

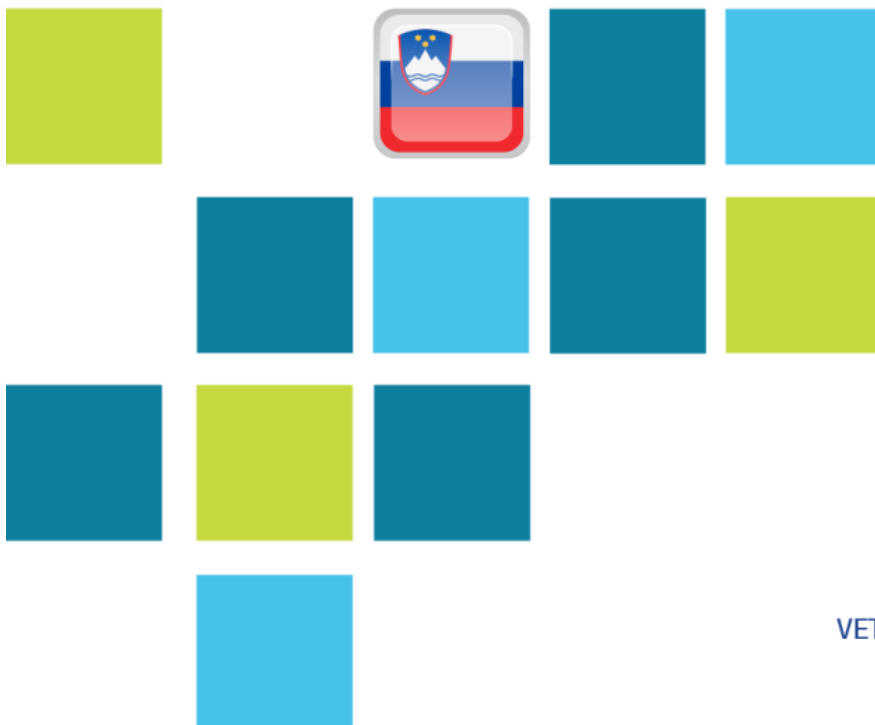
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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

# SLOVENIA

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## SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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  - Short Vocational Upper Secondary Education programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (nižje poklicno izobraževanje, NPI).
  - Vocational bridging programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (poklicni tečaj, PT).
  - Master craftsman, foreman and shop manager exams (mojstrski, delovodski ali poslovodni izpiti). EQF level 4, ISCED 354. Each exam is under the auspices of the individual chamber that organises the exams. Candidates study independently, though preparatory courses may be prepared due to market demand and literature may be also offered..
  - Higher Vocational programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (višje strokovno izobraževanje, VSI).
- References.

## CHAPTER 1.

# Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

### Summary of main elements (1)

Formal vocational education and training (VET) in Slovenia starts at upper secondary level and is provided mainly by public schools that are founded and financed by the State. The education and labour ministries share responsibility for preparing legislation, financing, and adopting VET programmes, standards and qualifications. While the education ministry deals with VET at systemic level, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) is responsible for VET at the practical level; it monitors and guides the development of VET and provides in-service teacher training and VET curricula. The CPI also acts as a link between ministries, schools and social partners.

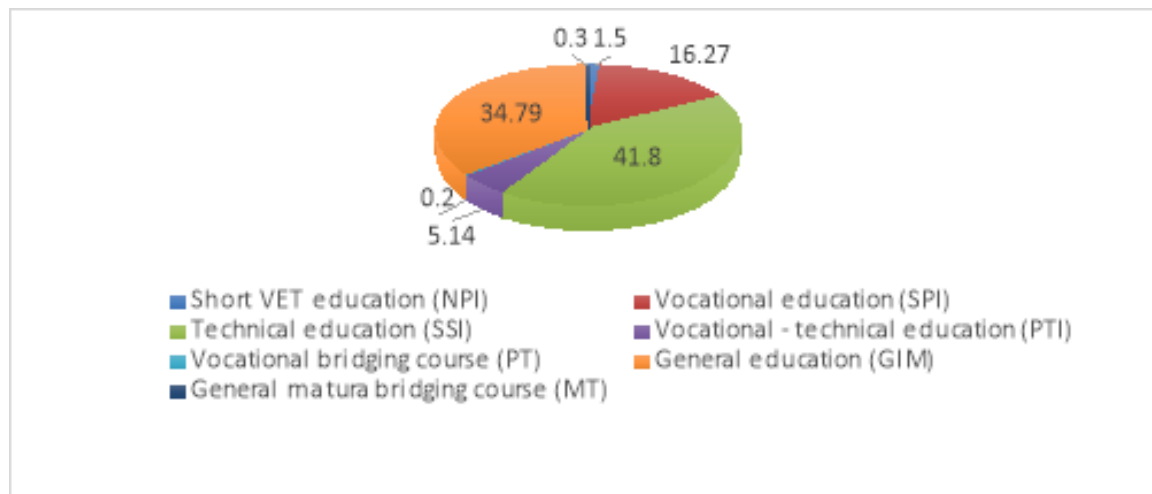
#### VET programmes

After completing compulsory basic education, learners can enrol in the following upper secondary programmes:

- technical upper secondary programmes (ISCED 354): 4-year programmes that consist of 40% of general subjects and at least 8 weeks of in-company work-based learning (15% WBL). After vocational matura (two general exams and one vocational-theoretical and one practical exam, partly external) learners can enter the labour market or enrol in tertiary education.
- vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353): 3-year labour-market-oriented programmes with two paths:
  - school-based path: approximately 20% (at least 24 weeks) of the programme is undertaken at an employer and the rest at the school (consisting of general subjects and professional modules);
  - apprenticeship path: a minimum 50% of the programme is undertaken at an employer, while at least 40% is delivered in school. Changing paths midway is possible. After final exams (first language and practical exam), students from both school and apprenticeship paths can enter the labour market or enrol in 2-year vocational technical education programmes at ISCED 354 that lead to vocational matura;
- short vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353): 2-year programmes that qualify learners for less demanding occupations (at assistant level) or continuing education in vocational programmes.

In the school year 2020/21, 34.79% of students enrolled in general upper secondary programmes, 0.3% in a general matura bridging course and 64.91% in upper secondary VET programmes: 41.8 % in technical programmes, 0.2% into vocational bridging education, 16.27% in vocational programmes, 1.5% in short VET programmes and 5.14% in vocational technical education (2) .

Share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

Graduates with a vocational matura can enrol in 2-year higher vocational programmes (ISCED 554) or first-cycle professional education (ISCED 655) and, after successful participation in an additional entry examination, also in first-cycle academic education (ISCED 645).

Higher vocational programmes are practice-oriented and include 40% of work-based learning in companies. These were developed to meet the needs of the economy, as they train graduates for managing, planning and controlling work processes. In 2020/21, 13% of all tertiary students enrolled into higher VET schools.

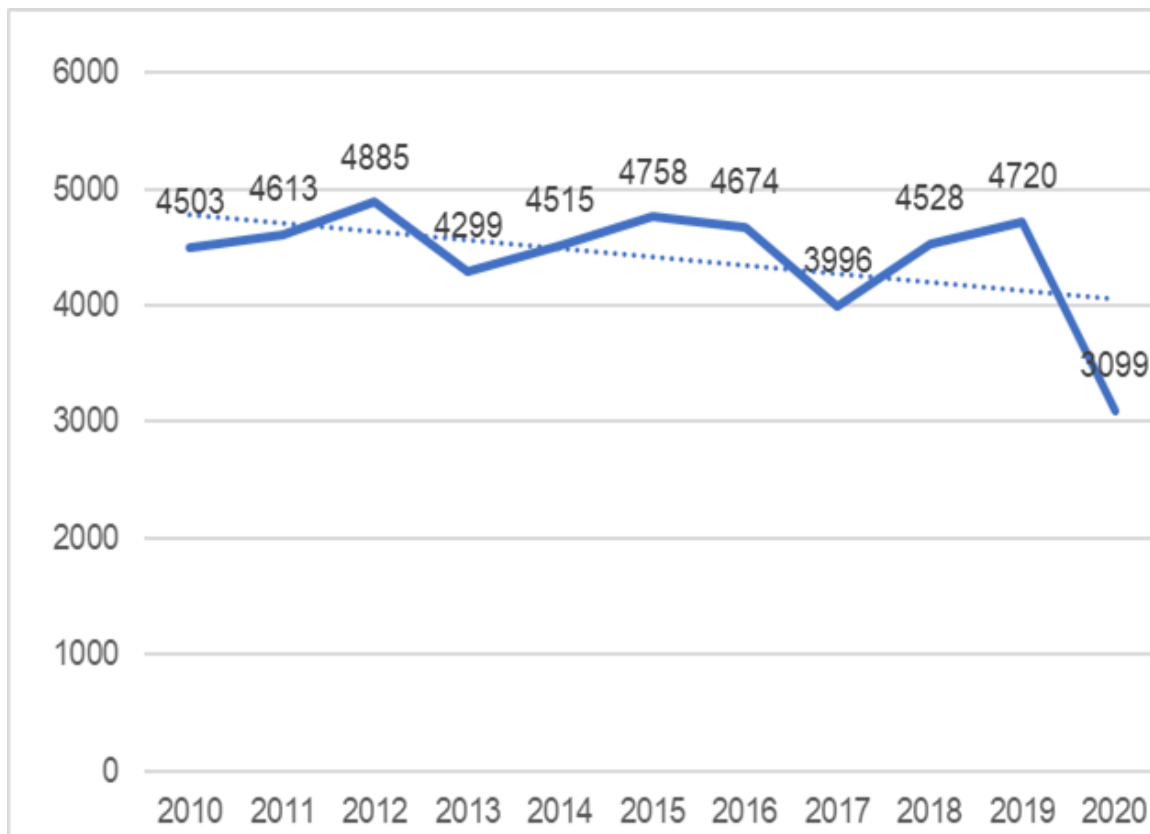
#### Adult learning and CVET

Adults can enrol in the same formal VET programmes as young people. Adults can also participate in continuing VET, offered by public and private providers; regulation of provision of such programmes is not covered by legislation. Many activities to support adult education are organised by adult education centres.

According to the most recent data available, in the school year 2019/20 16 276 adults participated in the upper secondary programmes; 75% of them were younger than 25. Of these adults, 4.5% were enrolled in general education, 59.9% in technical education, 34.9% in vocational education and 0.7% in short vocational education (3) .

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is possible within the national vocational qualifications (NVQ) system that has been in place since 2000. In 2021, an NVQ certificate can be obtained for approximately 178 (4) qualifications. Candidates must prepare a personal portfolio and take part in a validation procedure.

Number of NVQ certificates issued, by year:



Source: [www.nrp.org](http://www.nrp.org), extracted on 15.3.2021

The number of certificates awarded has been stable, with a small increase during recent years. It decreased only in 2020, due to the pandemic.

### **Distinctive features (5)**

VET in Slovenia is characterised by the following main features:

- occupational standards form the basis for competence-based VET programmes and for the NVQ system;
- vocational and technical programmes are offered in all professional fields, all VET programmes combine general subjects with professional modules that integrate theoretical and practical learning; permeability between education levels and programme types is high;
- work-based learning represents an integral part of all types of VET programmes. Students are trained in modern intercompany training centres and companies, in selected vocational upper secondary programmes, as well as in apprenticeship form;
- upper secondary school autonomy: framework curricula are set at national level, while VET schools are responsible for design curricula. They adapt 20% of the curricula (open curricula) to local companies' needs.

Slovenia has one of the lowest rates of early leavers from education and training (ELET) in the EU. In 2020 the percentage of ELETs/ NEETS aged 18-24 with a maximum of primary education was 4.1%. The reasons are the traditionally high value of education in society, availability of

State scholarships, progression opportunities in education, and a well-developed guidance system, as well as a well-developed network of formal adult education providers.

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- [1] Based on Cedefop (2021). *Spotlight on VET - 2020 compilation: vocational education and training systems in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.  
<http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/667443>
  - [2] Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia:  
<https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/News/Index/9588>
  - [3] Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia:  
<https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/News/Index/9588>
  - [5] Based on Cedefop (2021). *Spotlight on VET - 2020 compilation: vocational education and training systems in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.  
<http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/667443>

## CHAPTER 2.

# Main challenges and policy responses

Improving VET response to labour market needs has been at the heart of the development of competence-based curricula since 2006. The implementation period has brought changes in school curriculum planning, school-company cooperation culture, didactic and student assessment approaches and VET attractiveness. Significant efforts were made through investing in new training facilities (intercompany training centres) and reinforcing in-company work-based learning (WBL). The quality of WBL and competence-based assessment remain a challenge.

Further development of career guidance services and promoting more flexible and individualised paths remain current priorities.

