing education, Slovenia 2009/2010

10,102 adults attended accredited programmes with entrance criteria, more than half in programmes with completed primary school as a requirement (Graph 15).

In 2008/2009, services accounted for the greatest share of accredited programmes (85%), hours of training (64.3%), and participants (87.3%) (Statistical yearbook, 2010).

Non-formal education and training provided as part of the active employment policy represent an important part of CVET aimed at the needs of the labour market, and are strongly supported by MoLFSA. Participation in non-formal training and education is free for all unemployed people, employees being made redundant, and other vulnerable groups meeting certain requirements (Roma, dropouts) defined in active employment policy measures or other legal regulations (immigrants).

Other policy measures include co-financing of education and training for key personnel to make businesses more competitive.

MAIN DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROVIDER

A special survey (RIS 2005) dealing with eLearning in companies showed that one-fifth of companies reported some form of eLearning, mostly relating to online ICT-based materials. About 43% of large companies and 25% of medium, small and micro businesses use some form of Internet eLearning and e-content. A Eurostat survey of eLearning usage in businesses shows very high values for businesses in Slovenia (40%) compared to EU15 (20%) in 2006 (Vehovar: xii, 33).

Though eLearning is heavily promoted, the data for 2010/2011 show that only 56 of 295 providers offered a total 315 of e- and distance-learning programmes. Of the 232 e-learning programmes, most were offered by private organisations (35.1%), folk high schools (19%), and vocational colleges (16.2%). Most e-learning programmes cover one of four fields of education: computer science (37.4%), humanities and art (19.6%), business (17.8%) and personal development (8.7%) (Brenk, 2011).

MECHANISMS TO VALIDATE NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING

The principles for accreditation of non-formal/informal education and learning are defined by education legislation and secondary legislation for upper secondary (Rules on the Assessment of Knowledge in Secondary Schools, ULRS 60/2010) and higher vocational education (Rules on the Recognition of Prior Education in Higher Vocational Education, ULRS 20/2010), and by universities' rules for higher education.

Adult-education providers specify the procedures and bodies (e.g. staff responsible for information and guidance, school validation and accreditation committee), and tools for recognition and accreditation (e.g. in secondary education, non-formal learning must cover at least 70% of a formal programme's contents, otherwise the participant has to pass an exam covering the "missing" part of the formal programme, at least 25 hours of learning - equivalent to 1 credit point; the tools also define recognition of work experience) for programme participants. However, the process of recognition, assessment and accreditation does not replace entrance criteria for access to further formal education or to regulated professions. Instead, it merely obliges formal-education providers to exempt participants from taking certain subjects and parts of programmes, and permits them to progress more quickly within the programme.

At the same time, the National Professional Qualifications Act implemented a certification system - a network of institutions and bodies enabling individuals to obtain formal recognition (NVQ) of their knowledge and competences acquired through experience or non-formal and informal learning (6.1.2). However, an NVQ does not provide a national school-leaving certificate.

At present, the methodological and technical capacities for effective integration of these two systems for recognising informal and non-formal learning and their integration into the formal system have still not been developed. Other systemic measures necessary for this to happen (e.g. in governance, financing, modularisation and decentralisation of curriculum responsibilities) have been enacted, but have not yet been put into practice. The SIAE has developed training courses to support teachers when implementing the necessary procedures in practice.

A project developed by the SIAE with the support of MoES and MoLFSa and the European Social Fund is now paving the way for accreditation of non-formal and informal learning, and for connecting NVQs obtained in the certification system to formal educational levels.

The project has implemented a 350-hour non-formal accredited literacy programme for under-qualified people in employment. The programme was adopted by the Council of Experts for Adult Education. It consists of general subjects (Slovenian language, mathematics, basic science and a foreign language). Its standards were certified by the Council of Experts for General Education in 2009 as equivalent to those in formal primary and IVET programmes for young people. The first adults enrolled in the new programme in 2010. Adults who achieve the standards will be exempted from taking those subjects in formal vocational programmes. As difficulties with general subjects is among the main reasons adults cite for dropping out of vocational school, representing an important barrier to adults returning to formal education, we expect the programme will foster participation and successful completion of formal vocational programmes for adults.

The Centre for Slovenian Language (as a second foreign language) at the Department of Slovenian Studies (Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana) has been authorized to assess knowledge and skills in the Slovenian language and to issue publicly recognized certificates on Slovenian language as a second language. Such a certificate is a requirement for Slovenian citizenship, work permits or entrance to any Slovenian university or high school.

ADULT PARTICIPATION IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

TABLE 17: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU-27	16.3	33.3	52.8	32.7
SI (p)	10.9	33.7	63.4	36.2

Source: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 3 May 2010; Last update: 13 Jan 2010

TABLE 18: PARTICIPATION IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS	Employment	Inactive population	Total	Unemployment
EU-27	40.5	13.2	32.7	20.4
SI (p)	43.6	16.5	36.2	22.1

Source: Eurostat (AES); Extracted on: 3 May 2010; Last update: 13 Jan 2010

In non-formal learning, the most privileged group - employees with ISCED 5-6 - can best take advantage of education and training provision. Unequal access (the participation rate of the most educated in SI is 6 times higher than for those with ISCED 0-2, compared to 3 times in EU27) and educational inequality have been recognized and dealt with in labour market policy (participation rates for the unemployed have been rising, see Table 18), while education policy still disadvantages non-formal learning compared to initial general and vocational education, and adult formal education. Non-formal education is entirely dependent on the annual national budget, and is generally the first to be cut in economically unstable times. Non-formal learning suffers from inadequate public investment and inefficient mechanisms for allocating funds. The MoES is preparing ReNAEMP 2011-2015, which is expected to remedy the deficiencies from 2004-2009. The White Paper on Education (2011) pays particular attention to improving access to quality non-formal learning to develop social and cultural capital.

6.4 MEASURES TO HELP JOBSEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Vulnerable groups are defined in legislation (regulating adult education and unemployment), the RENAEMP, AAEP and AEP. MoLFSA is primarily responsible for providing CVET opportunities for the following vulnerable groups

- Young people not yet in the labour market (those still planning to continue education, those in transition from formal education to work, graduates finishing ISCED level 5–6 courses, and unemployed school-leavers aged 26 or less);
- Employees in the commercial sector at risk of unemployment, and with at most ISCED level 3 (4-year secondary school) education, employed in firms entitled to reduce working hours to cope with the downturn, redundant workers, employees in small and micro businesses;
- Unemployed people (with few or no qualifications, weak key competences; disabled people, people over 50 years, young people up to 25, Roma, ex-addicts, ex-prisoners, immigrants, long-term unemployed people, unemployed people with health limitations, unemployed people with professional qualifications in sectors with a surplus of qualified people).

Table 19 shows the types of training activity defined in the Active employment policy programme approved by the Slovenian Government and implemented by ESS.

