

Labour market information in lifelong guidance

AO/RPA/PMDFON/LMI in Guidance/007/14

Case study visit focusing on Lifelong Career Guidance Centres “CISOKs”, Croatia

prepared for CEDEFOP – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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This text is presented in its original form.

It has neither been revised nor edited by Cedefop.

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1. Background information for the case study

This section starts with a short introduction of the focus of the case study and the field-visit to Croatia as well as the presentation of the host organisation that have been crucial in organising the field-visit.

1.1 Field-visit identity

The following Table 1 summarises the main elements of the field-visit, namely the host organisation that facilitated the activities during our visit, the main contact persons and the timing of the visit:

Table 1: Main elements of the field visit

County in focus	Croatia
Host organisation	Croatian Employment Service (CES) (http://www.hzz.hr)
Focus of the case study	Lifelong Career Guidance Centres “CISOKs”: publicly accessible centres for the delivery of Life-long Career Guidance (LLCG) to all Croatian citizens, which operate under the Croatian Employment Service (CES)
Location(s)	(a) Central Office of Croatian Employment Service (http://www.hzz.hr) - Zagreb (b) CISOK premises (http://www.cisok.hr) – Zagreb
Contact persons	<u>Host organisation</u> Mirjana Zećirević - Assistant Director General, Croatian Employment Service (mirjana.zecirevic@hzz.hr , +385 1 6126 091 / 024) <u>Contractor</u> (a) Elissavet Lykogianni – LMI Project Manager (elissavet@gmail.com , +32 494426822) (b) Iakovos Delioglani - project manager, Q-PLAN INTERNATIONAL LTD (delioglani@qplan.gr , +30 2310 411 191)
Dates of field-visit	11-13 May 2015

The present section follows with a short description of the objectives and operations of the main organisation that we visited in Croatia.

1.2 Background on the host organisation

The **Croatian Employment Service (CES)** is a public institution owned by the Republic of Croatia, established under the Act on Employment Mediation and Unemployment Entitlements focusing on the development of the national labour market, bringing together labour supply and demand with the aim of achieving full employment. CES acts as a “labour market mediator” by developing high quality services in line with the needs of clients. It has been identified as **the main holder of systematically organised activities of information, guidance and counselling aimed at different users** – from students in their final years of basic and

secondary school to different groups of adults, the unemployed persons and job seekers, as well as the employers.

Employment preparation in CES includes lifelong career guidance, learning methods and techniques of active job seeking, training for employment and professional rehabilitation. Through its five regional centres, 17 regional offices, 98 local offices, 11 Lifelong Career Guidance Centres and two Youth centres, CES provides:

(a) information and counselling services to the unemployed in the way that they (in collaboration with employment counsellors) establish their individual career plans aiming at active job seeking and improvement of employability. Assessment of competencies of both the unemployed and employed persons is conducted, which in case of larger employment barriers can involve the application of additional professional procedures for the purpose of establishing their psycho-physical status;

(b) career guidance of persons with disabilities as well as to vocational guidance of students with disabilities through its Division for Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. Specialised employment counsellors are employed, while evaluation of working ability of an unemployed person with disability, including also psychological and medical evaluation, is done in collaboration with career guidance counsellors;

(c) educational activities for the unemployed for the purpose of improving employability and matching their competencies with current and anticipated labour market needs. These activities are organised within the Measures of Active Employment Policy (financing and co-financing of employment and education) but also in collaboration with the units of local and regional self-government, as well as within various EU programs and funds;

(d) professional selection services to employers based on the identification of the required key competencies for certain positions and on the evaluation of the unemployed or job seekers'.

Finally, as a measure to prevent (long term) unemployment, CES is organising “**early intervention**” activities among which there is a set of vocational guidance services (such as informing and counselling), aimed at final grades basic school pupils, secondary school pupils and university students.

1.3 Context information

In order to analyse the CISOK initiative, we need to put it into the context of the overall characteristics of the labour market in Croatia as well as of the national career education and vocational guidance system. This section presents the main elements that characterise the way that labour market intelligence is integrated into this context with some additional information on characteristics of the Croatian labour market system.