With the adoption of the new Apprenticeship Act in 2017, implementation of the apprenticeship path in four vocational programmes (ISCED 353) began. In 2021 the apprenticeship path was implemented in 14 vocational programmes. Along with companies and schools, chambers have a significant role in assessing suitability of training places, approving apprenticeship agreements and monitoring companies. Companies are financially supported to train apprentices. CPI has carried out three evaluations of the apprenticeship system as a basis for further development.

The importance of raising adults' levels of skills is growing. Slovenia's population is ageing, and about 26% of workers face a high risk of seeing their jobs automated. To improve the inclusion of adults in learning and reach national and EU indicators, Slovenia is preparing the *new national master plan for adult education 2021–30*. It aims to provide every adult in Slovenia with equal opportunities for quality education throughout their life by focusing mainly on increasing their participation in lifelong learning.

The basic digital skills level of the age group 15 to 64 is 55%, close to the EU average (58%) in 2019. Slovenia is working on the national *Digital Slovenia 2027 development strategy* (6) .

Projects supported by the Recovery and resilience facility (RRF) will primarily focus on the modernisation of vocational education. The RRF basic goal is adapting education to digital, sustainable transition, and increasing the resilience of the education system. Digital, green and entrepreneurial competences will be introduced to education programmes; computer science and informatics will be strengthened (7) .

Development of accredited CVET programmes for upskilling specific vocational competences is another response to labour market needs. New programmes offer training to employees to improve vocational competences and acquire new or in-depth specialisation. They are planned at EQF levels 4 and 5.

Recognising the importance of monitoring and anticipating skills need and supply, in May 2021 the Ministry of Labour, together with other stakeholders, established the Skills forecasting platform project. Its function is to develop the skills/competence forecasting system to identify short-, medium-, and long-term gaps in occupations and competences in the labour market. The results of this project will help the labour market and education system to develop programmes to strengthen knowledge, skills and competences of all learners (young and adult) in accordance with the labour market needs (8) .



- [6] <https://www.gov.si teme/digitalizacija-druzbe/>
- [7] <https://www.eu-skladi.si/sl/po-2020/nacrt-za-okrevanje-in-krepitev-odpornosti>
- [8] Based on Cedefop (2021). *Spotlight on VET - 2020 compilation: vocational education and training systems in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.  
<http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/667443>

## CHAPTER 3.

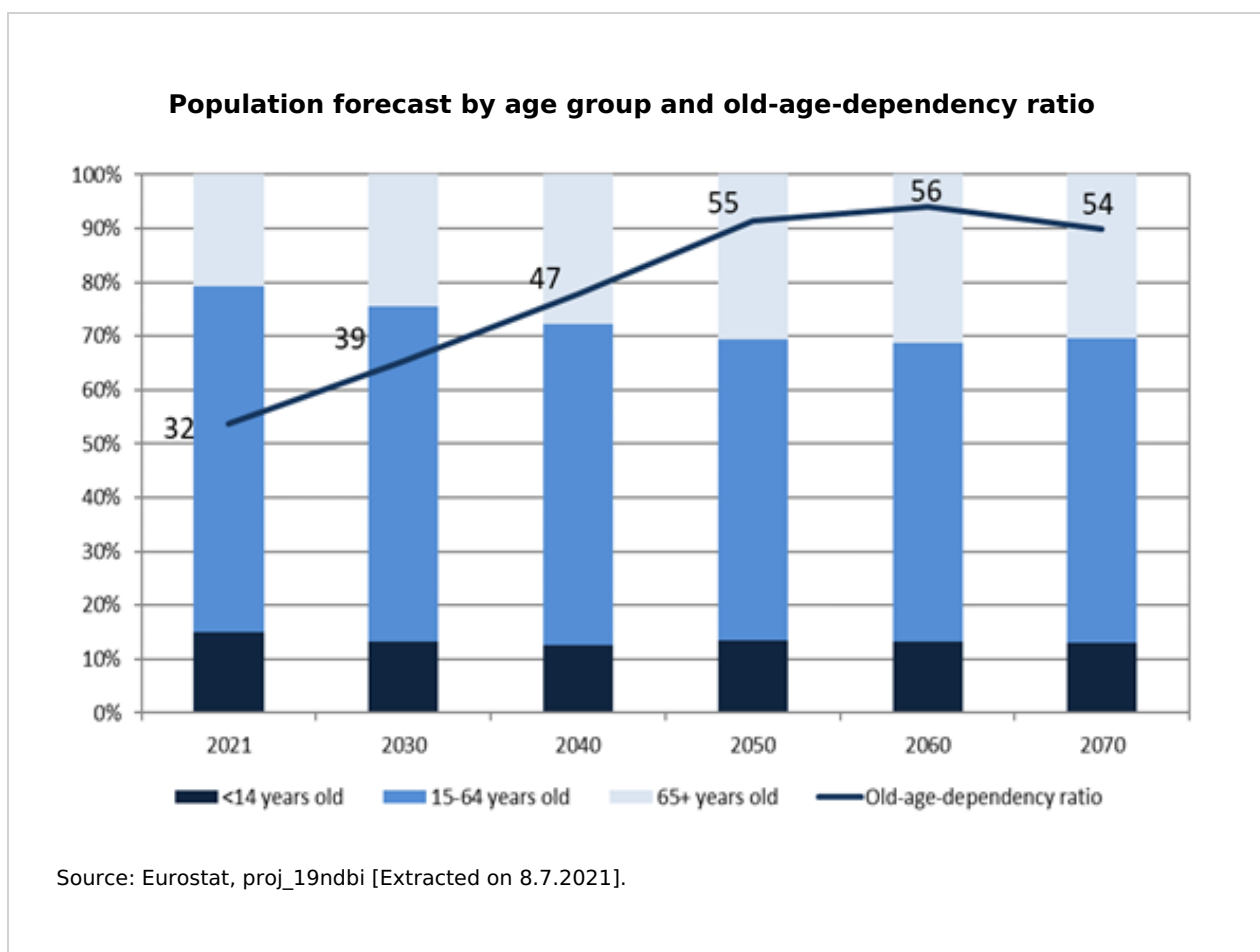
# External factors influencing VET

## 3.1 Demographics

Population in 2020: 2 095 861 (9)

It increased by 1.6% since 2015 due to positive net migration, although natural population (10) growth was negative.

The population is ageing. The old-age-dependency ratio is expected to increase from 32 in 2021 to 54 in 2070 (11) .



Demographic changes have an impact on VET.

In response to the ageing population, the government adopted an active ageing strategy in 2017 (12) and comprehensive support to companies for active ageing of employees in 2018 (13) aimed at increasing the vocational competences of the adult population (14) (15) .

In 2020, Slovenia adopted a government strategy in migration, with measures for promoting

immigration of foreign labour to reduce labour market mismatches (16) .

The country has two minorities, Italian and Hungarian. The Italian minority has an option to learn in their native language and learn Slovene as a second language. A VET school in Obalno-kraška region offers 12 different VET programs in Italian teaching language (17) .

The Hungarian minority has a bilingual VET school in Pomurska region, offering 16 different VET programmes (18) .

## 3.2 Economics

Most companies are micro and small-sized.

Main economic sectors:

- manufacturing (automobile, metallic, electronics, pharmacy and chemicals, etc.);
- service sector;
- construction.

Export comprises mainly manufacture of motor vehicles, electrical equipment, pharmaceutical products and preparations, machinery, equipment and basic metals.

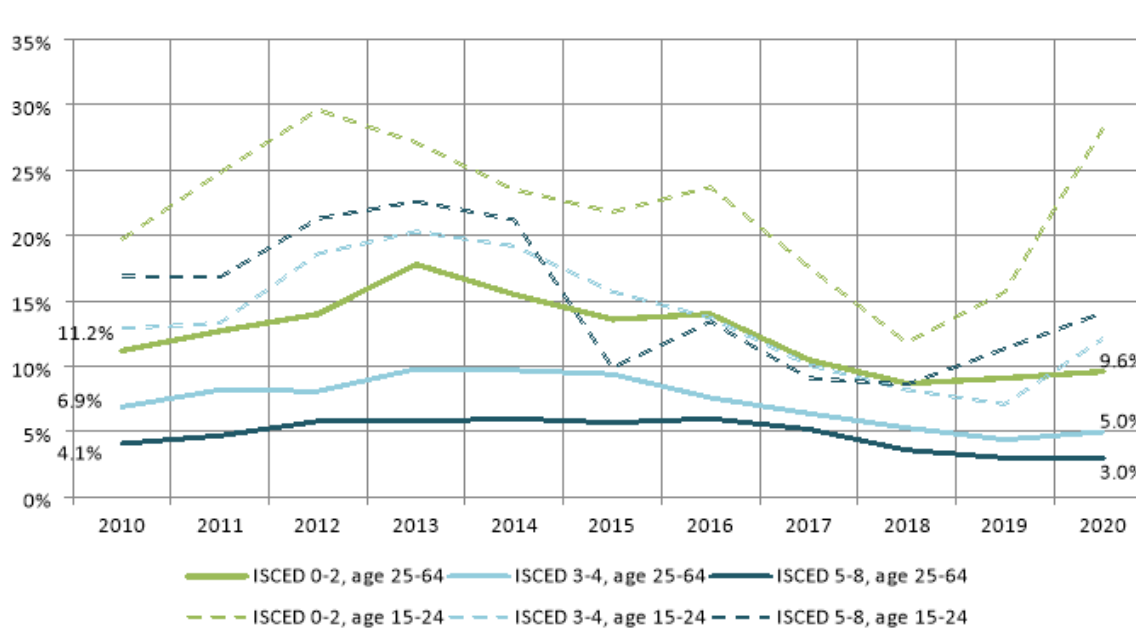
## 3.3 Labour market

The process of profession deregulation (19) started in 2010, when there were 323 regulated professions. In 2014, it became one of the key government projects with cross-sectoral status (20) . The focus of deregulation has been all economic sectors. However, the majority of the professions that were deregulated were in tourism, construction, veterinary, trade, social assistance, sales and commercial management (21) .

The aim of this policy has been to ease entry conditions and access to the labour market and to minimise the administrative burden that would lead to easier inclusion of young people, migrants and other groups in the labour market. The number of regulated professions is currently 220.

Total unemployment (aged 25-74) (22) in 2020 was 4.4% (6.2% in EU-27); it was decreasing from 2008 to 2019, mainly because of economic growth and increased demand for labour force, and demographic changes (ageing of population). Because of the pandemic, unemployment increased in 2020 (4.4%), but it was by 2.3 percentage points lower than in 2010 (6.7%)

### Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2010-20



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series; low reliability for ISCED 0-2 and 5-8, age 15-24. ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education. ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education. Source: Eurostat, Ifsa\_urgaed [Extracted on 8.7.2021].

Young people (15-24 years) are especially vulnerable on the labour market. After 2013 - when unemployment in Slovenia reached its peak - the unemployment rate was falling until 2019. In 2020, young people were one of the groups most at risk of losing their jobs, also because of their high share of temporary contracts. The highest increase in unemployment for 2020 was once more among low-educated people.

Despite the crisis in 2020, the number of young people in employment has increased in the last 5 years by 14.2% (from 107 000 to 122 000). This exceeds the increase in the total working population rate (10.9%) (23) .

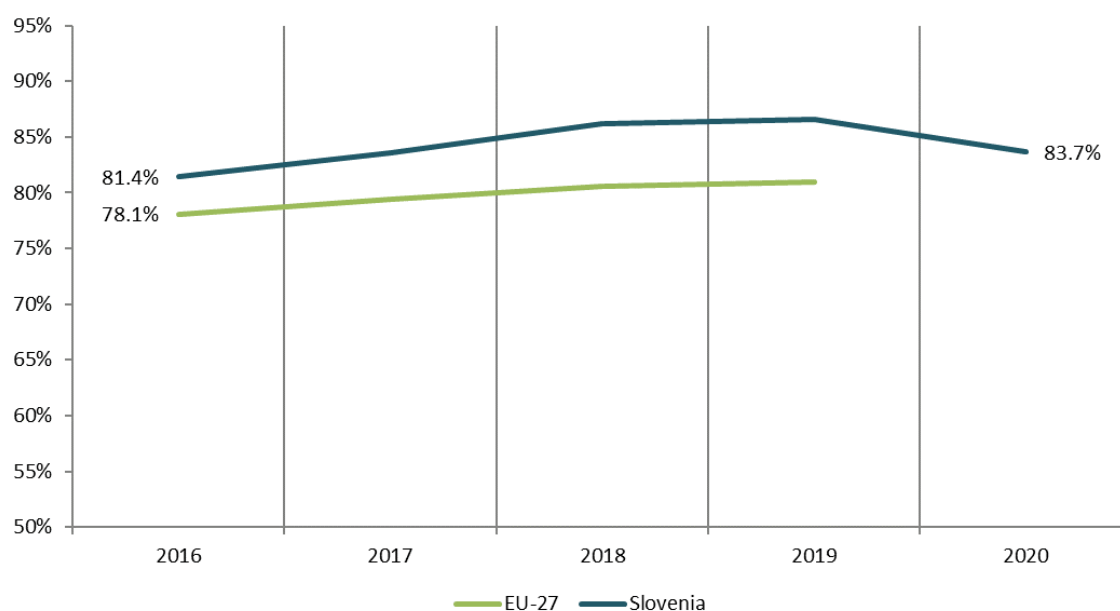
Unemployment is distributed unevenly between people with low- and high-level qualifications, with unskilled workers being most vulnerable to unemployment.