TABLE 19: PARTICIPATION BY THE UNEMPLOYED, THOSE AT RISK OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2005-2010								
Year	2010		2009		2007		2005	
Educational activities	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Accredited literacy programmes	398	1.4	531	2.5	245	1.8	136	0.9
Institutionalized training	8,951	31.5	8,484	40.3	4,586	33.2	3,981	25.9
Acquisition of NVQ			469	2.2	205	1.5	419	2.7
Preparation for National Vocational Qualification	1,737	6.1	-	-	-	-	-	-

Certification of NVQ	1,278	4.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work trial	6,544	23.0	3,353	15.9	2,210	16.0	1,897	12.3
On-the-job training	4,886	17.2	4,556	21.6	659	4.8	2,064	13.4
Programmes of formal education	4,451	15.7	3,371	16.0	5,697	41.2	6,654	43.3
Project learning for young adults (PUM)	184	0.6	297	1.4	215	1.6	210	1.4
Total	28,429	100	21,061	100	13,817	100	15,361	100

Source: ESS Annual Reports 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010

Accredited literacy programmes aim to improve competence in mathematics, Slovenian language, natural sciences, social skills, active citizenship, ICT, and learning to learn for various priority groups: younger unemployed people with no qualifications wanting to return to formal education (120-hour programme), unqualified rural population looking for paid rural work (50-hour programme), adults with special needs seeking to improve their everyday skills (120-hour programme), and unskilled employees at risk of redundancy (350-hour programme). An employment plan must be designed for each participant.

Institutional training and programmes prepare participants aiming for NVQ to improve their employability and competitiveness in the labour market by acquiring new knowledge or NVQ. They are aimed at unemployed persons without any vocational education or those trained in surplus professions, unemployed young persons, young people without work experience, employees at risk of redundancy and disabled persons. Programmes last up to 12 months, or 18 months for people with disabilities.

Formal education and training programmes provided in the Education Programme for Unemployed Persons is the most outstanding government-supported measure to provide formal education for unemployed people. It has been provided since 1997 (initially as Programme 5000). It primarily targets unemployed people, young dropouts, those with no vocational qualifications or with qualifications not in demand in the labour market who have been unemployed for more than six months, and those made redundant at the end of a training contract. The number of places and areas of study are determined by demand in regional labour markets, the vocational and personal skills of unemployed participants, possibilities for successful completion of a programme, and programme costs. The interests of the unemployed are taken into account where possible. The objectives, duration and certification of programmes are determined by the formal programmes and their providers.

The programme Project Learning for Young Adults (PUM) was designed specifically for dropouts. It was given the European social policy champion award in 2007. It is an accredited non-formal education programme for young people aged 15-25 who are out of work and who have little or no education. The purpose of the programme is to motivate young people to resume their interrupted education, help them to decide which form of education to choose, and offer them individual support while they make up for their deficient prior knowledge. The programme lasts for 1 year. Nearly 65% of young participants return to school.

On-the-job training comprises programmes of practical assessment of knowledge, skills, interests and abilities of unemployed people, and workplace training for unemployed people and graduates. Programmes aim to improve the employability of unemployed people and graduates by providing the work experience and competences needed for certain jobs or sets of tasks. Programmes last from 1 to 3 months.

Training programmes for employees include programmes to develop key competences and to raise the education level, and are aimed at employees in SMEs, and employees in businesses.

A special education programme for initial integration of immigrants was accredited in 2010. It consists of an initial module (60 hours) and a continuing module (120 hours). It covers everyday situations such as personal identity; family and home; work and profession; labour market; health and social security; education; public life; Slovenian society; and the constitution). Participation is free of charge for immigrants with work permits, or who are permanent or temporary residents in Slovenia, and their family members. A new network of 8 teachers trained to provide the programme was developed in 2010-2011. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for immigrant education.

A new education programme for dropouts has been developed and tested. It will be accredited, and a network of teachers will be developed for its implementation.

There are several other initiatives for the unemployed and employees, such as job sharing, job clubs, guidance with careers and finding work, and enterprise training.

7. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1 PRIORITIES IN TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Teacher education is provided at faculties and professional colleges. The general admission requirement is a general *matura* certificate or, for some courses, vocational *matura* certificate with an additional bridging examination. Students apply to courses through the joint national application system.

The key objectives of VET reform were based on the most recent version (2001) of the Platform for Establishing Education Programmes in Lower and Secondary Vocational and Secondary Technical Education.

Crucial objectives were:

- bringing together general, technical and practical knowledge into a coherent and problem-structured education programme, knowledge catalogues and examination catalogues. The ultimate objective was to improve internal integration of knowledge, and to develop professional and key competences for professional, social, personal-development and further education purposes;
- striking a balance between content planning, objective-oriented planning, and problem-centred planning when preparing knowledge catalogues and implementing the learning process;
- developing modular, flexible education programmes;
- opening up the curriculum and encouraging local partners to meet local needs and interests;
- determining a uniform educational standard for school and dual education;
- achieving greater programme flexibility and school autonomy by devising a framework education programme at the national level and transferring part of the decision-making process and curriculum design to the school level (syllabus with allocation of periods, open curriculum, implementation models);
- encouraging schools to develop new methods and teaching solutions, increasing individualization of teaching, and reinforcing teamwork of all teachers involved.

Teachers and trainers were required to adopt and to deal with new roles to face new challenges and handle greater autonomy. European funds were mostly allocated to teacher training to implement the objectives of VET reform. These objectives, and training for teaching special-needs students, are common issues in training programmes, themed conferences and network education, and other elements of systematic continuous professional education for teachers (see 7.2.2.).

7.2 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

7.2.1 TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

Slovenia has the following occupations for VET teachers and trainers for young people and adults:

1. At the level of upper secondary education IVET:

- Teachers of general subjects can teach in all secondary schools and also in the final three years of compulsory school. Subjects: Languages (native language and other foreign languages), Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Social Sciences, History, Geography, Psychology, Sociology, Physical Education, Art, Informatics.
- Teachers of professional theoretical subjects²⁷.
- Trainers in schools.
- Workplace trainers.

2. Apart from teachers and trainers, the following experts also play an important role in achieving programme objectives:

- Directors (business manager of education centres encompassing several units - schools), headmasters and assistant headmasters (as head teachers of schools).
- Counsellors who provide counselling and support services for teachers, trainers, students and parents.
- Librarians, who are in charge of school libraries and participate in lessons.
- Teachers responsible for the organisation of adult education.
- Laboratory assistants.

3. Higher vocational education has the following professional occupations:

- lecturer,
- laboratory assistant,
- instructor,
- librarian,
- headmaster.

Difference between teachers and trainers:

Teachers are responsible for general subjects and professional theory, while trainers are responsible for practical education in schools or the workplace. There are also differences between their training. Teachers and trainers in schools must pass a teaching certification examination, while workplace trainers are not required to do so. Teachers must have a university degree and pedagogical-andragogical training. Trainers in schools must also have pedagogical-andragogical training, at least upper secondary education and a minimum of three years work experience. It is sufficient for workplace trainers to have shorter pedagogical-andragogical training organised by the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

²⁷ Teachers of professional theoretical subjects and teachers in schools by law have different responsibilities. As part of modularization in new education programmes, intensive cooperation is being developed between both types of teacher. Professional theory and practice are consequently taught together.

There is no data on the relative attractiveness of careers as VET teachers and trainers compared with general teachers and other sectors. However, in previous years general teaching seemed to be a more attractive profession than VET teaching and training. Generally, teachers in Slovenia are not as respected as professionals in other sectors.

RESPONSIBLE BODIES

PRE-SERVICE

Higher-education programmes for teachers are the responsibility of NAKVIS, the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, founded by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. The Agency is a body governed by public law and a direct non-governmental budget user in accordance with public finance regulations.

The Agency performs professional and development tasks in higher education, and regulatory tasks for the purpose of external quality assurance in higher and vocational education. External quality assurance includes accreditation of higher-education institutions and study programmes, including external evaluation. The Agency undertakes tasks in its area of competence that are in the public interest to ensure permanent, professional and independent support for quality and development in higher education.