1.3.1 General context of LMI in Croatia

Croatia has been affected by the financial crisis at the end of 2008 many enterprises lost their sustainable competitive advantage in the coming years. During 2014 GDP has fallen in comparison to the previous year but, at the same time, positive trends have been observed in the manufacturing/processing industries, in tourism and transport services and in the exports.

Some main characteristics in the labour market are summarised in the following:

(a) in 2014, unemployment was at 17,3% (according to the Labour Force Survey);

(b) the highest unemployment rate in 2014 has been reported in the wholesale and retail trade, the manufacturing/processing industries, accommodation, catering, education and construction;

(c) the sector occupying the largest number of employees include: the manufacturing/processing industries, construction, the wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and catering;

(d) the main stakeholder in the field of Lifelong Learning and Career Guidance is the Croatian Employment Service (CES). CES provides services to unemployed, employed people who want to change their career, employers, pupils and students. Using a range of methods and instruments such as individual and group counselling, informing, workshops for arising career management skills. Expert teams work in 22 CES Regional Offices, together with a coordination team at the CES Central Office;

(e) initial vocational education includes:

(i) forty nine one-year and two-year programmes of lower professional qualifications;

(ii) seventy two three-year programmes for professions in the industry and 63 three-year programmes for crafts;

(iii) ninety four four-year programmes for technicians;

(iv) one five-year programme.

(f) education for attainment of VET qualifications in crafts implemented according to a vocational curriculum consisting of general education and apprenticeship;

(g) apprenticeship consists of a professional/theoretical part and practical training and exercises;

(h) during the school year 2013/2014, the total number of licensed craft workshops was 8443;

(i) entrepreneur impulse 2014, a document by the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts, plans scholarships for students who are educated for scarce occupations and sends out a public invitation for potential users.

Apart from CES, other relevant lifelong learning career guidance stakeholders in Croatia are: the Ministry of Economy Labour and Entrepreneurship (MELE) in cooperation with the Ministry of the Science, Education and Sport (MSES), the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETA), the Agency for Science and Higher Education, Education (ASHE) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), as well as educational institutions, employers, private companies, social welfare agencies, etc. Also, an *Intergovernmental Body for Labour Market Monitoring* was set up by the ASHE in 2010, which has a threefold remit: i) to develop a system for monitoring the labour market and forecasting educational needs; ii) to define and implement a career counselling system to provide advice at all levels of education; and iii) to promote cooperation between the education system and the labour market. It advises public authorities and educational institutions on issues related to the labour market, initiates legislation in the relevant areas, and adapts guidelines and recommendations for the activities of all stakeholders in these areas. Certain aspects of guidance are also conducted by private agencies and non-governmental associations, mostly in connection with job placement and with the organisation of different programmes of education and vocational training, and rarely with general guidance and career counselling.

In 2010 the Croatian Government adopted the *Regulation on the monitoring, analysis and forecasting of labour market needs* for occupations and competences needed for planning and delivering lifelong learning career guidance services. Under this regulation, the MSES in cooperation with various other governmental bodies and agencies, is in charge of forecasting and anticipating future labour market and skills needs.

The Employment Service conducts annually the *Survey of Vocational Intentions of Primary School Pupils and Secondary School Students*, on the basis of which the expert teams consisting of schools and the Employment Service representatives define the target groups that need specific services of career guidance. The pupils/students are afterwards offered information services (group, individual), self-informing through brochures, the Internet, the computer software for career guidance “Mojizbor” (My Choice) or vocational counselling services. Aggregate results of the survey indicate the trends in the pupils'/students' vocational intentions and are forwarded to stakeholders in the field of education and employment on the county and national level.