The gap increased in 2020 (6.6 p.p.) but it was lower than in 2013 when it was the highest (12.0 p.p.).

Since 2013, the unemployment rate of low- and medium-level qualified people fell due to economic recovery and more employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector. In 2020, the pandemic affected mostly low and medium-level qualified people, whose unemployment rate increased.

The employment rate of VET graduates aged 20 to 34 was increasing from 81.4% in 2016 because of favourable labour market trends and population ageing (shrinking working age population) up to 2019, but in 2020 it decreased to 83.7%, mainly because of the pandemic.

### Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Source: Eurostat, edat\_ifse\_24 [Extracted on 8.7.2021]

Employment of VET graduates age 20 to 34 increased by 5.2 p.p. between 2016 and 2019 due to improved labour market conditions; in 2020 the economy was negatively affected by the COVID-19 epidemic and it fell by 2.9 p.p.

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- [9] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 7.5.2021]
  - [10] Natural population growth is the difference between the numbers of births and deaths in a population
  - [11] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).
  - [12] Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the RS, hereinafter IMAD, 2017.
  - [13] Public Scholarship, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the RS, hereinafter Public Fund, 2017b.
  - [14] <https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MDDSZ/Direktorat-za-starejse-in-deinstitucionalizacijo/strategije/Active-Ageing-Strategy-2017.pdf>
  - [15] <https://www.srips-rs.si/razvoj-kadrov/celovita-podpora-podjetjem-za-aktivno-staranje-delovne-sile-asi>
  - [16] <https://www.gov.si/novice/2019-07-18-vlada-sprejela-strategijo-na-podrocju-migracij/>
  - [17] Scuola media Pietro Coppo: <http://www.pietrocoppo.net/sl/>

- [18] DVOJEZIČNA SREDNJA ŠOLA LENDAVA, KÉTNyelVű KÖZÉPISKOLA, LENDVA:  
<https://www.dssl.si/sl/>
- [19] Deregulation means to withdraw the regulation of the profession or to renew the regulation.
- [20] Ministry of Economic Development and Technology (in Slovenian: Ministrstvo za gospodarski razvoj in tehnologijo); Ministry of Economy (2017). *Zaključno poročilo projekta VSRP 10. Prenova reguliranih dejavnosti in poklicev* [Final report of the VSRP 10 project. Renewal of regulated professions].
- [22] Eurostat table une\_rt\_a, (percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old) [extracted 6.5.2020].
- [23] Source: Mladi\_in\_trg\_dela/Youth and the labour market Employment service of Slovenia.  
[https://www.ess.gov.si/\\_files/14103/Analiza\\_Mladi\\_in\\_trg\\_dela\\_2021.pdf](https://www.ess.gov.si/_files/14103/Analiza_Mladi_in_trg_dela_2021.pdf)

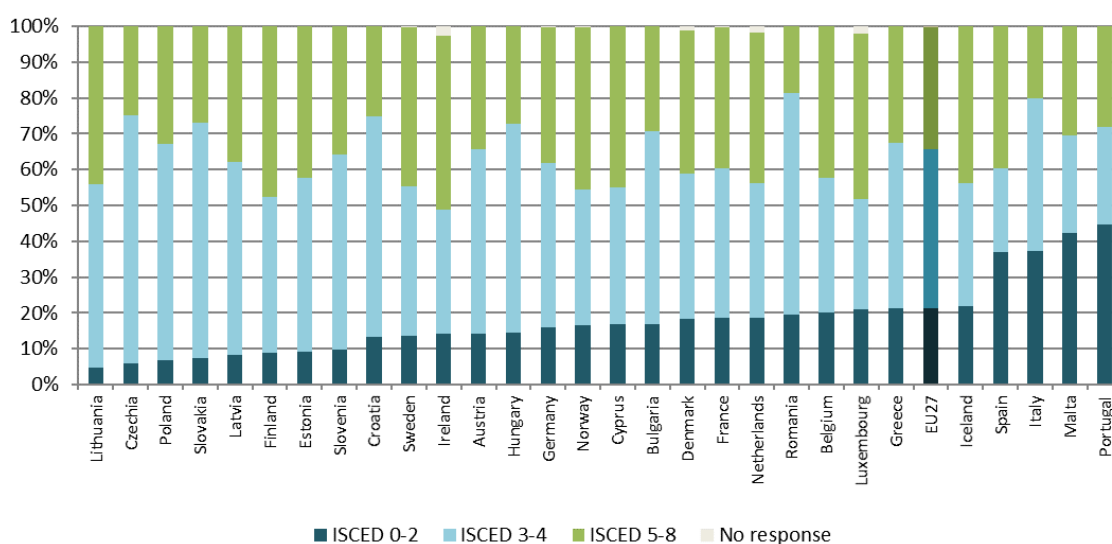
## CHAPTER 4.

# Education attainment

## 4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

The share of the population aged up to 64 with higher education (35.9%) was higher in Slovenia than EU-27 average in 2020. The share of those with low or without a qualification (9.7%) was among the lowest in the EU.

**Population (aged 25 to 64) by highest education level attained in 2020**



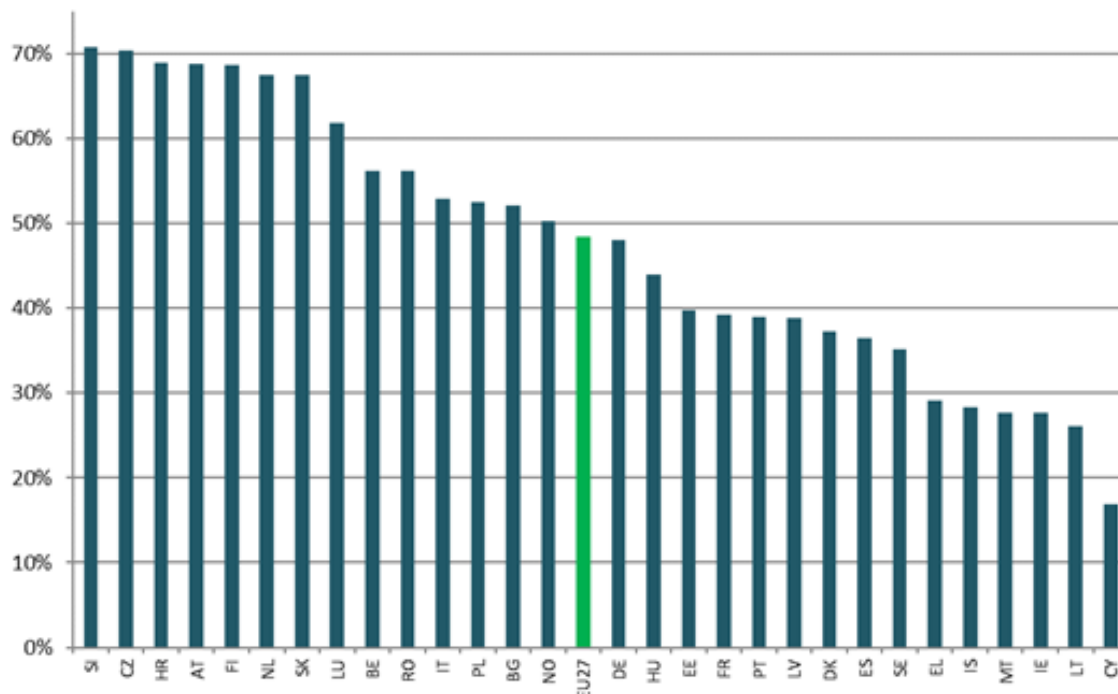
NB: Data based on ISCED 2011. Low reliability for 'No response' in Czechia and Latvia  
ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education  
ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education  
ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education  
Source: Eurostat, Ifsa\_pgaed [Extracted on 6.5.2021].

## 4.3 VET learners by level

In Slovenia, the share of learners in VET at ISCED-3 level was 70.8% and is the highest among EU countries. In 2019 it totalled 70.8%.

### Share of learners in VET by level in 2019

### Share of initial VET learners from total learners at upper secondary level (ISCED level 3), 2019



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.  
Source: Eurostat, educ\_uoe\_enrs04 [Extracted on 8.7.2021].

The number of young people enrolled in VET was declining during the 2015/16 - 2019/20 period, mainly due to demographic reasons; in school year 2020/21 their number increased.

The supply of VET graduates does not meet labour market needs, where there is excess demand for several VET occupations.

## 4.4 Female share

Traditionally, there are more males in VET than females. Males prefer professions in fields like science and engineering, manufacturing and construction, while females more often enrol in programmes from fields like education, social sciences, business and law, health and welfare, humanities and arts and services.

**Table: Young people, enrolled in VET, number and structure, by sex, in %, school 2020/21**

Structure of enrolment by sex, in %



	Total, number	Men	Women
Fields of education - TOTAL	47 942	58.5	41.5
Education	2 610	9.8	90.2
Humanities and arts	2 947	36.3	63.7
Social sciences, business and law	6 025	40.1	59.9
Science	306	40.5	59.5
Information and communication technologies (ICTs)	3 276	94.7	5.3
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	18 592	89.1	10.9
Agriculture	2 394	44.8	55.2
Health and welfare	5 590	23.1	76.9
Services	6 202	34.8	65.2

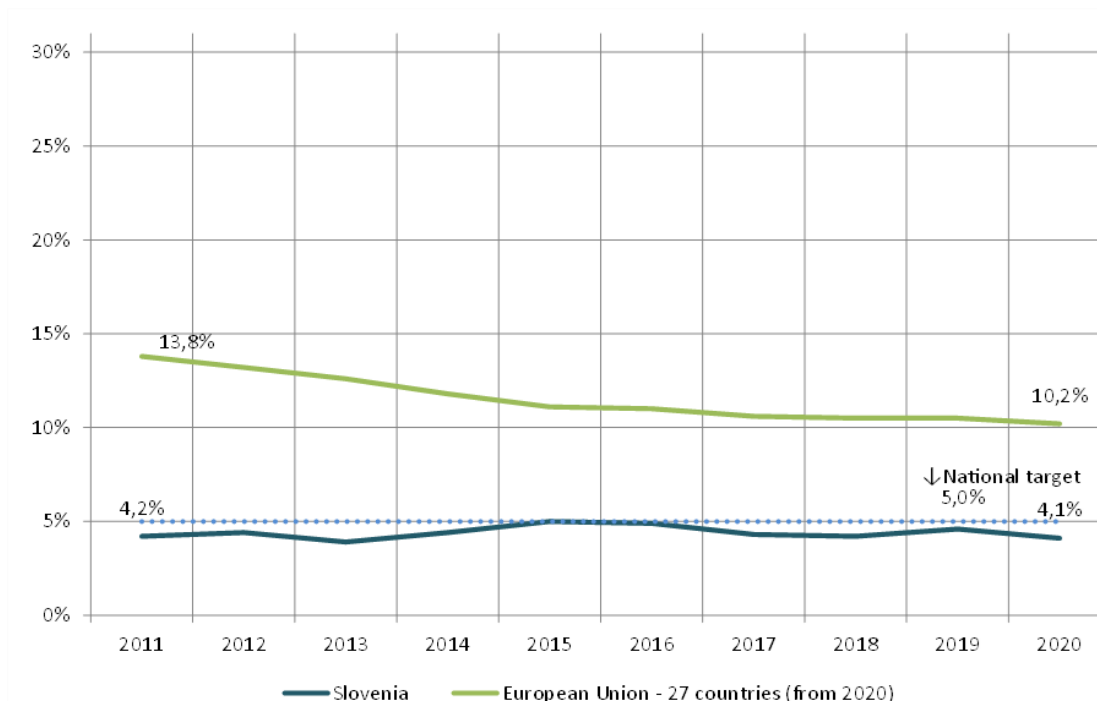
*Source:* Statistic Office of the Republic of Slovenia. [Extracted on 18/07/2021].

## 4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training was 4.1% in 2020, which is approximately the same as in 2011 (4.2%).

It is higher among men (4.6%) than women (3.4%).

### Early leavers from education and training in 2011-20



NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

Source: Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_14 [Extracted on 8.7.2021], European Commission, <https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-progra...> [Extracted on 14.11.2018] and <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4cd55a97-854d-...> [Extracted on 6.5.2021].

## 4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

### Participation in lifelong learning in 2009-20



NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training.  
Source: Eurostat, trng\_ifse\_01 [extracted 06.05.2021].