NAKVIS is also responsible for pedagogical-andragogical education (60 ECTS) provided by universities. Such education is intended for experts with university degrees (for non-teachers) who are teachers of professional theoretical subjects.

Lecturers in higher vocational schools must be approved by the Lecturers Council with the consent of the Council of Experts for VET.

The master craftsman, foreman and shop manager exams, which include short Pedagogical-andragogical training and which is mandatory for workplace trainers, is the responsibility of the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

The two chambers are also responsible for the registration (accreditation) of workplaces for workplace training (provided by workplace trainers as part of secondary vocational education and higher vocational education).

IN-SERVICE

Every February, the Ministry of Education and Sport publishes a tender seeking proposals. Any state or private organisation registered as an educational organisation for valid education courses may apply to the tender. Quality is monitored by the Ministry of Education and Sport.

Study groups for teachers are organised by CPI, for teachers of vocational modules, and by the National Education Institute for teachers of general subjects. Quality is not monitored systematically by any external evaluator.

European funds are used for teacher training by the National Institute for VET and three consortia of secondary VET schools. Quality is monitored through self-evaluation. European funds are used to train higher-education lecturers by a few consortia of higher VET schools. Quality is monitored through self-evaluation. SIAE provides compulsory training for members of certification committees; licences are issued by the National Examinations Centre.

Special education leading to a licence is also compulsory for school headmasters, and is provided by the National School for Leadership in Education.

7.2.2 PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

There are two ways to become a VET teacher:

- acquire a university degree for a teacher of a general subject;
- acquire a university degree for a profession, with additional andragogical-pedagogical education (60 ECTS).

Trainers in schools must be at least qualified in a suitable profession at the secondary or higher vocational level, must have a few years (the number varies depending on the education programme) of work experience in the profession, and pedagogical-andragogical education (60 ECTS).

All teachers and trainers in schools must pass a teaching certification examination (see below in-service teacher training).

There are several ways to become a workplace trainer:

- Pass a master craftsman/foreman/shop manager exam, which encompasses short pedagogical-andragogical training;
- Vocational education and training (secondary level), at least 5 years work experience and short pedagogical-andragogical training;
- Higher vocational education, at least 2 years work experience, and short pedagogical-andragogical training;
- Professional university degree, at least 1 year work experience, and short pedagogical-andragogical training.

A director must have a university degree, at least five years work experience, and a school-principal licence.

Headmasters must have a university degree, and be qualified as a teacher or school counsellor. They must have at least five years work experience in education, and hold a school-principal licence. School-principal licences are acquired in a special training programme which is compulsory and which is provided by the National School for Leadership in Education.

A librarian must have a university degree and pedagogical-andragogical training (60 ECTS).

Any teacher with a relevant university degree, three years relevant work experience and relevant professional achievements can apply to be a lecturer in higher vocational education. Lecturers in professionally orientated higher education are also eligible. Applications are accepted by a council of lecturers in the school, with the consent of the Council of Experts for VET. Lecturers are appointed for five years.

Laboratory assistants must have at least higher vocational education.

Instructors and librarians must have professionally orientated higher education and pedagogical-andragogical training.

Headmasters of higher vocational schools must be a registered lecturer in a higher vocational school and have at least 5 years work experience in education.

Pedagogical-andragogical training (60 ECTS) consists of: pedagogy (45 hours), psychology (45 hours), didactics (75 hours), special didactics (135 hours), and andragogy (30 hours). Teachers can undergo pedagogical-andragogical training at the Faculty of Arts or Faculties of Education (in Ljubljana, Koper and Maribor).

IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All teachers and trainers in schools, and anyone who works with students (laboratory assistants, librarians, counsellors etc.) in secondary schools have to pass professional state exams.

Candidates for professional state exams must have a suitable formal education and pedagogical-andragogical training, and at least 4-6 months of employment in a school. MoES finances a limited number of ten-month traineeships for future professionals in the education system who have not found employment in schools. These trainees are selected in a public tender in accordance with MoES criteria, but also on the basis of local demand in schools. Each candidate can also apply to be an unpaid trainee.

Candidates prepare for the exam under the guidance of a mentor in the school where they work. Mentors must have at least 5 years work experience in the same position.

In order to sit the teaching certification examination, teachers and trainers in schools also have to have 5 performances (teaching lessons in actual classrooms) supervised by mentors and headmasters.

Other professionals (librarians, counsellors etc.) have to prepare an empirical/theoretical paper. In addition to a mentor, they also have an external co-mentor. These co-mentors are appointed by MoES.

The exam itself consists of the following sections:

- Education legislation,
- Constitution,
- European legislation,
- Slovenian language.

Workplace trainers must have at least master craftsmen/foreman/shop-manager training. In addition to that, the first of these must pass an exam set by the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia, while the latter two must pass an exam set by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

Continuing (in-service) education of teachers and other professional workers is provided within the system of continuous professional education under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Sport on a commercial basis. The system consists of various training programmes, themed conferences and network education. Participation is voluntary. Teachers are awarded points for participation which enable promotion. See also section 7.2.1. (In-service).

7.3 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

Slovenia has specific legislation for AE. All teachers, trainers and adult educators involved in providing state-accredited education and vocational programmes for adults must meet the same criteria as teachers in IVET.

SIAE provides compulsory training for members of certification committees; licences are issued by the National Examination Centre. In-service training is also obligatory for counsellors in the certification system and members of committees that certify and grant NVQs to individuals. Programme participants are awarded points that are important for promotion at work.

Teachers and other professionals implementing accredited non-formal adult education programmes must acquire special knowledge in accordance with the provisions of the individual programme and secondary legislation. All national institutes play important roles in continuous training of teachers and other professionals. SIAE issues licences for teachers providing literacy programmes, PUM (see 6), and other publicly funded projects and activities, such as quality assurance, counselling (see 9), and study circles. Programmes last from 16 to 200 hours.

8. MATCHING VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH LABOUR MARKET

8.1 SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS FOR ANTICIPATING SKILL NEEDS

Occupational standards represent the statutory basis for the preparation of vocational-education programmes. An occupational standard is a document establishing the content of a vocational qualification at a specific level of complexity, and defines the required knowledge, skills and general and vocational aptitudes. The definition of an occupational standard itself indicates that the standard is linked to an occupation in the labour market. Occupational standards are further broken down into the knowledge a person must acquire to practise a specific vocation. Under the National Professional Qualifications Act (2000), occupational standards must facilitate a revision of occupational standards every five years. The revision is proposed by the competent sectoral committee for vocational standards. (see 4.5, 5.1)

Identification of new occupations and occupational standards derives from a number of social partners, who may be representatives of chambers, ministries, companies or individuals. Formally, they also initiate the drafting of occupational standards. A proposal to draft a vocational standard is initiated by the identification of new types of work and knowledge that arise in a specific sector or within an existing vocation. In their proposals, initiators must describe the new types of knowledge or work that have arisen in a newly proposed or existing occupation, and must further assess demand for the occupation for the next five years. Data may be derived from the economic strategies of individual sectors, from future trends in a sector, if available, or from data collected by the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) through its labour force survey (LP-ZAP survey). The survey is carried out annually by the Employment Service of Slovenia and includes data on human-resource demand in companies, organisations and employers with more than ten employees.