Overall, career guidance has still not been properly elaborated in the Croatian education related legislation. Except for the National Framework Curriculum, it has been inadequately mentioned in the Primary and Secondary School Education Acts, the Vocational Education Act or in the Adult Education Act. Career guidance in schools is mainly offered with a recruitment nature and cannot be equated with careers information based on accurate labour market information. As reported, the institutional setup for skills anticipation is in place, but strategic coordination and the capacity to translate the findings into actions that will improve matching still needs to be strengthened.

1.3.2 Career education and vocational guidance

Vocational guidance services in Croatia have been systematically provided for several decades and were delivered by the Croatian Employment Office (CES). Services comprise of vocational information, vocational counselling, support to educational institutions through the provision of vocational information and support to employers through a vacancy matching service. However, **they are mainly targeted at the unemployed or pupils with (health or other developmental) disabilities:**

(a) excluding the vocational schools which have a clear professional skills development orientation, guidance and counselling in the **primary and general secondary education (general grammar schools)** is still not properly elaborated and defined in the respective legislation. Professional orientation is introduced through operational programmes of in-class education and within the contents of additional and supplementary courses and extra-curricular activities. Career guidance services are provided by non-teaching staff (school pedagogues, psychologists, etc.) as part of their duties, while partnership-based models apply including various national stakeholders (for example CES in collaboration with schools organises lectures and workshops to inform pupils on professions, qualifications and available educational paths);

(b) until a few years ago, there was no comprehensive organized system for supporting students in vocational guidance and career management skills existed in **universities**, while services were provided in the frame of student counselling centres, aimed mainly at students with difficulties. However, during recent years, inspired by good practice examples in other EU Member States, the emergence of available Structural Funds and various EU-funded programmes as well as towards the upcoming integration of Croatia in the European Union, numerous initiatives in the field of professional and career guidance for students have emerged. For example, Croatian Universities are gradually establishing student counselling and support centres;

(c) almost all the institutions for the **adult education** (private/public higher education institutions, primary and secondary schools dealing with the adult education) operate under the Croatian Employers Association – Education Employers Association (HUP – UPO), while a significant number of its members actively carry out lifelong guidance activities, including candidate selection procedures, guiding and counselling students about the possible courses and programs adjusted to their profiles, etc.;

(d) in Croatia, there is no specific educational institution in the field of lifelong guidance and no unified approach to the development of the required professional competences of guidance practitioners neither in the educational nor employment sector. Guidance counsellors **in schools or the employment sectors** do not have specific degrees in guidance, but mainly bachelor or master degree in psychology or pedagogy, while guidance and counselling is only one of their responsibilities. However, **guidance counsellors in CES** mainly have Master Degree in humanity or social sciences and acquire the necessary guidance skills through the one year “on the job” training, under the supervision of the mentor. Moreover, they are also obliged to engage in continuous professional development in order to maintain their professional licence.

2. Initiative in focus: Lifelong Career Guidance Centres “CISOKs”

2.1 Objectives

The purpose of the LLCG Centres (CISOKs) is to provide quality tailor-made services for lifelong career guidance to all citizens. Developed as part of the Croatian Employment Service (CES), their model is based on a partnership approach driven by the public employment service focusing on **collaboration between local municipalities and chambers, universities, adult education institutions, schools and NGOs** in different aspects, including financing, premises and service delivery.

This partnership model was introduced in 2013 as part of the Croatian Employment Service resulting from the IPA EU project “*CES services to clients: Improving lifelong career guidance and ICT support*”. Established currently in 10 cities (with a plan to gradually expand and cover all counties) CISOK offers its services for free based upon the identified needs of **a specific region or location** and promotes and/or delivers career development services to a wide range of stakeholders, from elementary and high school students and their parents to the unemployed and job seekers and to career counsellors. However, the majority of ‘clients’ who received support through some form of counselling/coaching since its establishment are young people at the age of 15 to 24.

2.2 Implementation

CISOK provides services to clients based upon their identified needs and their willingness for making decisions regarding their career. The Centres provide triage support at three main levels of support: self-help services, brief assisted services and individual case managed services. Besides, CISOK provides coaching the clients and knowledge bases on career guidance and staff training.