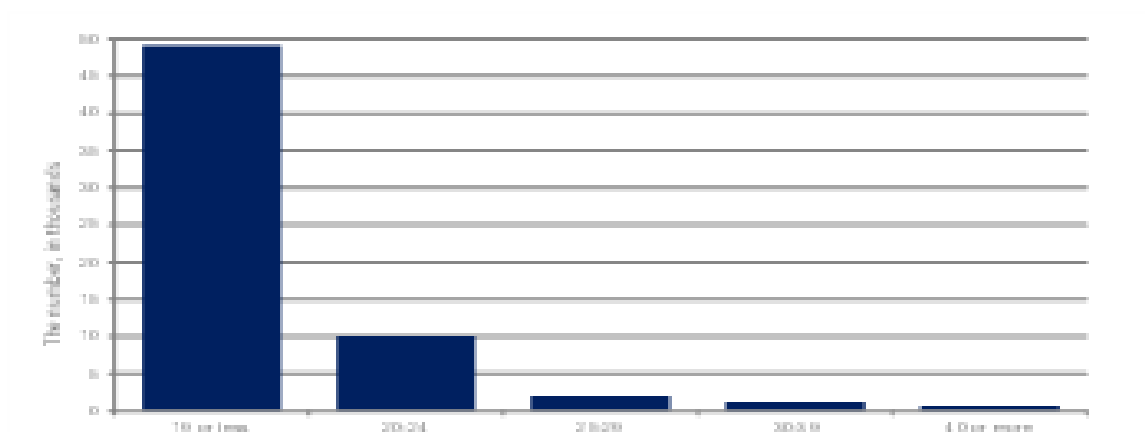
Although the national 2020 target (set in 2013) is 19%, participation in lifelong learning in Slovenia has decreased from 16.4% in 2010 to 11.2% in 2019 and 8.4% in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Slovenia was for the first time below the EU-28 average.

The low involvement of the low-educated, the elderly, men and immigrants stood out.

## 4.7 VET learners by age

### VET learners by age group

**Graph: The number of young people and adults, enrolled in VET at ISCED 3-4, school year 2019/20**



Source: Statistic Office of the Republic of Slovenia, SiStat Database,

<https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStat/en/Podrocja/Index/192/education> [Extracted on 07/07/2021]

Source: Statistic Office of the Republic of Slovenia, SI-STAT Data Portal - Demography and Social Statistics -- Education.

In the structure of enrolments in VET, 77.9% of participants are aged 19 or less, 22.1% aged 20-24, while the shares for other age groups are much lower.

## CHAPTER 5.

# VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- pre-school education (ISCED 0);
- integrated primary (ISCED 100, EQF 1) and lower secondary education (ISCED 244, EQF 2) (nationally referred as basic education).
- upper secondary education:
  - short vocational programmes (ISCED 353, EQF 3);
  - vocational programmes (ISCED 353, EQF 4);
  - vocational - technical programmes (ISCED 354, EQF4);
  - technical programmes (ISCED 354, EQF 4);
  - general programmes (ISCED 344, EQF 4).
- tertiary education
  - higher vocational programmes (ISCED 554, EQF 5);
  - professional bachelor programmes (ISCED 655, EQF 6);
  - academic bachelor programmes (ISCED 645, EQF 6);
  - integrated bachelor and master programmes (ISCED 766, EQF 7);
  - master programmes (ISCED 767, EQF 7);
  - doctoral programmes (ISCED 844, EQF 8).

82.5% of children aged 1 to 6 are enrolled in kindergarten (*vrtec*). Each child is by law entitled to a place in a kindergarten, but pre-school education is not compulsory. Kindergartens are public or private. 96% of children attend public ones that are founded and financed by the local communities. Fees can be subsidised by the government.

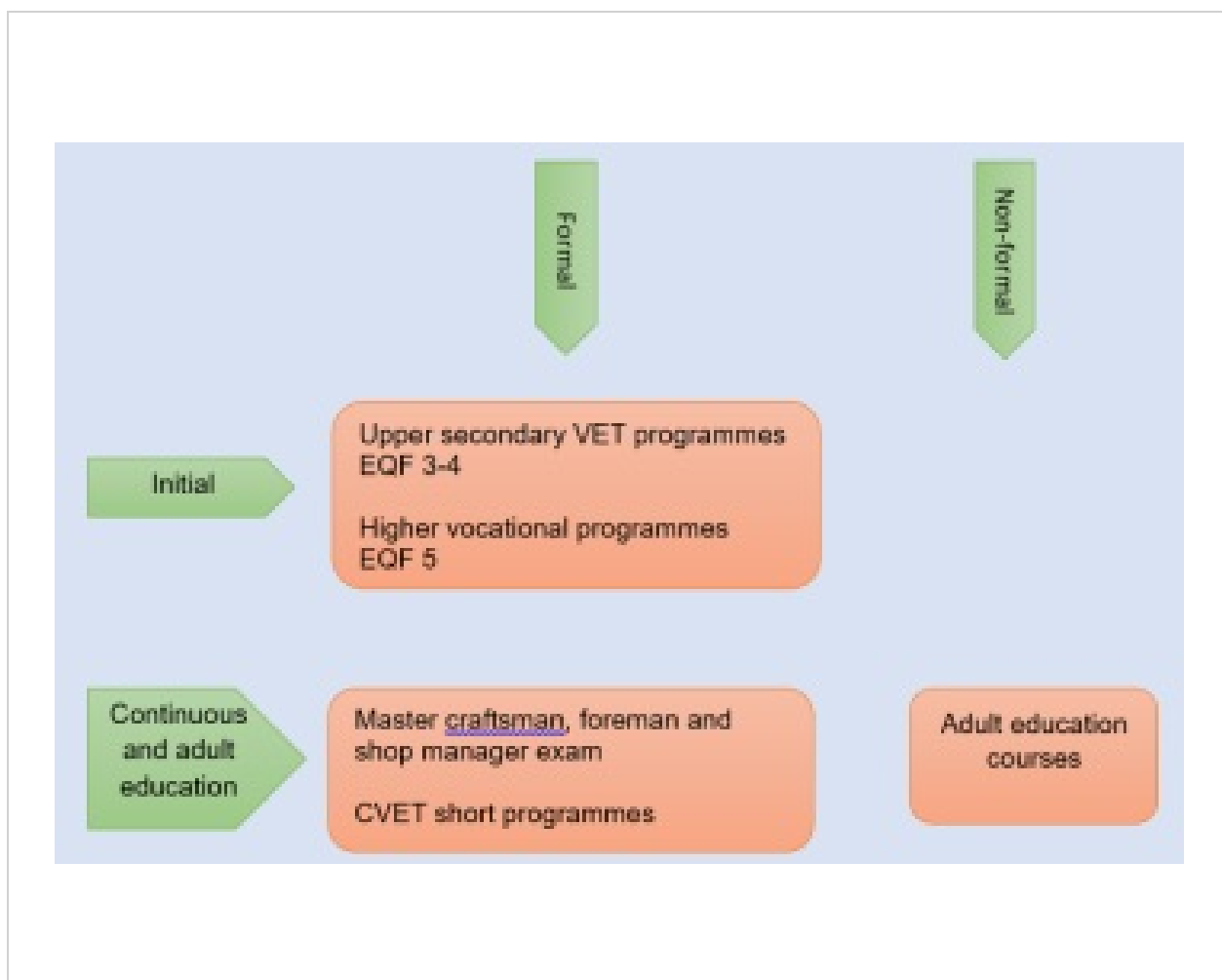
Basic education (*osnovna šola*) lasts 9 years; it consists of single structured primary and lower secondary education and is compulsory (ISCED 1-2). Learners start at age 6 and complete at age 15 in six private and 448 public schools. Learners who do not finish basic education successfully in 9 years can enrol in short vocational education (ISCED 353, EQF 3). Public schools are founded by local communities and funded by education ministry. Parents contribute mostly for meals, school supplies, books and extracurricular activities.

General programmes (*gimnazija*) last 4 years (ISCED 344, EQF 4) and are completed by external examination, general matura (*splošna matura*). Enrolment depends on grades in the last 3 years of basic education. Graduates have access to tertiary education. Six private schools and approximately 60 public schools offer gymnasia programmes. Public schools are founded and funded by the education ministry. Parents contribute mostly for meals, school supplies, books and extracurricular activities. There are two types of general programmes: general gymnasia and professional gymnasia. The latter provides general education but with some emphasis on professions (technical, economic, art).

To transfer from general to vocational education after having completed 3 years of gymnasia, learners may attend a 1-year vocational course, enabling them to pass a vocational matura.

Tertiary education comprises higher vocational education (2 years), professional and academic

programmes at a bachelor level (3 or 4 years) integrated bachelor and master programmes (5 or 6 years), and master level (1 or 2 years). Doctoral programmes last 3 years.



### Formal initial VET

Both young learners and adults can enrol in initial VET programmes free of tuition charges. Once young learners are enrolled, they can repeat one grade and re-enrol in the same grade but different programme. If they are not successful and want to continue, or want later in life to re-enter or change profession, they can enrol as adults.

Initial VET consists of accredited, formal programmes at upper secondary level. There are 3 entry points.

1. Short vocational programmes (2 years) at ISCED 353, EQF 3 levels with assistant type of professions, accessible to learners with minimum EQF 1 (attending 9 years of basic education). Graduates of short vocational programmes, passing a final exam (*zaključni izpit*), can continue to the second entry point: vocational programmes (3 years) at ISCED 353, EQF 4.
2. After 3 years of professional work experience, graduates of vocational programmes having passed also the final exam, can participate in the craftsman, foreman or shop manager exam; with additional exams, they can continue also to higher vocational programmes. Young vocational programme graduates mostly continue to vocational technical programmes (2 years) at ISCED 354, EQF 4 that gives them access to vocational matura

(*poklicna matura*).

3. Most VET students (41.8% in 2020/21) start upper secondary level in technical programmes (4 years) on ISCED 354, EQF 4, finishing with a vocational matura that gives them access to tertiary level: higher vocational programmes (2 years, ISCED 554, EQF 5), professional bachelor programmes and, with completed additional fifth general matura subject, also to academic bachelor programmes. Transferring from VET to the general path is possible also through a 1-year matura bridging course, which prepares learners for General matura.

These programmes are mainly school based with in-company WBL from 4 to 24 weeks, in some cases extension is possible up to 50 weeks. Since the school year 2017/18 apprenticeship has been reintroduced. The existing 3-year Vocational programmes are gradually being adapted at national level to be implemented as an apprenticeship path in addition to a school-based path. Apprentices spend at least 50%, maximum 60%, of their time learning with mentors in companies.

In order to conclude their studies VET students must pass a final exam (first language and practical assignment), vocational matura (two general, one vocational theoretical and practical assignment) or they get a higher vocational diploma.

Since 2000, all upper secondary learners can have their prior knowledge assessed by the school; this can reduce learners' obligations within the programme.

### **Formal continuing VET**

Craftsman, foremen and shop manager exams are traditionally understood as CVET, as the applicants (at least 3-year vocational programme graduates) must have specific prior professional working experience. It is a way that an experienced employee can be promoted to a more demanding work position that does not require the next education level. Optional preparatory courses and literature may be offered by the chambers, which also assess the candidates.

CVET short programmes are being developed since 2017, with the first published programme in 2019. They are prepared in close cooperation with the employers to upskill employees to perform specific tasks, upgrade and modernise some concrete professional skills. They focus entirely on the vocational and professional competences and 50% of curricula are conducted at the workplace, the other half at school. They last for a maximum 6 months and are prepared on the same educational (ISCED or EQF) level as initial programmes at upper secondary and tertiary level (higher vocational programmes).

National vocational qualifications enable citizens to get their vocational competences, obtained through non-formal and informal learning, verified, but cannot gain levels of education through this option.

Adults can enrol in non-formal courses in the education service market provided by private entities or public schools, to gain numerous VET or general competences.

## CHAPTER 6.

# Apprenticeship

With the adoption of the new Apprenticeship Act in 2017, a pilot implementation of the apprenticeship path in four upper secondary vocational programmes (ISCED 353, EQF) has started. In 2021/22 learners can enrol in 14 programmes choosing between school-based and apprenticeship paths.

The apprenticeship path means that at least 50% of the programme is undertaken at an employer, while at least 40% - general subjects and professional modules - is in school.

At the beginning of an apprenticeship, the implementation plan for individual learners is prepared in cooperation between the school and the company under the supervision of the chamber; it is signed between the student (or legal guardian), and representatives of the company, school and chamber. It includes the objectives and set of competences for WBL, distribution and schedule of education at the school and in the company, ways and modes of communication and cooperation between the company and school, as well as information regarding the mid-term and final exam for the apprentice (24) .



## CHAPTER 7.

# VET governance

The Organisation and Financing of Education Act (25) , Vocational Education Act (26) , Higher Vocational Education Act (27) , Apprenticeship Act, Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (28) , National Professional Qualifications Act and Adult Education Act (29) represent main legislation dealing with VET.