Based on this survey, data is collected annually regarding planned employment in companies, organisations and sole traders. The CPI reviews them and, where appropriate, sends them to a sectoral occupational-standards committee for assessment. The sectoral occupational-standards committee is structured as a partnership, with members appointed by the minister of labour. If a sectoral committee deems a proposal appropriate, it approves it and orders an occupational standard to be drafted.

Representatives from chambers of commerce and craft, union representatives, employees and other established professionals in the relevant field for the proposed occupation or occupational standard are all involved in drafting occupational standards. When the occupational standard has been drafted in accordance with the adopted methodology, additional justifications must be provided. These are mainly more detailed, using specific data on the status of the proposed occupation in the labour market, particularly with regard to employer demand for occupations. Here, CPI, as coordinator of the overall procedure, relies heavily on other available databases from the Employment Service of Slovenia.

These are databases recording actual labour demand. The data is provided in the form of employment conditions by employers seeking to employ new staff. These conditions include education, occupation, and level of education, length of service, work experience, sector and various other data. Education, occupation and the employer's sector are the most important items, and provide the basis for analysing and determining a worker's position in the labour market. Data regarding aggregate demand is derived from analysis of demand for specific occupations, while matching occupations with education provides data on how specific forms of education are linked to occupations in the labour market.

This data is a valuable source of information when determining the breadth of an occupational standard and deciding which competences should be included in occupational standards.

8.2 PRACTICES TO MATCH VET PROVISIONS (SKILLS) WITH SKILL NEEDS (JOBS)

Confirmation of an occupational standard by the Council of Experts for Vocational Education represents a formal order to draft an education programme. A working group comprising teachers and social partners is formed to draft an educational programme.

The group analyses occupational standards and competences and on this basis draws up an outline for developing modules of the education programme. Social partners verify whether the competences denoted in occupational standards are represented in education programmes. Each education and training programme must cover all of the competences of the relevant occupational standard, or all competences of the occupational standards if the education and training consists of more than one occupational standard. In the competence approach, seminars are used for teacher training. These seminars consist of education on integrating key competences into education and training programmes, as well as assessment of competences.

As previously mentioned, occupational standards are revised every five years. In this process, we check in cooperation with employers whether there have been any changes in competences within occupational standards. The education and training programme is then altered if deemed necessary.

This year the revision of the occupational standards indicated that there are many people in the energy sector working on solar energy without suitable training. As a result, a list of typical professions in solar power is being drawn up. Related typical tasks will be combined into professional competences, on the basis of which occupational standards will be prepared. Based on the confirmed occupational standard, a new education and training programme will be developed in solar energy.

9.1 STRATEGY AND PROVISION

Bodies responsible for providing guidance and counselling services

The main providers of career-guidance services in Slovenia are schools, the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) and Adult-educational guidance centres (ISIOs). In all settings, professional counsellors are employed. They provide a broad range of guidance services (personal, social and vocational).

Guidance in schools is provided by school counsellors who work in school counselling services. Schools have at least one school counsellor, while larger schools have two or three. Career guidance is not a compulsory part of the educational pathway in Slovenia. Nevertheless, the National Education Institute is responsible for the professional framework for school counselling work and for professional support for school counselling services, and also prepares materials for the introduction of the trans-curricular competence "Career-Managing Skills" into primary-school curricula. Actual delivery of activities to develop this competence is a matter of decision for individual teachers and is usually adjudged of secondary importance compared with their primary subject.

Guidance in the ESS is provided by local and regional offices and vocational information and counselling centre (VICCs) throughout Slovenia, and is co-ordinated by the Department for Vocational Guidance and National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (hereinafter (NVICC) at the central office. The first VICC was established in 1999. Now more VICCs operate within the ESS (there are 4 larger centres and 9 smaller centres, plus 8 centres run in partnership with other partners). Career counsellors in the ESS and VICC provide a guidance service for unemployed people (80%) and pupils/students (15%). The guidance service is also offered to other adults (employed, school counsellors), who in 2008 made up 5% of all clients. The ESS also provides limited guidance activities for school students in primary and secondary schools.

Guidance in adult education is provided by adult-educational guidance centres (ISIOs), created since 2001(see 9.2).

A number of other organisations are operating in the field of guidance, such as the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia, which is responsible for the apprenticeship system (crafts). Its role is to find suitable employers, license them, arrange contracts, place apprentices, etc. The chamber also produces information on apprenticeships (the apprenticeship system, learning opportunities, etc.) and actively promotes craft occupations and job prospects (through fairs, etc.). The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is not very active as far as guidance is concerned. Most contacts between schools and employers are arranged without the participation of this chamber. In the last few years, however, the chamber has shown growing interest in guidance and began to work in partnership in guidance projects.

CPI has become an important actor in the field of guidance, providing information material on occupations and vocational training. CPI promotes several guidance projects and is also very active in the field of skills promotion.

Provision of guidance (specialised for students) in higher education is still limited. The University of Ljubljana, University of Maribor, University of Primorska, and University of Nova Gorica have established career centres for their students. Students can obtain guidance and counselling in the ESS and in VICCs, but this is not specialised.

In the early 1990s, a number of private counselling agencies, which mostly provide vocational training or placements, but also some guidance activities, emerged. Some bigger companies also provide guidance services for their employees.

Financing guidance and counselling

There is no unique budget for other guidance activities in schools. It therefore depends on schools themselves what level of resources are spent on guidance activities (information material, etc.). There is also a special budget for guidance activities (information production, collection and dissemination, ICT, training, etc.) which includes a national contribution for the NVICC - Euroguidance Slovenia, which operates at the ESS central office. NVICC is co financed by European Commission, DG Education, Audiovisual and Culture as a part of Euroguidance network.

Cooperation between education and employment sectors

Responsibility for the management of guidance services is divided between the MoES and the MoLFSA. The former finances school counselling services (providing salaries for counsellors) and ISIO's, as well as projects on VET promotion and career guidance run by the CPI. The MoLFSA finances guidance services in the ESS.

Since 2005, the two ministries have made some steps towards better co-ordination and faster development of guidance services in Slovenia:

- a project on developing the concept of lifelong training and guidance centres;
- the National Guidance Policy Forum, which was established in 2005 as part of a joint-action project with the same name. The main result of the forum was a proposal for further development of guidance services in Slovenia with the support of the ESF (the human-resources development operational programme 2007-13). Implementation activities were expected to start in January 2007. Unfortunately, in 2007, with the expiration of the Leonardo da Vinci project under which it was established, the forum ceased to exist;
- in January 2006, the MoES established the Board for VET Promotion. The work later resulted in the realisation of the Action Plan for the Improvement of Recognition and Promotion of Vocations (time frame 2007-2013). Projects implementing the action plan are designed to promote VET via lifelong-learning career-guidance tools and activities. The action plan is implemented according to the schedule, mainly via the projects run by CPI and financed by the ESF. The Board for VET Promotion formally still exists, but has not met since December 2008;
- in December 2007 the MoLFSA established the Working Group for the Development of the Project on Lifelong-learning Career Guidance (as part of the Human-Resources Development Operational Programme 2007-13). The working group aims to collect available financial, intellectual and human resources to produce expert groundwork for the establishment of a systematic approach to lifelong-learning career guidance. This expert groundwork is planned to result in the establishment of a national reference point for lifelong-learning career guidance - a national authority responsible for the development of policies and practice of lifelong-learning career guidance;
- In 2007, Slovenia joined the European Lifelong Guidance policy network (ELGPN). A representative of the MoES is the official representative of Slovenia in the network and the National CPI has been appointed as partner organisation;

- In December 2008, a working group for lifelong career guidance was established under the authority of the MoES, uniting members from the MoLFSA, MoHEST, the Ministry of the Economy, the Government Office for Development and EU Affairs, the University of Ljubljana, CPI, the SIAE, the ESS and representatives of social partners. Many of the members of this working group are also formal members of the Board for VET Promotion. In April 2009, Slovenia hosted a Study Visit under the Working Package 3 (Co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms in guidance practice and policy development) of the ELGPN programme. Joint analysis of co-operation with the above-mentioned working group and the possibilities of uniting the two groups and on the best ways to co-ordinate policy and delivery of services of various providers in the field of guidance has been conducted.