Figure 1: CISOK career guidance services system



Source: Euroguidance brochure 2014

The main idea is that the majority of those seeking support are informed through brochures, leaflets and various types of **group information**, self-informing and on-line tools (publicly

accessible web portals). They can be informed regarding employment opportunities, labour market situation (e.g. statistics on employment/unemployment, etc.), professions and education opportunities and education services of other relevant institutions.

A smaller group of clients attend **individual and group counselling** on career management skills development and improvement of active job seeking skills.

Finally, an individual multidisciplinary approach is followed through **individual informing and counselling services**, which could (if needed) include the entire procedure of psychological and medical evaluation and counselling for persons with disabilities, persons "hard to place" and other disadvantaged groups. Special attention is given on identifying at an early stage students with health difficulties as well as those facing social exclusion. The purpose is to develop individual career plans aimed for the active job seeking and increasing employability.

Furthermore, the Croatian Employment Service has developed a number of **e-tools** under the project "*CES services to clients: Improving lifelong career guidance and ICT support*", which are publicly accessible and are widely used by CISOK's career counsellors for the provision of LLCG services:

(a) Labour Market Information System (LMIS) combining and visualizing information on employment, unemployment and wage rates in Croatia. It gives overviews of the labour market for individual activities at both national and county level, while it offers comparisons of certain occupations or activities. The information is based on statistics of several institutions, such as the Croatian Employment Service and the Croatian Bureau of Statistics;

(b) Advanced Labour Market Information System (ALMIS) which offers insights on labour market trends, employment opportunities and education possibilities. The data are provided by the Croatian Employment Service, the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, the Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the Agency for Vocational Education and the Training and Adult Education;

(c) statistics online of CES which aims to improve and modernize public access to data on registered unemployment and employment. Information is available in both years and months, and according to different characteristics, such as gender, age, education level, economic activity, occupational groups, etc.

Self-Assessment Questionnaire personality traits associated with work. The questionnaire is a tool for self-assessment of personality and is intended to help an individual determine his/her characteristics that are important for adaptation to different positions in various business situations, providing an approximate estimate of his/her personality traits.

Finally, CES has developed a computer programme "**My Choice**" for vocational guidance targeting citizens above 13 years old who are choosing a profession or thinking about changing professions as well as those who want to learn more information on specific occupations. The program is available in all CISOKs and is free for all citizens. Institutions that wanted to use the program in their institutions were entitled to use it **by purchasing a license**. An internet version is planned to become available from 1 August 2015, being part of the new national eGuidance portal on CES website. The programme will provide:

(a) **information on more than 250 different occupations** (e.g. a brief description, required skills, working conditions, related occupations, job opportunities, etc.); and

(b) **self-assessment tests on traits that employers seek and on professional interest** - questionnaire on attractiveness of dealing with work-related activities and assessment of competences in dealing with them information on labour market and education opportunities.

Figure 2: CISOK home page



Source: <http://www.cisok.hr>

2.3 Results and SWOT of CISOK

The establishment of CISOKs by the Croatian Employment Service constitutes a practical example of the new approach in Long-life Career Guidance following the country's accession to the EU in 2013. EU support, both in terms of policy/practices borrowing (at both national and local level) and financial resources, resulted to the adoption of a de-centralised partnership based approach for the operation of the Centres, based on close collaboration with other stakeholders (such as local municipalities and chambers, universities and adult education institutions, schools and Non-governmental organisations) in different aspects, including co-financing, sharing of premises and unified service delivery.

Labour market information (e.g. employment/unemployment current status and trends both at national and regional level, job profiles, employment and education possibilities, etc.) is collected from several reliable national sources (e.g. Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, Agency for Science and Higher Education, etc.) and visualised in a variety of on-line tools developed by CES. Moreover, self-assessment questionnaires and computer programmes have been developed by CES aiming to guide individuals in taking informed decisions on starting, changing or advancing their career. CISOKs' career counsellors exploit these tools and offer a wide range of services to all citizens adjusted to their needs.