The education ministry (30) is responsible for the quality and development of the education system, it formulates and implements education policies and makes system regulations. It prepares the budget for public financing, oversees its implementation and allocates VET programmes. It cooperates intensely with the labour ministry and social partners (representatives of employees and employers), who are active members of four national expert councils (31) operating as a consulting body for the education ministry. A school inspectorate operates within the education ministry. Cooperation with the public employment service (PES) and cooperation with the economy (chambers) is established.

Eight public institutions for the implementation of regulations are also active, supporting education institutions and taking care of development, and supervising, as well as taking care of quality monitoring and counselling.

- Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (CPI);
- National Education Institute of the RS - responsible for general education;
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education -responsible for adult education;
- National Examinations Centre - external assessment in education;
- Educational Research Institute - research;
- Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes - mobility - national EU agency;
- National School of Leadership in Education - development of management in education;
- Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (32) .

These public institutions (including VET schools) are government controlled by appointment of representatives to governance bodies, public funding, salary system, adoption of common rules and guidelines of public service, and centrally adopted curricula. The providers of accredited education programmes are under supervision of the school inspectorate.

The governance body of a VET school is the council that is composed of representatives of the founder, school employees, parents and students. The founder - this means the State - participates in the governance of VET schools through representatives appointed to the council and directly in administrative procedures.

The management body of a VET school is the head teacher, who is also a pedagogical leader. Teachers enjoy professional autonomy and the head teacher has autonomy in accordance with requirements to employ teachers of her/his own choice.

The system of VET education is centralised; decisions about the foundation and financing of VET schools, as well as agreement on and distribution of education programmes, are adopted at the national level. However, schools and teachers enjoy autonomy in designing the implementation of national curricula (school curricula) and choosing teaching methods.

Higher vocational schools shall establish governance and management bodies depending on the founder (state, private) and organisation (independent college, unit of another institution or company). The management body is the director or head teacher, whereas the council is the governing body.

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- [24] Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from the European database on apprenticeship schemes by Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/apprenticeship-schemes/scheme-fiches>
- [25] <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO445>
- [26] <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4325>
- [27] <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4093&d-49682-p=2&&tab=strokovni&scrollTop=557>
- [28] <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO6958>
- [29] <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO7641>
- [30] In Slovenian: Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport.
- [31] The Expert council for VET, for specific elements also: the Expert council for general education, the Expert council for AE and the Expert council for Higher education.
- [32] Respectively: Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje, Zavod RS za šolstvo, Andragoški center Slovenije, Državni izpitni center, Pedagoški inštitut, Center Republike Slovenije za mobilnost in evropske programe izobraževanja in usposabljanja, Šola za ravnatelje., Nacionalna agencija RS za kakovost v visokem šolstvu.

## CHAPTER 8.

# VET financing mechanisms

Legislation (33) stipulates the public financing of upper secondary VET and higher vocational programmes. The sources of funding are specified by purpose, duty and responsibility. The terms and conditions for financing and supervision are presented.

Each year the education ministry determines the cost of a VET programme per learner, based on the methodology for financing education programmes for upper secondary schools, mostly regarding cost of work (salaries of school employees), expenditure for goods and services (heating, electricity, water), number of hours in a programme.

The total level of funding is specified in a financing agreement signed by the education ministry and the school for each budget year.

Additional public funding is also accessible for extra costs and through cooperation in developmental (national and international) projects.

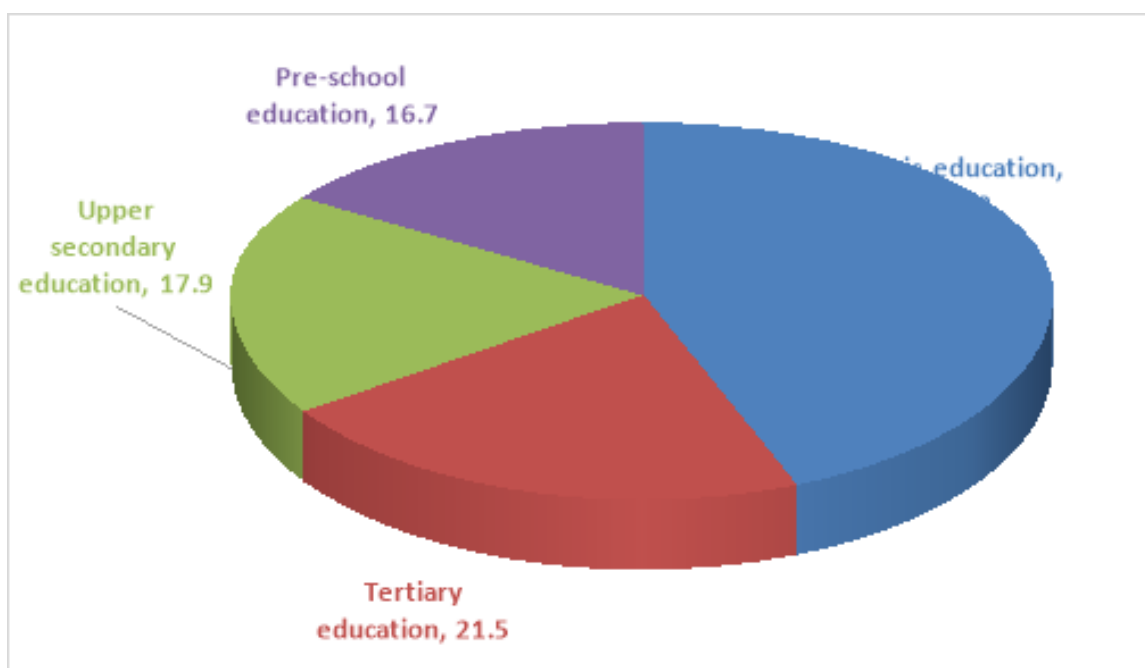
Other possible funding sources for VET include:

- contributions from industry associations and chambers;
- direct contributions from employers for the provision of work practice;
- payments and fees from students;
- funds from the sale of services and products;
- donations, sponsorships and other sources.

The public expenditure allocated to formal education (including VET) in 2020 amounted to EUR 2 532 774 million, or 5.4% of GDP. The biggest share of total public expenditure for formal education was allocated to basic education (43.9%), followed by tertiary education (21.5%), upper secondary education (17.9%) and pre-school education (16.7%) (34) .

End note (<https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/News/Index/10012>)

**Public formal education expenditure; share of 5.4% GDP by level of education in 2020**



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

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- [33] The Organisation and Financing of Education Act (2007-17).  
[34] <https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/News/Index/10012>

# CHAPTER 9.

## Teachers and trainers

### 9.1 VET teacher types

In VET, there are:

- at upper secondary level
  - teachers of general subjects;
  - teachers of the professional theory;
  - teachers of the practical training;
  - lab technicians.
- at the higher vocational education
  - lecturers;
  - instructors;
  - lab technicians.

Education requirements for teachers at upper secondary level:

Teachers of general subjects must have:

- a master degree (ISCED 7);
- completed 1 year pedagogical/andragogical training;
- the State professional exam.

There are two types of teachers of professional modules.

- Teachers of the theoretical part are expected to have the same level of education as teachers of general subjects. They must have the prescribed field of education, specified by the programme and depending on the module.
- Teachers of practical training must have at least vocational upper secondary education (ISCED 354), 1 year pedagogical/andragogical training, the State professional exam and at least 3 years of relevant work experience.

Lab technicians must have at least technical upper secondary education and pedagogical/andragogical training.

In-company mentors must have professional education in the appropriate field, an appropriate number of years of work experience and have completed a short pedagogical/andragogical training designed for mentors.

Education requirements for teachers at higher vocational education level.

Lecturers at the higher vocational education level must have a relevant master degree (ISCED 7), 3 years of work experience, preferably pedagogical/andragogical education and relevant professional achievements (shared authorship of valid education programmes, textbooks or study materials, membership of exam committees, and similar).

Instructors must have at least a bachelor degree and pedagogical/andragogical education; lab technicians at least higher VET education and pedagogical/andragogical education

In-company mentors are employees of the company conducting WBL as part of VET programmes.

Teachers and lecturers are employed by the schools and funded by the education ministry. They can be employed full-time; according to the number of students enrolled some may have part-time contracts.

Salary in general depends on the education level. Apart from this, teachers are included in a promotion scheme through which they can achieve three mayor promotion levels.

## 9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

Teachers have limited options for continuing their professional development, which is defined only as a right of 15 days in 3 years (35) and not as an obligation. The education ministry partly finances accredited programmes for the continuing professional development of teachers and the other part is covered by the school. A great deal of additional teacher training is also provided through national and international projects. Schools can also organise private providers of non-accredited programmes.

According to the new rules (36) , there are two types of accredited CPD programmes for teachers.

- Continuing teacher education (*programi za izpopolnjevanje izobrazbe*) for teachers who need to gain additional training for a specific teacher position (for example a mechanical engineer did not get pedagogical/andragogical training during university studies, so she/he needs to pass this training) or for special tasks (for example for teachers to work with special education needs (SEN) students as SEN experts).
- Career development courses (*programi kariernega razvoja*) are shorter (8-24 hours) courses on various topics that teachers can choose from a catalogue published by the education ministry (didactical courses, modernisation of a learning subject, key competences). Providers can be private or public organisations that are included in a catalogue via public tender and may be co-financed.

Through an ESF project (37) teachers and other professional workers in upper secondary vocational schools and higher vocational schools are trained to strengthen their competences in promoting entrepreneurship (and other key competences), innovative methods of teaching, quality completion of education, upgrading professional skills, working with special needs students, acquiring pedagogical/andragogical skills for higher-education lecturers, and supporting quality assurance in higher vocational schools.

The teachers participate in training in ICT, individualisation, apprenticeship, etc., organised by CPI and financed within various national and international programmes (e.g. ESF, Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus+).

### **Training of in-company mentors**

CPI prepared a programme for mentor training (38) . Within the ESF-funded project Training mentors 2016-21, a training programme for mentors has been available free of charge. The two projects were led by Biotechnical Educational Centre Ljubljana (BIC) and School Centre Kranj (ŠC Kranj). The training aimed to equip the mentors with the basic pedagogical/andragogical knowledge, basic knowledge regarding developmental characteristics of the young, psychological and pedagogical elements of learning and teaching, communication skills, skills regarding health and safety at work and relevant legislation (39) .

In December 2020 the accredited training programme (32 hours) for the in-company mentors was modernised and adopted by the Expert council for VET.

There are additional training programmes for mentors implemented by either chambers or various projects financed by the education ministry.

More information is available in the Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspective on teachers and trainers (40) .

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- [35] Collective agreement for the education sector in the Republic of Slovenia; Ministry of Education (1994).
  - [36] Rules on the selection and co-funding of further education and training programmes for educational professionals.
  - [37] Strengthening the competences of professionals in the field of managing an innovative educational institute 2016-22.
  - [38] In-company training for students in upper secondary VET and higher vocational education.
  - [39] They also get to know the importance of a good organisational culture for successful work, how to include the student into the work process, how to prepare documentation for an efficient management, monitoring and validation of students.
  - [40] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/teachers-and-trainers>

## CHAPTER 10.

# Shaping VET qualifications

## 10.1 Anticipating skill needs

VET programmes are prepared based on labour market data such as the data on labour market movements. The Employment Service of Slovenia (ZRSZ) and Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) collect these data in their official records using their own classification tools in the process.

As labour market data are presented at the aggregated level (i.e. unemployment, the active population, needs for new employment positions, and the like), the need for a research institution to analyse and monitor changes in the labour market has emerged several times in the past. This is to provide support for decision-making processes within the scope of the preparation of VET programmes and to forecast potential education requirements.

The official records on current workplace demand managed by the PES, where the majority of the employment positions offered by employers are recorded, have proven to be a comprehensive source of information. However, the problem with these records is the poor organisation of the data in the various educational programmes, which changed during the education reforms, and so a comprehensive data review, as well as its translation into high-quality topical data (educational programmes), is required. In addition, the systematic collection of labour market needs according to the employers' provision of information ended in 2013, and the country therefore lost one of the databases from which the data was drawn (41) .

See also Cedefop's skills forecast (42) and European Skills Index (43) .

## 10.2 Designing qualifications

### **Vocational qualifications**

There are two types of vocational qualification (*poklicna kvalifikacija*). The first may be acquired following the education and training system path (gaining also an education level) and the second by recognition of non-formal and informal learning (gaining a qualification but not an education level). In 2007, the legislation (44) connected both systems with occupational standards (*poklicni standardi*), which represent a learning outcome standard for each vocational qualification that can be formally acquired or recognised in Slovenia. Vocational qualifications are classified in the sectoral qualification structures approved by the sectoral committee for occupational standards. The labour ministry established 10 sectoral committees for occupational standards, which are composed of experts and representatives nominated by social partners (e.g. chambers, ministries, trade unions).

### **Occupational standards**

Occupational standards serve as the basic documents for the performance of examinations and the verification of vocational qualifications acquired through the recognition of non-formal learning. The methodology for the preparation of occupational standards is prescribed, which ensures their transparency and comparability.