9.2 TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

9.2.1 STUDENTS AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

All public schools and many private schools operate school counselling services. They provide advice to apprentices, pupils, students, teachers and parents and work with tutors, teachers and school management in planning, reviewing and evaluating development of the school in performing educational tasks, and provide vocational guidance. School counselling services are carried out by school counsellors working alongside the ESS in the field of guidance.

Career-guidance activities are part of each school's annual plan. The plan content depends on the school but further activities are usually included: visits to employers, a visit to a local VICC, individual counselling sessions, and activities related to the enrolment procedure (from primary to secondary schools). Some schools also organise additional activities, such as work experience, work with parents, etc.

9.2.2 HIGHER-EDUCATION STUDENTS

Guidance activities in Slovenian higher-education institutions are modest and in some cases do not exist. Where guidance activities exist, they are limited to visits of students to prospective employers or discussions between students and relevant professionals. Some private providers run job-search sessions for students at universities.

Universities and other higher-education institutions mostly do not provide specialised career services for their students. There are two exceptions: the Faculty of Economics (University of Ljubljana) with its career centre for students (CERŠ) and another centre (currently in development) at the University of Maribor.

Students' organisations are also quite active in guidance. They organise student career fairs (Student Arena, Informativa, etc.) which are becoming more popular each year among higher-education students. The number of career fairs for students increased in 2006 with new fairs organised by private agencies.

9.2.3 UNEMPLOYED

Unemployed people are a priority target group of the ESS. The main methods used in guidance in this area:

- Information: the ESS publishes a wide range of information (leaflets, brochures, etc.) on ESS activities, occupations and job opportunities. Information is available at local offices and also in the media (newspapers). The ESS also maintains a website, where unemployed people and others can access job vacancies and information on ESS activities, opportunities for unemployed people, etc. The level of information activities has increased since the introduction of NVICCs which has operated in the frame of ESS.
- Advice and counselling: there are two levels of (vocational) counselling provided by the ESS. The first, employment advice, is provided by employment advisers, who also provide a job-brokering service. At an interview, an adviser will identify possible barriers to finding employment. If advisers identify problems related to the choice of vocation (lack of information, career indecision, lack of career planning, skills, etc.) they refer the person to a career counsellor, rehabilitation counsellor or in the case of medical problems include doctor (the second level of counselling). Two months after registration, the adviser produces an "employment plan" with the unemployed person;
- Group information sessions: these are obligatory for the unemployed and are usually provided by employment advisers. Sessions include information on opportunities provided by the ESS; meetings with potential employers usually take place at local employment offices;
- Job-search seminars: (two-day seminars) are partly provided by ESS employment advisers or career counsellors and partly by external providers;
- Guidance in employment programmes: there are numerous guidance services for unemployed people, such as training and other employment programmes, which are provided by external providers. These guidance-service providers are mostly private agencies financed by the ESS on the basis of public tenders.
- ESS create as a part of ESS web site eCounselling where is it possible to find the whole counselling process on the internet.

9.2.4 ADULTS

The ISIO network is determined by RENAEMP and AAEP (see 2) as a basic infrastructure which is of great importance when it comes to motivating adults for education, for acquiring NVQ, for increasing inclusion of adults into education, as well as for improving the quality and efficiency of education. There are 14 regional ISIO's, which means that most regions have one ISIO, but some have 2. ISIO's also use dislocated and mobile units in order to provide access to counselling to adults in the remote parts outside the scope of the centres. Using the above mentioned units means the ability to offer counselling to vulnerable adult groups (poorly educated, Roma, elderly, blind, deaf etc.) and thus develop new approaches for counselling for adults. Parallel to each ISIO there is a partnership network of other organizations. More than 250 various organisations participates in this network (Folk High Schools, ESS, VICC's, regional development agencies, unions etc). These networks are coordinated by ISIOs and their function is to guide the development of counselling activities for adult education in the region.

From 2008 the ISIO's function under the auspices of Lifelong learning centres who are a part of the Folk Universities. The Lifelong learning Centres develop and set up web portals, provide information on learning and education, offer access to various e-material for supporting independent learning, spread the activities of organized independent learning, supported by the ICT, promote availability of other forms non-formal education. The Adult Education Act (1996) in Article 24 defines counselling as an activity that is part of the annual programme of adult education, adopted each year by the Government. Article 29 of the same act defines standards for financing guidance staff.

In 2004, the Government of Slovenia adopted the first ReNAEMP. It covers the period 2004-2010 and contains adult-education goals for this period, priority areas in adult education, activities required to carry out the resolution and the amount of public funds required to achieve these purposes. Guidance activities are also stressed as an important supporting factor in attaining the national adult-education goals. In 2011 is in the process of adopting an new ReNAEMP which will cover the period up to 2015 and guidance activities for adults in education again have an important role.

We have data for 14 regional ISIOs. Each year around 25,000 adults look for information, advice or counselling in the centres.

In the last years, special emphasis has been paid to increasing the accessibility of guidance to vulnerable target groups of adults, those with no or less access to counselling and education, those who are less involved in education and disadvantaged in certain ways with respect to access to lifelong learning. For this reason, guidance centres for adult education have developed various counselling approaches for different target groups, e.g. a mobile guidance service for the Roma population and guidance in the workplace for employees with a low level of education in small and medium-sized enterprises.

9.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

9.3.1 SCHOOLS

Guidance in schools is provided by full-time school counsellors. The educational profile of counsellors in schools is regulated by law. School counselling services can be provided by psychologists, pedagogues, social-welfare workers, social pedagogues and special-education specialists.

School counsellors have a special training system which involves many subjects relevant to their work (the relationship between parent and child, drug abuse, etc.). Usually these are short courses, which counsellors can choose according to their interests and needs. Some training courses are relevant to career guidance (counselling techniques, etc.), while some are not. Specialised courses on career guidance are rare. Some guidance issues, such as knowledge of the labour market, are not covered at all by the courses available.

Further training for school counsellors is organised into "study groups" co-ordinated by the National Institute of Education. Counsellors taking part in a study group choose a subject of interest and work on this.

Another type of training for school counsellors in primary and secondary schools has been provided by CPI. The training programme *New Trends in Guiding Youth Prior to the Selection of a Secondary School* includes the presentation of new developments in the area of guiding youth in Europe, a briefing on the latest laws and measures in the EU and Slovenia. The training programme also includes a workshop, which trains participants in the planned implementation of tasks and the planning of improvements in career orientation.

9.3.2 EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF SLOVENIA

Employment advisers traditionally have higher levels of education (three years of post-secondary education), but the number of advisers with a four-year university diploma is growing.

Career counsellors in the ESS are mostly psychologists (with a few exceptions) who have been working in the field for many years.