Currently, there are 11 CISOKs established in 10 major cities not covering the entire country and are understaffed, but a strong interest is evident to create more Centres in the coming years allowing a better interaction among career counsellors and citizens. However, the lack of personnel as well as of a national framework for initial and continuous education and training of the career counsellors are major obstacles for the provision of career guidance services. Newly employed counsellors develop their skills through one year long initial "on-the-job" training

under the supervision of a mentor (experienced counsellor), while depending on their vocation, they could take a state exam after successfully completing their first year on the job.

The following table summarises the main conclusions that the field-study team has derived about the operation and the results of the CISOK initiative in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis.

Strengths

(a) CISOKs operation is based on a partnership approach;

(b) a number of e-tools have been developed by the Croatian Employment Service and used by CISOKs' counsellors combining reliable labour market information from several national sources;

(c) career counselling services provided by CISOKs' experts are adjusted to the clients' support needs, ranging from information of the labour market and the professions to individual counselling.

Weaknesses

(a) currently there are 11 CISOKs established in 10 cities not covering the entire country while they are understaffed;

(b) there is currently no nationally agreed framework for initial and continuous education and training of the career guidance counsellors.

Opportunities

(a) the recent accession to the EU enables the transfer of knowledge from other EU Member States on LLCG practices and this is reflected on the constant development of CISOKs;

(b) there is a strong interest to establish more Centre and cover all counties, allowing a better interaction between career counsellors and citizens;

(c) increased interest to integrate the existing, independent IT tools into one that will gather and present information in a unified way, while different governmental departments as well as employers and their associations will feed the system with updated data on the labour market and occupations.

Threats

(a) funding for career guidance services is currently depending on Structural Funds, while national funding is not enough, which may affect the operation of CISOKs.

3. Developments towards the future

The discussions with both policy makers and practitioners revealed that **the career guidance services in Croatia are in a phase of transition** from the *'traditional'* largely office based counselling targeting mainly the unemployed and people with (learning or health) disabilities or facing social exclusion to *a new approach* that is based on the cooperation of all stakeholders from the public and private sector and the citizens and uses IT tools accessible for all. This re-orientation and re-structuring is the result of Croatia's accession to the EU in 2013, which allowed the country to benefit both in terms of funding (IPA instrument, TEMPUS programmes, etc.) and knowledge on measures and practices (e.g. extensive training for the established career counsellors was delivered by UK specialists).

The **new national strategy for Lifelong Career Guidance**, first drafted in 2012, **targets both cultural** (e.g. citizens were unused to seek assistance for their career development and their choices were constrained by lack of opportunity) **and systemic** (e.g. career guidance was not fully integrated into the educational system, there was little connection at policy level between employment services and other governmental departments, and was no unified approach for the development of the required professional competencies of guidance counsellors) **challenges:**

(a) there was little connection between employment services and other governmental departments, although on a practical level partnerships between employment and educational institutions as well as between public and private providers did exist. As a result, the current system of vocational education and training was not modernised rapidly enough to follow the labour market trends, while information on occupations and the necessary qualifications was collected mainly under the initiative of the career counsellors;

(b) furthermore, until now, career guidance is not formally integrated into the educational system at all levels but is carried out by non-teaching staff (school pedagogues, psychologists, etc.) as part of their duties through operational programmes of in-class education and within the contents of additional and supplementary courses and extra-curricular activities.

To address those challenges, the **National Forum for Lifelong Career Guidance** has been established in September 2014 under the authority of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System while the Croatian Employment Service has the role of the Secretariat. The Forum brings together key stakeholders from the field of education, employment and social inclusion for a more efficient development of policies, measures and activities, as well as more coordinated provision of lifelong guidance services on national level and regional levels. Its activities include:

(a) the development of the *National Strategy in Croatia 2015-2020* setting the priorities and measures for the provision of LLCG services in different sectors on national and regional level, including their links with the education system;

(b) the improvement and adaptation of the career counselling services aimed for different target group of clients (elementary and high school pupils, students, adult learners, employers etc.);

(c) the design of the quality standards of the services in different sectors; and

(d) the setting up of the framework for initial and continuous education and training of the career guidance counsellors.