The preparation of occupational standards is conducted through social dialogue. It is important for employers to describe the knowledge, skills and competences employees need to possess, now and in the future. Occupational standards do not simply serve as a record of the current



situation; they are also an indicator of the situation as it develops. This is of considerable importance for the changing labour market, not just from the employer's perspective, but, more importantly, from the point of view of the certificate holder.

Occupational standards must be prepared in cooperation with experts who are familiar with the profession, work organisations, technology and trends in the development of the profession and the sector itself. Occupational standards are closely related to sector and profession.

### **Occupational standards development process**

The processes of the preparation of occupational standards and national vocational qualifications catalogues are determined in the National Professional Qualifications Act. It starts with an initiative submitted by any legal or natural person at the Institute of the RS for VET (CPI). The CPI provides an expert assessment and submits it for discussion to the relevant sectoral committee for occupational standards. When discussing the initiative, the following is especially important: information on the needs of the labour market, the comparability of standards for a specific qualification among EU Member States, and, if necessary, compliance with regulations and norms.

If the sectoral committee for occupational standards considers the initiative to be well founded, they appoint the experts who, with methodological support from the CPI, prepare a proposal for an occupational standard. The national methodology provided by the CPI serves as a uniform basis for all occupational standards and NVQ catalogues, thereby ensuring the transparency and comparability of documents at the national level.

Based on the occupational standard, experts prepare a proposal for an NVQ catalogue (with the new entry/-ies). The sectoral committee submits the NVQ catalogue to the Expert Council for VET for discussion. When the council supports the NVQ catalogue, it proposes its adoption to the labour ministry. The procedure for revision that takes place every 5 years is the same as the procedure for the preparation of new occupational standards.

### **Preparation of VET programmes**

Based on one or more occupational standards, a VET programme is developed by CPI. The national curriculum standards (minimum hours for general subjects, professional modules, the proportion of open curricula, etc.) for each level of VET programme are set by the Expert Council for VET, which proposes the adoption of the VET programme to the education ministry.

The learning-outcomes approach is seen as a useful way of bringing VET programmes closer to 'real life' and the needs of the labour market. National VET framework curricula define the expected knowledge, skills and attitudes to be acquired by students. The syllabi usually follow Bloom's taxonomy for learning outcomes. Broad competences in the catalogues of knowledge for modules/subjects are defined as the ability and readiness to use knowledge, skills and attitudes in study and work contexts.

The Slovenian Qualification Framework Act has defined the unified system of qualifications as the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) since 2016. It is a comprehensive qualifications framework that includes approximately 1 680 qualifications, classified in three distinct categories of qualifications. The SQF consists of 10 levels defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. SQF and EQF levels are indicated on certificates, diplomas and Europass supplements from all education and training levels, and in the SQF register. Inclusion of qualifications in the framework is possible only after a formal accreditation procedure.

The three types of qualifications are:

(a) education, gained by completing formal programmes; graduates are awarded a certification indicating the level and field of the qualification;

(b) national vocational qualifications, obtained through the NVQ procedure, and CVET programmes;

(c) supplementary qualifications, which increase learner competences in a specific professional field without leading them to a higher education level than the one they already possess. These qualifications are not part of the public or private education system. They are included in the SQF at the suggestion of the employer, group of employers or public employment service and are tailored to labour market needs. They are demonstrated by the certificate acquired.

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- [41] Since 2013 private sector employers are not obligated anymore to inform PES about a vacancy, therefore PES collects data from Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia (Labour Market Regulation Act, amendment in 2013).
  - [42] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>
  - [43] <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index>
  - [44] The National Professional Qualifications Act (2007, 2009).

## CHAPTER 11.

# Quality assurance

The Vocational Education Act in 2006 and Organisation and Financing of Education Act in 2007 identified the importance of quality assurance and self-evaluation of VET schools as obligatory and crucial method for quality assurance (QA) and quality development (QD), while it strengthened the autonomy and the developmental role of IVET. Schools are required to establish a quality committee consisting of a minimum of a chairperson plus five members, from representatives of teachers and other professional members of school staff, employers, students and parents. The committee is obliged to publish an annual quality report on the school website. The structure and content of the report is up to the school. However, VET providers have to monitor 11 national quality indicators (10 EQAVET indicators included); upon request, they have to send the data to the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) (EQAVET NRP in Slovenia), but they do not have to make the information on 11 national indicators public.

There is a national reference point (NRP) for quality assurance in upper secondary VET (EQAVET NRP in Slovenia (45) ). The NRP is part of the EQAVET network and is based at the CPI.

Its role at EU level is manifesting the role of EQAVET network, which is developing a common European framework for QA in VET and implementing it in national VET systems.

At national level, the NRP gathers information about quality assurance in VET schools and school centres, monitors quality indicators at the national level (46) and supports VET providers in the process of establishing and developing QA systems in their organisations. The EQAVET NRP offers training, guidelines (CPI, 2007 (47) , CPI 2017 (48) , ŠR 2019 (49) webpage, newsletters, peer review with national or international teams of peers, self-evaluation campaigns and platforms and other service to support VET providers in QA and QD efforts. EQAVET NRP collaborate mostly with VET schools and VET school centres, which offers IVET and CVET. State and private providers use for adult education purposes some EQAVET NRP services. The EQAVET NRP participated in developing the common national framework for QA in education, which was developed in collaboration with the education ministry, four national educational institutes and developmental/pilot schools in the period 2016-19. According to the legislation, CPI is obliged regularly to prepare and publish a national quality report on VET (50) .

According to Higher Vocational Education Act (2004, 2013) a Quality Committee consisting of five lecturers and two students is also requested in higher vocational schools, while the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (NAKVIS) (51) monitors the quality assurance of higher vocational schools.

Responsibilities/assignments of the Quality Committee in higher VET programmes are:

- create conditions for the promotion and development of the quality of educational work at school;
- establish mechanisms for continuous monitoring and assessment of the quality and efficiency of work at the school;
- plan, organise and coordinate monitoring and quality assurance at school;
- cooperate with the NAKVIS and make comparisons between schools at home and abroad;
- monitor the employment opportunities of graduates;
- on the basis of employers' responses, make proposals for improvement;
- prepare evaluation reports to be discussed with the NAKVIS.

A part of CVET that is conducted by adult education institutions and is funded by the State abides by the quality assurance regulation included in the Adult Education Act (2018). This requires VET

providers to establish an internal QA system lead by a quality committee. It includes regular monitoring and self-evaluation, cooperation in the external evaluation, and public presentation of their internal quality assurance system on their web pages.

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- [45] <http://www.eqavet-nrp-slo.si/equavet-v-sloveniji/>
  - [46] Renewed set of 11 national quality indicators were set in 2017 by the Expert Council for VET. All 10 EQAVET indicators are included into the set of 11 national indicators:  
[http://www.eqavet-nrp-slo.si/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/09\\_Nacionalni\\_kazalniki\\_kakovosti\\_PSI2017.pdf](http://www.eqavet-nrp-slo.si/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/09_Nacionalni_kazalniki_kakovosti_PSI2017.pdf)
  - [50] <http://www.eqavet-nrp-slo.si/gradiva/>
  - [51] Nacionalna agencija republike Slovenije za kakovost v visokem šolstvu (NAKVIS).

## CHAPTER 12.

# Validation of prior learning

Slovenia has had a system of validation of non-formal and informal learning in place since 2000.

Several national and regional organisations and institutions are involved in putting this policy into practice. Awareness of validation has grown amongst the general population and is no longer considered a new topic (52) .

Validation procedures are included in legislation for higher education, higher vocational education, and adult education. The national system (national vocational qualifications) enables acquiring formal qualifications by means of validation procedures for non-formal and informal knowledge as legally regulated (53) .

Validation of higher vocational programmes, that is part of tertiary education, takes place according to European credit transfer system (ECTS) criteria, along with a comparison between the competences achieved by the candidate and those declared in the accredited syllabus of the course or in the study module/programme. Each institution and university member is free to prepare and use ECTS in accordance with the qualification for which they provide education (autonomy granted by the Higher Education Act).

There are two main legally regulated routes in VET for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge. For the purpose of further participation in formal education, the validation process is based on education standards (catalogues of knowledge for professional modules and the operational curriculum). If the purpose of validation is recognition of occupational competences in the labour market, the national vocational qualifications (NVQ) system is used, and the knowledge and experience gained by the candidate are compared with the skills and competences in the NVQ catalogue.

The recognition of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge is often seen as the domain of adult education, and so recognition of non-formal and informally acquired knowledge in the formal education system is not widespread. It is most common with part-time students in higher vocational education and least common with upper secondary school students (54) .

According to the rules (55) , class teachers must prepare the individual learning plan for adult (part-time) students, that must include information about previously gained and recognised formal and non-formal knowledge. However, higher vocational education is the exception since the procedure is well defined by the common guidelines and standards in the procedures for the recognition of previously acquired knowledge in higher vocational education (56) .

The development of the system of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge for adults in VET has also been dealt with at systemic level by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) in cooperation with the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) in 2011. Technical criteria have been drawn up for the systemic regulation of the evaluation and recognition of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge in VET, for adult learners primarily. This remained at the proposal level and has never been implemented on the systemic level. The responsibility has been left to the VET schools.

Candidates whose previously acquired knowledge has been recognised within the formal education system may be exempt from certain requirements of a formal education programme (e.g. practical training, subjects or modules, and similar), and may obtain a NVQ certificate or career progression within an enterprise.

In 2020 CPI prepared a publication entitled *Validation of non-formal and informal learning - One-*

*off report*, explaining the background of the national vocational qualifications system, verification procedure, funding, and quality assurance (57) .

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database (58) .

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[57] [https://www.nok.si/sites/www.nok.si/files/dokumenti/porocilo\\_cpi\\_a4\\_ang.pdf](https://www.nok.si/sites/www.nok.si/files/dokumenti/porocilo_cpi_a4_ang.pdf)

[58] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/european-database-on-validation-of-non-formal-and-informal-learning>

## CHAPTER 13.

# Incentives for learners

### Scholarships

The scholarship system is State regulated by the Scholarship Act and includes all education programmes and both young people and adult learners. The Scholarship Policy is adopted by the government every 5 years to set up an implementation framework for awarding scholarships for shortage professions.

A State social scholarship (*državna štipendija*) is available for upper secondary and tertiary education students from low-income families. Depending on family economic status, the scholarship ranges from EUR 35.84 to EUR 97.28 per month for learners under 18 and from EUR 71.68 to EUR 194.56 per month for those over 18. Additional allowances can be obtained for above average grades, accommodation, and special needs.

The Zois scholarships (*Zoisova štipendija*) provide an incentive to learners who achieve exceptional results and performance. The monthly amount of scholarship is EUR 122.88 for upper secondary learners studying in Slovenia and EUR 245.76 for those studying abroad. The scholarship is higher for tertiary education and amounts to EUR 143.36 for studying in Slovenia and 286.72 for studying abroad.

The purpose of the Scholarship for shortage professions (*deficitarna štipendija*) is:

- attracting more learners to VET, in order to provide adequate human resources according to the needs of the labour market;
- encouraging enrolment in the fields of education that enable faster employability of graduates.

One thousand scholarships are offered annually (EUR 102.40 per month). Scholarships for shortage professions are offered to the students of specific VET programmes. The list of such programmes is prepared annually in cooperation with the Employment Service of Slovenia (ZRSZ) and the education ministry. This scholarship programme is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Corporate scholarships (*kadrovska štipendija*) are granted by employers directly to students. The scholarship is awarded to young person(s) selected by employer(s) that - after the completion of education - hire the scholarship recipient for at least a year. The Corporate scholarship is jointly financed by employer and the Republic of Slovenia and European Social Found. The purpose of the corporate scholarship programme is to create an additional bridge between the labour market and education. This program encourages companies to improve their human resource management and anticipate the professions/profiles that they will need in the near future. The regulation does not specify the maximum amount awarded.

The Scholarships for Slovenians living abroad give young people of Slovenian descent living abroad the possibility to come to Slovenia to obtain tertiary education. It helps to reinforce ties between Slovenian expatriates and their native country. These scholarships also follow the objectives of the strategy for economic cooperation between Slovenia and the Slovenian national community in neighbouring countries. The Scholarship amounts to EUR 204.80 per month, with extra funds available for those without health insurance.

The Ad Futura scholarships support international mobility of upper secondary and tertiary education learners and researchers. They are awarded for studying abroad, study visits abroad, and participation in knowledge and research competitions abroad. The Ad Futura scholarship for

study abroad is granted for undergraduate or graduate study at education institutions abroad for academic fields defined in the call for applications. A scholarship is usually granted for living cost (up to EUR 1000) and tuition (up to EUR 15 000). The amount of scholarship, conditions and criteria are determined in the call for applications (59) .