Within VICCs, there is very few extra staff at information desks that have a secondary education or a university degree (where only one person covers all tasks). These provide information to clients, help them to find information resources, refer clients to counsellors, etc. (counselling services in VICCs are provided by ESS counsellors).

In recent years (1999-2005), all ESS employment advisers and career counsellors have had intensive training in guidance lasting three weeks a year from 1997 to 1999 (as part of the Phare Pilot Vocational Information and Counselling Centre Project) and one week a year from 2000 to 2005. Five training modules on guidance have been developed: a counselling interviews module, a counselling for adults module, a labour-market training module, a module on the use of new guidance methods (the computerised careers-guidance tool *Kam in kako*) and a training-the-trainers module. ESS experts have also developed a number of other training modules, such as material on the psychological theories of career development. In 1998, a team of four internal trainers was nominated to train all ESS employment and career counsellors. The number of training days was reduced in 2005 due to a reduced budget and one internal trainer now works at the ESS. With funding from European Social Fund, in 2010, the ESS created an education centre to develop training programmes for ESS job counsellors and career advisers.

9.3.3 CENTRES FOR GUIDANCE IN ADULT EDUCATION

There are 60 counsellors working in ISIO's centres (full or part time), 14 of which are also in the function of running it. Each year around 25 000 adults come looking for counselling (individual counselling is predominant). The counsellors must have at least a university degree (mainly in the field of pedagogy or andragogy, as well as psychology, sociology and social work) and they must have passed professional exam in the field of education.

For the head of an ISIO a minimum of three years of work experience from the field of adult education is required, but all employed must undertake basic training and annual extra training in order to work in an ISIO. As part of basic training the counsellors must conduct analyses of the level of development of information - counselling activities for the AE education in the local area, analysis of the economic development and development perspective in the local area, analysis of socio-demographic characteristics of the local area. Apart from that the basic training consists of three parts: counselling in the AE and the concept of work in the ISIO, counselling instruments and counselling communication in AE.

Many themes are covered in this framework, they are mostly connected with direct work activities in an ISIO, other themes are connected with novelties in adult learning: development of new approaches in counselling (for example: guidance in the workplace) counselling specific target groups (lower educated, Roma, immigrants, elderly, blind, deaf etc) use of counselling materials, developing and coordinating activities in partnership networks, developing of teamwork, monitoring and evaluating of the centres, developing and updating the database, developing and implementing the promotional activities, developing quality in the centres etc.

A special part of the training are the workshops where the counsellors can deepen their knowledge and skills from counselling communication as well as undertaking a quality counselling process (use of super-vision, prevention of stress and burnout of a counsellor, self evaluation).

Since 2009 SIAE has been implementing a model of validation and development of quality in the ISIO's. The model has implemented the following standards:

- The director and counsellor have undertaken at least basic training (48 hour training).
- The director and counsellor participate per year at least in two educational meetings organized by SIAE.

The director and counsellor participate in other professional training connected with counselling, but not organized by SIAE, which last at least 16 h per year.

10. VET FINANCING

10.1 VET FINANCING POLICY

In general, a lack of direct data means it is difficult to analyse VET financing policies in Slovenia.

There are practically no development documents directly tackling VET. The oldest relevant strategic document is the OP-HRD (ESF) 2007-13. (see 2) Although a new financial plan is in preparation, this is still valid as a framework for action. The priority areas for analysis and action in this document have been selected on the basis of the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) definition of the areas that determine competitiveness of an economy. These are:

- ICT (In Slovenia, the communications network is satisfactory, but we are at the very beginning in terms of content production. A possible source for new jobs and developmental has therefore been identified in the so-called creative industries.)
- R&D investment (The main problem for Slovenia is not so much quantity as effectiveness, particularly in terms of transferring knowledge to industry. There have been warnings recently that the poor technological platform means industry cannot even absorb what little R&D is on offer.)
- Tertiary education (good results in general, but there is absolutely no clarity as to how much is academic and how much vocational. Based on employment data, more than 90% is vocational.)
- Business environment (Shortage of support mechanisms is evident, covering financing as well as business support and advice.)
- Technological development and innovativeness of companies (Given the foregoing, innovativeness is below the EU average).

Given this analysis development priorities have been set in the OP-HRD 2007 - 13:

- Supporting enterprise and adaptability;
- Increasing employability of jobseekers and inactive persons;
- Development of human resources and lifelong learning;
- Equity and social inclusion.

All these priorities are relevant for education generally and for VET in particular, but they need to be translated into immediate goals and tasks before they become operational in everyday practice. In the case of VET, operationalisation formed part of the recently completed reforms of VET programmes, which incorporated precisely these priorities: focus on independence, project work and more business and communication competences alongside traditional vocational skills. Initial results indicate that the reform has been successful, in some aspects very much so.

Given that both the OP - HRD and the curricular reform were designed before the onset of the economic crisis, they should be compared to more up-to-date strategies. Intended as tools to combat the crisis, the National Reform Programme 2011-12 (hereinafter NRP) recognises the great importance of education in combating the crisis in general and establishes two further distinct priorities: Due to falling demand for vocational careers, which is already causing skills shortages in certain fields, the Ministry of Education and Sport plans to increase the number of study programmes and professional standards for which students can obtain skills and professional qualifications in tertiary sub-degree programmes (higher vocational programmes). The aim is to maintain current enrolment in higher vocational programmes at 15% of all entrants to tertiary education.

Strengthening career guidance has already been mentioned in last year's report, but it remains a priority in NRP 2011-12.

In April 2011, the Government adopted a competitiveness strategy. It includes Measure 6: Increasing the quantity of education and training for employed persons, including acquiring NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications certificates) and other forms of informal training. This is a very welcome measure, as it complements the established AEP, which are aimed at the unemployed and well reflect the higher unemployment of recent years:

TABLE 4: THE INCREASE OF PERSONS ENROLLED INTO AEP MEASURES, 2008, 2009, 2010			
	2008	2009	2010
Institutional literacy programmes	3974	7247	8267
Preparation for NPQ assessment			1721
NPQ assessment and certification	239	450	1243
On-the-job assessment of skills relevance	2164	3314	6298
On-the-job training 2007/2008	1104		
On-the-job training 2008	2175	1613	
On-the-job training 2009/2010		2494	13
On-the-job training 2009/2011		431	4789
Formal education	2003	3096	4093
Project Learning for Young Adults	110	256	167
Knowledge makes dreams a reality			6198
Total enrolled in AEP measures	15013	25376	48633

Source: Competitiveness of the Slovenian Economy, Analysis and Improvement Measures, April 2011

A comparison of budget items for 2010 and 2011 clearly shows a sharp increase in on-the-job training:

TABLE 4: EDUCATION BY BUDGET ITEMS, 2010 AND 2011 BUDGETS		
BUDGET ITEM	FINANCE BY BUDGETARY LINE	
	2010	2011
Human-resource development in companies	50211593	117094804
Counselling and training for unemployed	118744186	31667886
Formal education of unemployed	1148565	-
Adult education (excluding	15789816	17550466

AEP)		
Pre-school	20100092	26567782
Primary education including musical education and special needs education	773661740	750438206
Secondary general and vocational	339559221	331804486
Post-secondary non-tertiary	17442872	18501659
Tertiary education	304608428	267786460
	-	53888242
Support activities (administration, research, system regulation)	46665864	39579566
Tuition and subsidies	224062338	203730.48
Total	1911994715	1858610039