To implement the new approach for the provision of Lifelong Career Guidance services:

(a) a National Qualifications Framework is currently under development, putting emphasis on

the knowledge and skills needed and related to the economy and the labour market;

(b) LLCG centres (CISOKs) have been established and in close collaboration with local/regional stakeholders (e.g. municipalities, chambers, schools, etc.), offer a variety of counselling services customised to the needs of the citizens, such as group informational/counselling workshops, presentations in schools (either in the school premises or in CISOK's offices), individual coaching for the development of individual career plans, etc. . In fact, there are examples where local actors formed formal partnership agreements with CISOKs offering support and resources (e.g. equipment, knowledge exchange, etc.) towards achieving common goals;

(c) a number of **IT tools** are developed offering information on labour market and professions at national and regional level, as well as for helping an individual to 'assess' his/her competencies and interests. Moreover, even though currently these tools independent and operate by different actors, there is a strong interest to present information in a unified way. Different governmental departments as well as employers and their associations will feed the system with updated data on the labour market and occupations with a view to offer a 'one-stop-shop' to all citizens when planning their career.

Overall, there are positive signs that the provision of career guidance services in Croatia is improving and all stakeholders recognise the need to be engaged. The knowledge transfer on LLCG from EU Member States plays a catalytic role for modernising the LLCG sector in Croatia, while a key challenge that remains is strong dependence on EU structural funds which may hinder the further development of the sector.