### **Facilitating formal education**

The measure runs from 2016 to 2022 and is coordinated by the Employment Service of Slovenia. The target group is the unemployed. The purpose of the activity is to:

- increase employability and flexibility of the unemployed;
- reduce the labour market mismatch;
- increase education and qualification level of the unemployed;
- enable them to acquire education for a shortage profession

### **Textbooks, commute and school meals**

In a small country like Slovenia, the low total number of VET learners in some VET programmes, makes it unprofitable for publishing houses to get involved in publishing textbooks for professional modules. Their cost is covered by the government, while the CPI coordinates textbook development. VET schools have a so-called school-textbook fund financed by the State and lend textbooks to learners for a maximum one third of cost. Learners from disadvantaged economic backgrounds can get lower borrowing fee, subsidised by the State (60) .

Upper secondary schools should offer one meal per day to learners. The State subsidises the cost for economically weaker families (61) .

All full-time learners receive subsidised tickets covering their daily commute cost with public transportation (62) .

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[60] Rules on approval of the text books (2015, 2017); rules on management of the text books (2020); Organisation and Financing of Education Act (2007, latest amendments 2017)

[61] Government guidelines on subsidising meals for learners.  
<https://www.gov.si teme/solska-prehrana/>

[62] Government guidelines on subsidising commuting of learners.  
<https://www.gov.si teme/subvencioniran-prevoz-v-solo/>



## CHAPTER 14.

# Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

**Not applicable**

## CHAPTER 15.

# Guidance and counselling

The VET Act (2006, 2017 in 2019) states the objective of VET as to promote lifelong learning and career management skills. Among other duties, school counsellors provide vocational guidance to students. For each 20 classes of 26 students (520 students) schools can employ one school counsellor. Every school, including VET schools, employs at least one school counsellor, while larger schools have two or three (63) .

The National Education Institute is responsible for the professional framework for school counselling work and for the professional support for school counselling services.

Learners, parents and school staff can find exhaustive information on the CPI web portal [Mojaizbira.si](http://Mojaizbira.si) (64) , which can be helpful in deciding on further educational and training paths.

For recently introduced (2017/18) apprenticeship programme learners, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS), Chamber of Craft and Small Business (OZS) provide information and offer guidance in search of an apprenticeship placement. A central register of training places on offer has been set up and maintained by the CPI (65) .

Information and counselling at tertiary education level is provided through career centres established at all universities and higher schools. The quality of service varies as there is no central regulation.

In adult education, free-of-charge career guidance is offered by Adult Education Guidance Centres (ISIOs) and other public education organisations. ISIOs function under the umbrella of 14 regional folk high schools, supported by the Slovenian institute for adult education (ACS). ISIOs particularly target marginalised groups of adults, who are usually less educated and have lower participation rates in LLL. Each year, around 25 000 adults reach out to ISIOs for support. Based on the Adult Education Act revisions (2018) that promote counselling for adult learners, the guidelines for counselling were adopted in 2020.

The labour ministry (MDDSZ) holds the responsibility for guidance services for the unemployed. It finances guidance in the public employment service (ZRSZ). Guidance is provided by 59 local offices and career centres. Career counsellors in ZRSZ local offices and career centres offer advice and counselling, e-counselling, group information sessions, job-search seminars and guidance regarding employment programmes, mostly to the unemployed (80%), but also to learners (15%). ZRSZ maintains their *Where and how (Kam in kako)* (66) , an online tool for research, development and upskilling career options intended for learners and adults.

ZRSZ also provides 160 hours of informal training for career counsellors from all areas.

### **Career centres for youth**

The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has been executing the programme Career centres for youth, since 2016; it is co-financed by the ESF. The main goal of the programme is to support young people's integration into the labour market by better connecting the education process with the local environment and economy. The purpose of the programme is to provide better access to career guidance services for the young (from age 6 to 19).

The career centres are to:

(a) provide information on occupations and labour market;

- (b) deliver career guidance for the young;
- (c) carry out activities to empower parents to help develop their children's careers,
- (d) organise promotional activities of the career centre and career guidance.

Two career centres were established in Slovenia, one in Western Cohesion Region (Career Place) and the other in Eastern Cohesion Region (Like and go). The two are the lead partners with three branch offices/ project partners each, so there is a career centre in all regions, with 8 overall.

Counselling is also offered throughout the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning, particularly in preparing learning portfolios. In Slovenia, the tasks and the role of counsellor in NVQ validation procedures do not constitute an independent profession. Most counsellors are employees of institutions that operate both as providers of NVQ verification and validation procedures and as providers of preparatory courses for NVQ assessments that are not regulated by the law and not obligatory for candidates. The provision of counselling in verification procedures is regulated and the counsellors are required to complete 2-day training in counselling.

National coordination and collaboration in career guidance are managed through a national Expert group for lifelong career guidance. The group was nominated by the minister of education and has 14 members: representatives of ministries, public institutions and other relevant parties.

Please see:

- guidance and outreach Slovenia report (67) ;
- Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit (68) ;
- Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices (69) .

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[63] The guidelines for school counsellors (agreed by the national board of experts for general education in 1999) assigned the responsibility for career guidance to school counsellors.

[64] <https://www.mojazbira.si/>

[65] Central register of training places. <https://crum.cpi.si/>

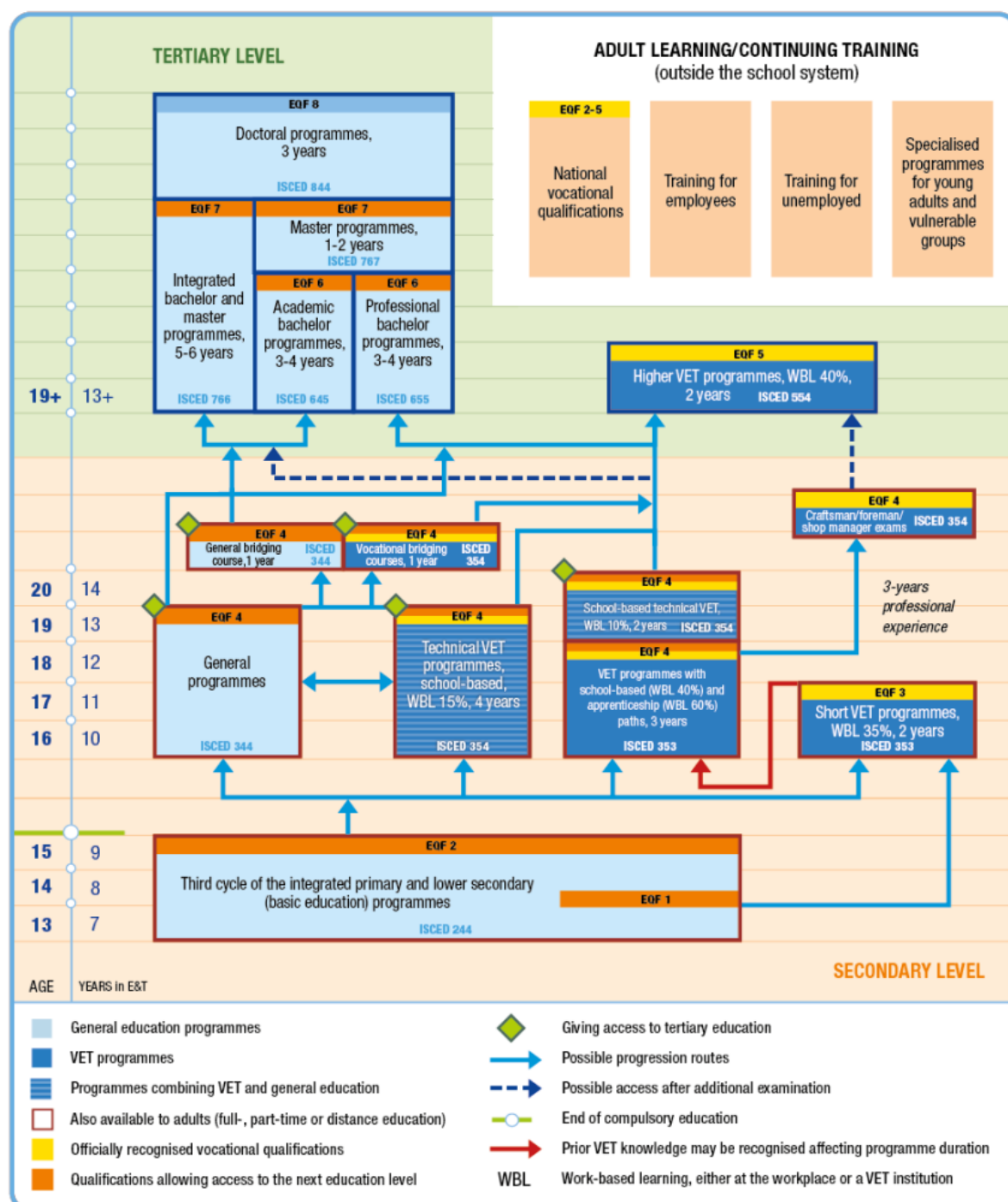
[66] <https://www.ess.gov.si/ncips/kam-in-kako>

[67] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/events-and-projects/networks/refernet/thematic-perspectives/guidance-outreach>

[68] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/resources-guidance/toolkit/where-can-you-find-more-information-in-your-country-and-elsewhere>

[69] <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices>

# Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Slovenia, 2022.

# VET Programme Types

EQF 4
Mainly
School-based
Technical VET,
WBL 15%,
4 years
ISCED 354

## Technical upper secondary programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (srednje strokovno izobraževanje, SSI)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	15	Usual completion age	19
Length of a programme (years)	4		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits 240

### Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

Programmes are mainly school-based.

Approximately 15% of the programme is work-based learning, of which at least 8 weeks (minimum 304 hours, depending on the programme) are in-company training. The rest is practical training at school workshops as a part of the professional module.





### Main providers

VET schools

### Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies

Approximately 15% (40% of which is in-company training)

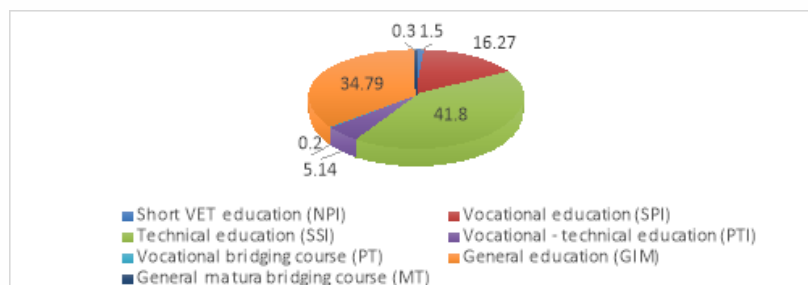
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-company training (at least 8 weeks)</li> <li>• practical training at school (in school estates or intercompany training centres (MIC) or school workshops)</li> </ul>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Programmes are available for young people and adults.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>To enrol in technical upper secondary education (SSI), successful completion of basic education or short vocational upper secondary education (NPI) is required.</p> <p>Usually, the learners are 15 years of age.</p> <p>Specific programmes may have additional entry requirements.</p>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>SSI programmes are completed with a vocational matura (<i>poklicna matura</i>). This is composed of two parts, two exams each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compulsory part: written and oral exam in (1) <b>mother tongue</b> (Slovenian but also Italian/Hungarian in some areas) and (2) <b>theoretical subject</b> (depending on the programme);</li> <li>• elective part: oral and written exam in (3) <b>foreign language or maths</b>, and (4) <b>a practical assignment</b> as product, service or project work with a presentation or seminar. The student can choose practical assignment topic in cooperation with the teacher of professional module.</li> </ul> <p>The vocational matura examinations rules are the same for all candidates. The written parts of the first and third exams are external and provided by the National Examination Centre (NEC), while the second and fourth exams and all oral parts of the exams are carried out and assessed at the school level by the school examination boards for the vocational matura. The schools with the same programme may cooperate in the provision of the examination.</p> <p>For the fourth exam, an employer representative as an external member may be part of the school examination board. This member is required to possess, as a minimum standard, technical upper secondary education in the appropriate field, at least 5 years of relevant professional experience, and have met all the requirements for the vocational matura set by the National Committee for the vocational matura.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Upon passing the vocational matura examination, learners obtain a vocational matura certificate (<i>spričevalo o poklicni maturi</i>).</p> <p>Graduates also receive a Europass certificate supplement, which is individualised for each student and prepared in the Slovenian and English languages.</p> <p>The vocational matura Certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p>

<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Economic technician, electrotechnician, <a href="#">pharmaceutical technician</a> , <a href="#">geomining technician</a> , nature protection technician, environmental technician, nautical technician, electronic communications technician, mechatronic technician.
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>After completing the vocational matura, learners can enter the labour market or continue their education in higher vocational education (ISCED 554) programmes or the first cycle professional education (ISCED 655).</p> <p>It is possible for students with a vocational matura to pass one additional exam (fifth subject) from the general matura subjects, which then enables learners to enrol in some of the first cycle academic programmes (ISCED 645).</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	 <p>In formal VET, receiving a school leaving certificate through validation is not possible. What is possible is recognition of a part of a programme (professional module or a subject).</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	 <p>4-year technical programmes contain a minimum of 2137 hours of general education subjects like Slovene language, maths, foreign language, arts, social science subjects, natural science subjects and sports education (70) .</p>
<b>Key competences</b>	 <p>The technical upper secondary programmes are competence-based, which means that there is an emphasis on development of key and vocational competences. This is done by connecting the vocational/theoretical education with practical training and systematic inclusion of key competences.</p> <p>The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge. Schools may also include key competences in the open curriculum (71) , where competences, objectives and content may be added to existing content categories, or additional (new) content categories may be designed for the specialised part of the programme.</p>
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	 <p>All VET programmes are modularised since 2006.</p> <p>Several professional modules together enable the acquisition of a vocational qualification.</p> <p>Professional modules are competence-based and include vocational theory and practical training at schools. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at a national level. It includes general objectives of a module, vocational competences, defined by informative and formative learning outcomes</p>

**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the 2020/21 school year 41.8% of learners were enrolled in these programmes (share of all students enrolled in upper secondary programmes)

A share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

- [70] In line with the guidelines for the preparation of the upper secondary programmes.
- [71] Schools must prepare 20% of the curricula by themselves. Legislation delivers 80% of the content of VET programmes, and the rest is a so-called 'open curriculum', which should be designed by schools in cooperation with local employers and local communities in accordance with local specifics or needs.