Sources: Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia:

http://www.uradni-list.si/files/RS_-2009-099-04370-OB~P002-0000.PDF

Ministry of Finance:

http://www.mf.gov.si/fileadmin/mf.gov.si/pageuploads/Prora%C4%8Dun/Sprejeti_prora%C4%8Dun/2011/spremembe/SP2011_II_2.pdf

Based on the budget structure, several conclusions can be drawn about general features:

- The system is very much supply-led. The vast majority of funding, with the exception of tuition but including most other forms of subsidy, is aimed at providers. Providers are the main partners in negotiations and the primary source of information for the funder. There are several forms of external evaluation, but they are more concerned with content and teaching than cost-effectiveness.
- We are approximately half-way between a classical budget divided based on the traditional division of government, and modern, task- or project-oriented budget. Current budget items tend to reflect as much as possible the logic of tasks and priorities, but for historic reasons these areas remain incomplete, with important parts belonging to other budget items traditionally depending on other government structures. On the other hand, joint responsibility of two or more structures for certain budget items shows a tendency towards project management, but frequently structures for shared management either don't exist or don't function optimally. An example of good practice is cooperation and coordination between AEP and formal education, which is traditionally good. Less optimal is coordination with on-the-job training, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Economy.
- For the time being, financing of formal education remains stable. However, although there have been no drastic declines in either investment or activity, if the crisis continues prolongs we may face serious cuts in investment in 2012, despite support in principle for continued investment in education.
- Funding has increased for other forms of education and training as the crisis has increased demand. However, it is debatable as to whether the budget can safely support further substantial increases.

10.2 FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As public institutions, public vocational and technical schools are funded from the national budget. Funds are provided by the MoES in its financial plan, which is an integral part of the national budget. Schools report to the ministry on the number of students, and propose a plan for posts by category based on the relevant norms and standards. If justified, the ministry agrees and schools receive monthly funding for salaries and running costs. This monthly amount varies from school to school, and depends on the number of students and the type of programmes provided.

Investments and maintenance are determined by an annual plan defined, following proposals from schools, by the MoES based on priorities and available funding in the national budget. For these purposes, the Government adopts special annual plans and budgets. Pursuant to the relevant law, schools also receive extra funding to maintain school buildings.

By law, schools as public institutions may also undertake activities not defined as public services. The scope of these activities depends on the spatial and human-resource capacities of individual schools. In this way, schools can obtain additional funding by selling their products and services on the market. Additional funds obtained in this way should be used to strengthen basic school activities (running costs, maintenance and investment). If the minister agrees, part of this additional funding can also be used for salaries.

Vocational education and training is also financed by other state sectors, as well as by individuals and employers/companies.

Public expenditure allocated to formal education excluding pre-school education and care in Slovenia in 2010 amounted to €1436.5 m, or 4.05% of GNP. Of this, just over €742 m was spent on primary education, €339.6 m on secondary (both general and vocational), €17.4 m on post-secondary non-tertiary (vocational) and €304.5 m on tertiary education.

Given the lack of direct data, information on investment in formal VET is derived from assumptions based on the following information: 62% of all new entrants to secondary education in 2010 enrolled in VET; the majority of adults who enrol in VET are acquiring their first qualification and it could therefore be considered IVET; and post-secondary VET programmes and on-the-job training could be considered as CVET. This results in an estimate of €224.3 m spent on IVET in 2010.

It is reasonable to assume that the higher drop-out rate in VET means that the number of students in higher grades is falling faster for VET than for general education, but it is at least compensated by the higher price per person for VET due to the technologies and practical training involved.

Unfortunately, assumptions like these make it very difficult to perform any in-depth analysis of the cost-effectiveness of IVET.

10.3 FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

10.3.1 PUBLIC FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS TO FINANCE CVET (EXCLUDING THOSE SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT THE UNEMPLOYED)

The only direct and indirect costs fully covered by public finances are those for primary education of adults, and education and training of unemployed people. Although the law stipulates that all other adult education is financed from three main financial sources (employers, individuals and public funds), there is no reliable data on the contributions from each source. The picture is further complicated by the fact that at least some publicly funded adult education is also vocational, despite the fact that funds allocated to adult education by MoES are intended primarily for non-vocational adult education. This would lead to the assumption that publicly funded CVET without AEP is virtually non-existent.

The situation is clearer concerning short cycle tertiary education (higher vocational education) programmes, which were subsidised by almost €17.5 m. Although students mostly enrol immediately after finishing secondary education as full-time students (in this case without scholarships), it is a post-secondary programme and as such counts as CVET. In addition, we can add various types of VET for adult unemployed people funded by AEP, resulting in total CVET being worth around €143.6 m, and the overall VET sector around €368 m, about 1% of GNP.

On the other hand, the 2010 budget provided an additional €15.7 m for adult learning other than VET. These funds are mostly intended to raise the level of basic competences in the adult population, and to provide those at risk of exclusion with skills that prevent exclusion (ICT literacy for the elderly). Consequently, a major proportion of these funds could also be covered in section 10.3.4 dealing with reaching at-risk groups.

10.3.2 PUBLIC-PRIVATE COST-SHARING

In formal VET there is a form of cooperation between VET institutions and local companies that is well established and successful. It is called Intercompany Training Centres (MIC) and operates on the basis of mutual agreement - companies usually provide hardware (technology and housing) and VET institutions know-how and personnel. A considerable proportion of training provided to both unemployed people under AEP measures and under the new human-resource development in companies scheme (Ministry of the Economy) was provided in these centres, although exact figures are not available.

On the other hand, companies can decide to train people themselves and receive subsidies from the Ministry of the Economy, usually subject to co-financing by the company. In 2010, just over €50.2 m was spent on such activities, although detailed information on specific partnerships or on the level of co-financing by companies is not available.

Another source is financial incentives from public funds (the Employment and Unemployment Insurance Act, delivered through active employment-policy measures) and special employment-policy measures to combat the economic downturn.

Employers can access co-financing for the training of employees:

- For education and training of newly hired workers;
- For training and retraining of redundant workers (including covering part of the cost of training and retraining permanently redundant workers during the period of the termination notice);

- For training and retraining of workers whose jobs are threatened due to their education and qualification deficits.

Education and training co-financed from public funds can take the form either of general publicly certified education and training, or training for company-specific skills and competences, developing ICT competences etc. In 2010, funding amounted to slightly over €50 m (see table 2).

The Safety at Work Act requires employers to provide regular training in safety at work. It is automatically assumed that the costs of training are met by employers.

Employers are obliged under collective agreements to cover the direct costs (tuition fees, learning materials, travel costs and subsistence costs) and indirect costs (payment of wages and salaries for absences from work due to training) of training that they initiate. Individuals themselves finance education and training mainly when it is not directly in the interests of their employers. They may also be forced to co-finance training required for work, mostly in the form of investment of their spare time.

10.3.3 COLLECTIVE (EMPLOYER, EMPLOYEE) INVESTMENT TO FINANCE CVET

This form of VET financing is not very common in Slovenia. Nevertheless, the Chamber of Crafts and Small Business requires its members to deposit 1% of their revenues in a special account for education and training.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Chamber of Crafts and Small Business both design and implement training programmes for workgroup leaders and craft masters. Sectoral organisations are also expected to cooperate in the process of designing and adopting VET programmes leading to publicly certified education, but there is no reliable data on collective financing.