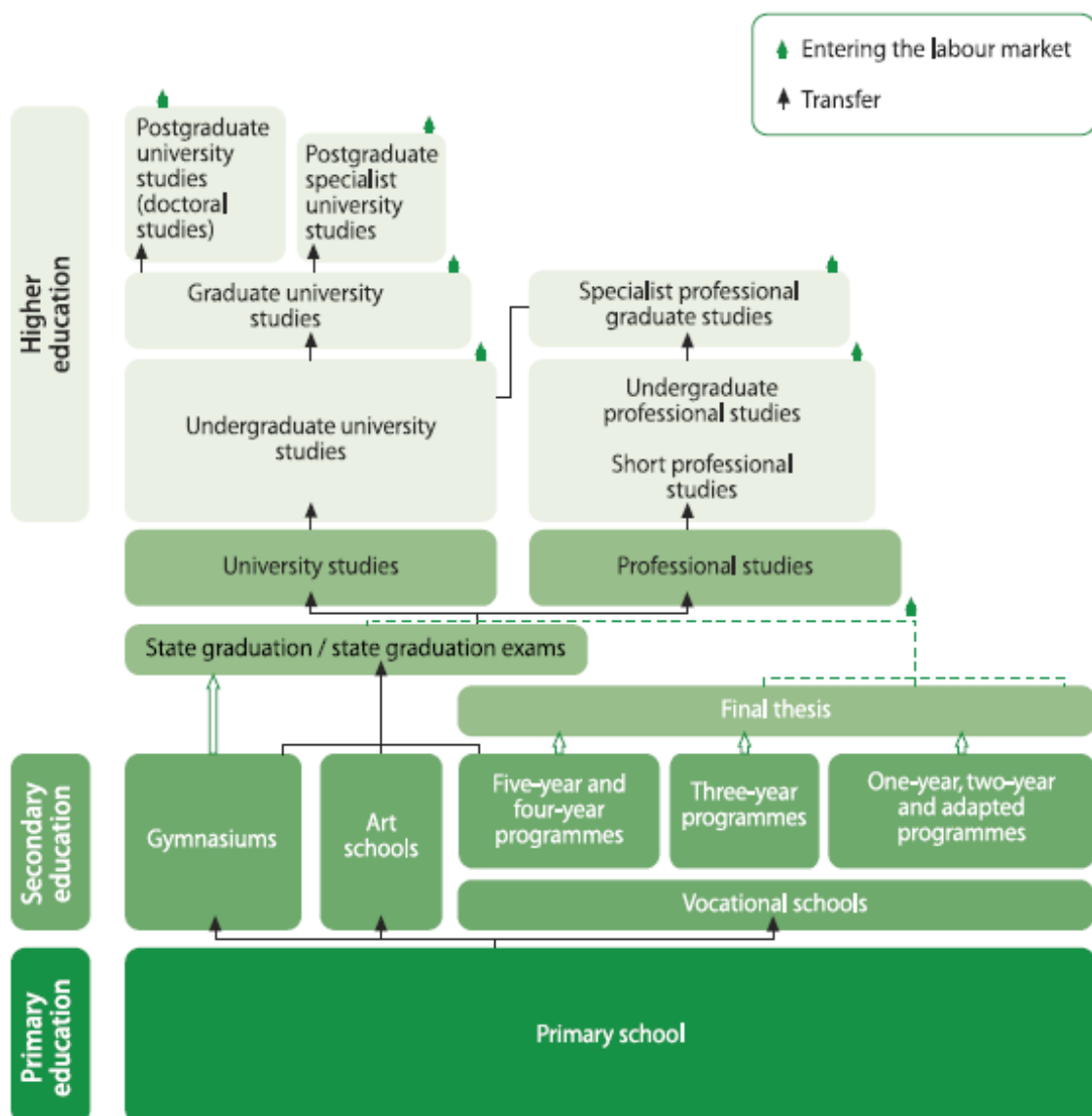
Annex I – Educational framework

I.1 Overview of the educational system

The Croatian Constitution establishes that in Croatia **education is accessible to all citizens under the same conditions in accordance with their capabilities**, as well as that **compulsory education** (encompassing eight years of single structure primary and lower secondary education) **is free for all**. The educational system is structured in such way to enable every pupil, student or adult to develop his/her potential, aiming at their personal development and entry to the labour market as well as prepare them for lifelong learning.

The Croatian education system’s structure is outlined in the figure below, which describes how different stages of education are followed in time (age of pupil) and which are the main options for education after the basic up to tertiary education.

Figure 3: The Croatian educational system



Primary school begins at the age of six and is compulsory for all children. It includes primary and lower secondary levels organised as a single structure system and lasts eight years. Upon completing their elementary education, children may continue optional secondary education which consists of general or vocational secondary courses. More specifically, all students are entitled to enrol to:

(a) gymnasiums (general grammar schools) which last for four years and education is completed by passing the State Matura exam, preparing students for the continuation of education on some of the higher education institutions;

(b) vocational schools (technical, industrial and craft based) lasting up to five years depending on the type of teaching plan and programme/curriculum. Education is completed (acquisition of 'vocational qualification') once a student submits his/her Graduation Paper and defends it orally in a procedure organised by his/her school. A student can acquire a 'lower vocational qualification' when he/she follows a shorted programme lasting one or two years. More specifically, there are:

(i) four or five years educational programmes enabling the acquisition of basic and vocational competencies to receive qualifications necessary for labour market, for further education (by passing the State Matura exam) and for lifelong learning;

(ii) three years programmes prepare students for working in industry, crafts or other economic activities; while

(iii) following a one or two years programme a student obtains the knowledge and skills both in schools and firms.

(c) art schools (music, dance, art) with a four-year duration enabling a student to acquire competencies necessary for the labour market or to undertake further education on higher education institutions by taking the State Matura exam.

Higher education is delivered within:

(a) university study programmes, which qualify students to work in science and higher education, private and public sectors, and society in general, as well as to develop and apply scientific and professional knowledge (undergraduate university studies normally last for three to four years, while graduate university studies last for one to two years); and

(b) professional study programmes, providing students the title of Professional Bachelor (with reference to a specialisation) enabling their direct integration into the working process (undergraduate professional studies last for two to three years and specialist professional graduate studies for one to two years).