10.3.4 REACHING AT-RISK GROUPS THROUGH FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS

This goal is mainly achieved through various forms of tuition and subsidies. As expected, this field has the highest number of involved parties. The main body of tuition for socially threatened persons at all levels of education is managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, amounting to almost €118.8 m in 2010. In addition, MoLFSA earmarked a further €13.6 m for various subsidies, but MoES accounts for the bulk of activity, with €8.7 m in subsidies for elementary and €60.7 m for secondary education. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology provides a further €20.5 m in subsidies for tertiary education. There are also specialised funds covering tuition in the fields of culture and law, bringing public funding for tuition and subsidies to just over €224 m in 2010.

10.4 FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

For data on the number of unemployed people enrolled, see Table 1. This chapter outlines individual measures managed by the public Employment Service under the Employment and Insurance Against Unemployment Act.

Preparation for NPQ assessment

In addition to formal education, National Professional Qualifications certificates are available for quite a number of vocations, providing entry to the labour market, but not

<p>to further education. These programmes prepare students for a formal assessment by the National Examination Centre. There were 1737 participants in 2010, at a cost of €848,205.</p>
<p>NPQ assessment and certification</p> <p>This route to the labour market is particularly popular among people with little formal education but considerable work experience. It is regarded as a short cut compared with much longer formal education. There were 1278 participants in 2010, at a cost of €164,003.</p>
<p>On-the-job assessment of skills relevance</p> <p>This allows unemployed people to test the relevance of their skills to a real, existing job. The employer is encouraged to accept candidates for the test, which is subsidised, allowing the employer to become acquainted with the candidate. In a sense, this is a test of mutual compatibility. There were 6544 participants in 2010, at a cost of almost €4.4 m. 66% remained employed.</p>
<p>On-the-job training 2009/2010</p> <p>The aim of the measure is to improve an unemployed person's employability by providing training in special skills required by an employer. Due to longer procedure involved in signing an agreement, the duration of training itself, and the evaluation, the 2010 figures include some people who signed their agreements back in 2009. A total of 4886 persons were involved at a cost of a little over €7.7 m. 58.9% remained in employment.</p>
<p>Formal education</p> <p>Persons without formal qualifications, persons with incomplete pre-tertiary education, and persons who cannot continue in their present jobs for health reasons can use this measure to obtain a formal education. 4451 people were enrolled in 2010 at a cost of €2.63 m.</p>
<p>Project Learning for Young Adults</p> <p>This measure is meant for young people without formal qualifications who for various social and mental factors are not ready for direct enrolment in education or training. Its particular nature means that enrolment is not high, with only 184 participants in 2010, at a cost of nearly €175,000. This measure has been acknowledged as a European example of good practice.</p>
<p>Knowledge makes dreams a reality</p> <p>Although part of AEP, this measure is aimed at persons still in employment who are at risk because of technological changes or a lack of skills. It was introduced in 2010 and proved to be very successful. The goal can be formal education, NPQ certification or the acquisition of specific skills necessary to remain in employment. 6226 persons were enrolled at the cost of a little over €1.4 m. 81.4% of all participants were successful.</p>

Source: Annual report on AEP, published by the ESS

In addition to these measures, many subsidies were paid to companies in order to foster adaptability (education and training of employees is a necessary component), to cover for temporarily shortened work-hours (employees were required to learn something useful in the subsidised hours, but responsibility for organizing the training was left to the employer so the results are not very clear), and for other purposes, such as employing or retaining in employment several categories of persons with limited employability, increasing the overall budget for AEP to just over €170 m.

11.1. AUTHORS

Tanja Čelebič
Tomaž Kraigher
Simona Knavs
Marja Medved
Anton Simonič
Špela Lenič
Mateja Hergan
Marija Tome
Darja Štarkl
Miha Lovšin

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11.3 LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAEP	Annual Adult Education Programme	<i>Letni program izobraževanja odraslih</i>
AE	Adult Education	<i>Izobraževanje odraslih</i>
AEP	Active Employment Policy	<i>Aktivna politika zaposlovanja</i>
CERŠ	Centre for counselling and development of students	<i>Center za svetovanje in razvoj študentov</i>
CMEPIUS	Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for mobility and European educational and training programmes	<i>Center RS za mobilnost in evropske programe izobraževanja in usposabljanja</i>
CPI	Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education	<i>Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje</i>
ECVET	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training	<i>Evropski kreditni sistem v poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju</i>
EQARF	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework	<i>Evropski referenčni okvir za zagotavljanje kakovosti</i>
EQF	European Qualifications System	<i>Evropski kvalifikacijski okvir</i>
ESF	European Social Fund	<i>Evropski socialni sklad</i>
ESS	Employment Service of Slovenia	<i>Zavod RS za zaposlovanje</i>
IMAD	Institute of macroeconomic analysis and development	<i>Urad RS za makroekonomske analize in razvoj - Umar</i>
ISIO	Adult Education Guidance Centres	<i>Informativno svetovalna dejavnost v izobraževanju odraslih</i>
IVT	Initial Vocational Training	
KLASIUS	Classification system of education and training	<i>Klasifikacijski sistem izobraževanja in usposabljanja</i>
LLL	Lifelong learning	<i>Vseživljensko izobraževanje</i>
MIC	Intercompany Training Centre	<i>Medpodjetniški izobraževalni center</i>
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sport	<i>Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport</i>
MoHEST	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology	<i>Ministrstvo za visoko šolstvo, znanost in tehnologijo.</i>
MoLFSA	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs	<i>Ministrstvo za delo, družino in socialne zadeve</i>
NCP	National contact point	<i>Nacionalno koordinacijska točka</i>
NDP	National development plan	<i>DRŽAVNI RAZVOJNI PROGRAM REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE ZA OBDOBJE 2007 - 2013</i>
NEC	National Europass Centre	<i>Nacionalni Europass Center</i>
NEIS	National Education Institute	<i>Zavod RS za šolstvo</i>
NQF	National qualification framework	<i>Nacionalni kvalifikacijski okvir</i>
NSLE	National Education Institute	<i>Zavod RS za izobraževanje</i>
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics	<i>Evropska statistična klasifikacija teritorialnih enot</i>
NVICC	National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance	<i>Nacionalni center za informiranje in poklicno svetovanje - NCIPS</i>
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications	<i>Nacionalne poklicne kvalifikacije</i>
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications	<i>Nacionalne poklicne kvalifikacije</i>
OP-HRD	Operational programme for human resources development for the period 2007-2013	<i>OPERATIVNI PROGRAM RAZVOJA ČLOVEŠKIH VIROV ZA OBDOBJE 2007-2013</i>
PPS	Purchasing power standards	<i>Kupna moč</i>
PUM	Project Learning for Young Adults	<i>Projektno učenje za mlajše odrasle</i>
RENAEMP	Resolution on adult education master Plan	<i>Resolucija o nacionalnem programu izobraževanja odraslih</i>

RIC	National Examinations Centre	<i>Državni izpitni Center</i>
RS	Republic of Slovenia	<i>Republika Slovenija</i>
SDS	Slovenia's Development Strategy	<i>Slovenska razvojna strategija</i>
SIAE	Slovenian Institute for Adult Education	<i>Andragoški Center Slovenije - ACS</i>
SORS	Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia	<i>Statistični urad RS - SURS</i>
SQF	Slovenian Qualifications Framework	<i>Slovenski kvalifikacijski okvir</i>
VICC	Vocational information and counselling centres	<i>Center za informiranje in poklicno svetovanje - CIPS</i>