Educational requirements for admission into study programmes are set by higher education institutions, most of them using the national examinations administered at the end of secondary school (State Matura).

Finally, **adult education** is also an integral part of the Croatian education system and refers to elementary and secondary education of adults. There is a wide network of institutions for adult education throughout the country as well as a large number of various institutions which, apart from their regular activities, carry out adult education program. Formal adult learning includes activities performed in institutional and publicly verified forms of education with the purpose of obtaining professional knowledge, skills and competencies. These activities comprise of primary and secondary education for adults towards obtaining secondary school or professional / lower qualification, retraining, education and training. Additionally, there is a wide range of non-formal education programmes focusing on job training for adults, different social activities and personal development.

I.2 Governance and funding

The Croatian education system at all levels is **centrally governed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports**. Other national public bodies involved in the **regulation, development and quality control of the educational sector** in Croatia are the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Agency for Vocational Education and Training, the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and the National Center for External Evaluation of Education. In fact, the Ministry and the Agencies legally proscribe and accredit educational programs provided by educational institutions at all levels, while the Ministry also administers the salaries of teaching staff for all levels of education, except for the lowest level (Early Childhood Education and Care - ECEC).

Furthermore, **regional governments and institutions**:

(a) finance and manage ECEC with the Ministry providing central guidance, accreditation and control over the educational programmes; and

(b) share the responsibility for appointing the school heads and individual staff members for ECEC, elementary and middle schools (upper secondary) levels.

Finally, **universities** enjoy organizational autonomy and academic freedom in teaching and research and for appointing of their management staff (deans, vice-deans, rectors etc.) which is guaranteed by the Croatian Constitution. The majority of funding is provided by the state, covering such items as salaries for academic staff, capital investment and running costs for academic institutions, research funds, student subsistence and tuition fees and other.

Overall, primary and secondary schools are mostly state-run (funded by the state), while there are a number of schools run by Catholic, Serbian Orthodox and Muslim religious communities (six primary and 16 secondary schools), but are also financed by the state. Moreover, there are six private primary and 32 private secondary schools. Finally, there are seven public Universities, one private (Catholic) University and a number of private and state-run colleges.

Annex II - Agenda of the field-visit

Day 1 – Monday 11 May 2015	
13.00– 14.30	<p>Focus group – interview with policy makers and practitioners (Croatian Employment Service)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mirjana Zećirević - Assistant director general, Croatian Employment Service - Teo Matković – Assistant director general, Croatian Employment Service - Andrea Tomšić – counsellor, CISOK central office - Matea Tolj – counsellor, CISOK Zagreb - Denissa Drusany – Head of the Student Counselling and Support Center, University of Zagreb - Hrvoje Balen – expert, Croatian Employers’ Association “Algebra” - Dubravka Balja – responsible for LMI, Ministry of Labour and Pension System - Dubravka Matić - Senior expert – specialist, Labour market sector, Ministry of Labour and Pension System
Day 2 – Tuesday 12 May 2015	
12.30– 13.30	<p>Interview with CISOK counsellors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zlatko Majsec - Regional office Zagreb, vocational information counsellor - Sanda Kačunić – CISOK Zagreb, counsellor - Matea Tolj – CISOK Zagreb, counsellor
13.30- 14.30	<p>Observation – presentation of the educational paths for high school graduates (1 classroom)</p>
Day 3 – Wednesday 13 May 2015	
10.00– 11.00	<p>Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanda Kačunić – CISOK Zagreb, counsellor • Katarina Ćurković – Head of career guidance department – Central office
11.00-12.00	<p>Reflections and questions on the field visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirjana Zećirević - Croatian Employment Service, Assistant director general

Annex III – References, sources of information

- Lifelong Career Guidance centres (CISOKs). <http://www.cisok.hr>
- Croatian Employment Service (CSE). <http://www.hzz.hr/>
- Eurydice network. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice>
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- Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education. <http://www.asoo.hr>
- Education and Teacher Training Agency. <http://www.azoo.hr>
- Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. <http://www.mzos.hr>
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