EQF 4
Mainly school-based technical VET, WBL 10%, 2 years ISCED 354

### Vocational technical upper secondary education programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (poklicno tehniško izobraževanje, PTI)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	18	Usual completion age	20
Length of a programme (years)	2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	120 credits		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	PTI is a school-based learning programme:  Approximately 10% of the programme is work-based learning, of which 2 weeks (76 hours) are in-company training. The rest is practical training at school workshops as a part of the professional module.		
Main providers	VET schools		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	Approximately 10% (of which 30% is in-company training)		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-company training (at least 2 weeks - 76 hours);</li> <li>• practical training at school I (at school premises, intercompany training centres (MIC) or school workshops)</li> </ul>		

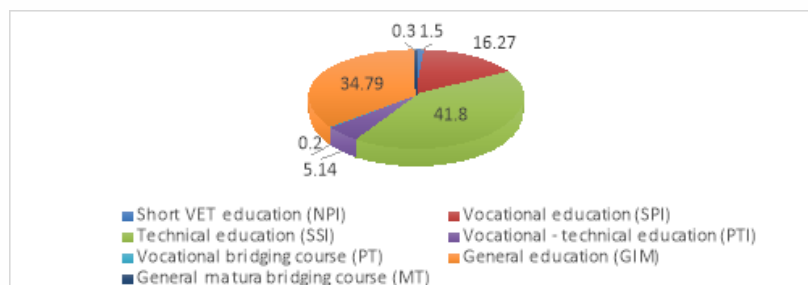
<b>Main target groups</b>	Programmes are available for young people and adults.
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	To enrol in vocational technical upper secondary education (PTI), successful completion of vocational upper secondary education (SPI - ISCED 353) is required. Learners are usually 18 years of age.
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>PTI programmes are completed with a vocational matura (<i>poklicna matura</i>). It is composed of two parts, two exams each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compulsory part: written and oral exam in (1) <b>mother tongue</b> (Slovenian but also Italian/Hungarian in some areas) and (2) <b>theoretical subject</b> (depending on the programme);</li> <li>• elective part: oral and written exam in (3) <b>foreign language or maths</b>, and (4) <b>a practical assignment</b> as product, service or project work with a presentation or seminar. The student can choose the practical assignment topic in cooperation with the professional module teacher.</li> </ul> <p>The vocational matura examinations rules are the same for all candidates. The written parts of the first and third exams are external and provided by the National Examination Centre (NEC), while the second and fourth exams and all oral parts are carried out and assessed at the school level by the school examination boards for the vocational matura. The schools with the same programme may cooperate in the provision of the examination.</p> <p>For the fourth exam, an employer representative as an external member may be part of the school examination board. This member is required to possess, as a minimum standard, technical upper secondary education in the appropriate field, at least 5 years of relevant professional experience, and to have met all the requirements for the vocational matura set by the National Committee for the vocational matura.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Upon passing the vocational matura examination, learners obtain a vocational matura certificate (<i>spričevalo o poklicni maturi</i>).</p> <p>Students also receive a Europass certificate supplement, which is individualised for each student and prepared in Slovenian and English languages.</p> <p>The vocational matura certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Automotive service technician, economic technician, electrotechnician, gastronomy, geominig technician, construction technician, graphic technician, horticultural technician</p> <p>Not to be confused with the technical upper secondary programmes. It is the same qualification, acquired through a different path.</p>

<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>After passing the vocational matura, learners can enter the labour market or continue their education in higher vocational education (ISCED 554) programmes or first cycle professional education (ISCED 655).</p> <p>It is possible for students with a vocational matura to pass one additional exam (fifth subject) from the general matura subjects, which then enables learners to enrol in some of the first cycle academic programmes (ISCED 645).</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>In formal VET, receiving a school leaving certificate through validation is not possible. What is possible is recognition of a part of a programme (professional module or a subject).</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	<p></p> <p>These programmes contain (72) a minimum of 1178 hours of general education subjects like Slovene language, maths, foreign language, art, social science subjects, natural science subjects and sport education.</p>
<b>Key competences</b>	<p></p> <p>The vocational technical upper secondary programmes are competence-based which means that there is an emphasis on development of key and professional competences. This is done by connecting the vocational/theoretical education with practical training and systematic inclusion of key competences.</p> <p>The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge. Schools may also include key competences in the open part of the curriculum, where competences, objectives and content may be added to existing content categories, or additional (new) content categories may be designed for the specialised part of the programme.</p>
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	<p></p> <p>All IVET programmes are modularised since 2006. Several professional modules together enable the acquisition of a vocational qualification.</p> <p>Professional modules are competence-based and include vocational theory and practical training at schools. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at national level. It includes general objectives of a module and vocational competences, defined by informative and formative learning outcomes.</p>

**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the 2020/21 school year 5.14% of learners were enrolled in these programmes (share of all students enrolled in upper secondary programmes)

A share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

[72] In line with the guidelines for the preparation of the upper secondary programmes.

# EQF 4

VET programmes with  
School-based (WBL 40%) and  
Apprenticeship (WBL 60%) paths,  
3 years  
ISCED 353

## Vocational upper secondary education programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 353 (srednje poklicno izobraževanje, SPI)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	15	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	3		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits 180 credits

### Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

SPI is mostly offered as a school-based path. It includes 40% of work-based learning of which 24 weeks (912 hours) is in-company training. In-company training can be to up to 53 weeks if an individual learning contract is signed. Collective contracts are more common than individual.

In the apprenticeship path at least 50% of the programme is in-company training, while at least 40% of the programme is provided as school education. Together the work-based learning is approximately 60%.



In the school year 2021/22 students can enrol in 14 different SPI programmes in the apprenticeship path.

### Main providers

VET schools (school-based path)

VET schools (apprenticeship path)

<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	<p>School based path:</p> <p>Approximately 40% (of which 60% is in-company training)</p> <p>Apprenticeship path:</p> <p>Approximately 60% (of which 90% is in-company training)</p>
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical training at school (at school estates, intercompany training centres or school workshops)</li> <li>• in-company training</li> </ul> <p>School-based path</p> <p>For the implementation of in-company training, a learning contract must be signed. A learning contract includes the competences the learner should acquire and develop, the duration of the in-company training as well as the other responsibilities and obligations of both parties. The learning contract does not include employment provisions. A contract can be collective or individual. A collective contract is more common. It is usually signed between the school, an employer and student or his/her legal guardians. An individual one is signed between an employer and a student. This type of contract allows the WBL in companies to be extended to up to 53 weeks (in this case, practical training in school is reduced). Students with individual contracts are required to pass a mid-term test of practical skills in the second year, which is provided by the relevant chamber.</p> <p>Apprenticeship path:</p> <p>An individual contract is signed by an employer, school, chamber and a student or his/her legal guardian prior to the student's enrolment into the programme. At the beginning of an apprenticeship, the apprenticeship implementation plan is prepared in cooperation between the school and the company under the supervision of the chamber and signed between student, and representatives of the company, school and chamber. It includes the objectives and set of competences for in company WBL, distribution and schedule of education at the school and in the company, ways and modes of communication and cooperation between the company and school, information regarding the mid-term and final exam for the apprentice. Apprentices are required to pass a mid-term test of practical skills in the second year, which is provided by the relevant chamber.</p>
<b>Main target groups</b>	<p>Programmes are available for young people and adults.</p> <p>Some programmes are adjusted for special needs students, or the classes are bilingual for education in ethnically mixed areas.</p>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>To enrol in vocational upper secondary education (SPI), completion of basic education or short vocational upper secondary education (NPI) is required.</p> <p>Usually, the learners are 15 years of age.</p> <p>In some cases, fulfilling specific conditions if required as well (73) .</p>

<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>SPI programmes (school-based and apprenticeship path) are completed with a final exam. It comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written and oral exam of mother tongue;</li> <li>• the final practical assignment: a product or service with a presentation.</li> </ul> <p>An examination catalogue for the practical assignment (final product or service with a presentation) for SPI programme is prepared at national level.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Final examination certificate (<i>spričevalo o zaključnem izpitu</i>)</p> <p>The Final examination certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p> <p>Students also receive Europass certificate supplement, which is individualised for each student and prepared in Slovenian and English languages.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Florist, metal shaper - tool maker, gastronomy and hotel services, baker, electrician
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>Upon completion of the final exam, SPI graduates may be employed or may continue their education.</p> <p>SPI graduates have access to vocational technical programmes (PTI).</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>In formal VET, receiving a school leaving certificate through validation is not possible. What is possible is recognition of a part of a programme (professional module or a subject).</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	<p></p> <p>These programmes contain (74) as minimum 1048 hours of general education subjects, such as Slovene language, maths, foreign language, art, social science subjects, natural science subjects and sports education.</p>

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**Key competences**

The upper secondary programmes are competence-based which means that there is an emphasis on development of key and professional competences. This is done by connecting the vocational/theoretical education with practical training and systematic inclusion of key competences.

The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge. Schools may also include key competences in the open part of the curriculum, where competences, objectives and content may be added to existing content categories, or additional (new) content categories may be designed for the specialised part of the programme.

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**Application of learning outcomes approach**

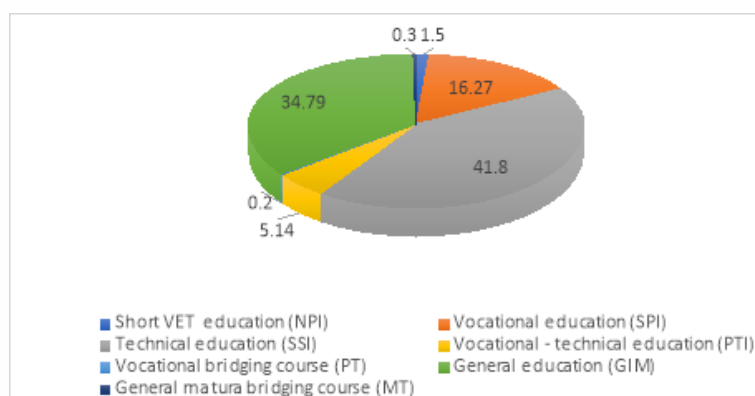
In the VET reform of 2006, all IVET programmes were modularised. Several professional modules together enable the acquisition of a vocational qualification. Professional modules are competence-based and include vocational theory and practical training at schools. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at national level; it includes general objectives of a module and vocational competences defined by informative and formative learning outcomes

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the 2020/21 school year 16.27% of learners were enrolled in these programmes (share of all students enrolled in upper secondary programmes).

Share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

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- [73] There is a special condition for entry into the geo-operator miner vocational upper secondary programme, i.e. psychophysical ability.



[74] In line with the guidelines for the preparation of the upper secondary programmes.

EQF 3

Short VET

Programmes,


WBL 35%,

2 years

ISCED 353

## Short Vocational Upper Secondary Education programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (nižje poklicno izobraževanje, NPI)

EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	10	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	15	Usual completion age	17
Length of a programme (years)	2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	120 credits		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	NPI is offered as a school-based learning option. It includes approximately 35% work-based learning, of which 4 weeks (152 hours) is intended for in-company training.		
Main providers	VET schools or School centres		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	Approximately 35-40% (of which 20% is in-company training)		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-company training (at least 4 weeks)</li> <li>• practical training at school, at school estates, intercompany training centres or school workshops</li> </ul>		
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and adults.		

<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	In NPI programmes can enrol learners who have completed compulsory education (9 years of basic education) (75) or completed basic education for special needs learners with lower educational standard.
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>NPI programmes end with a final exam that comprises a practical assignment: a product or service with a presentation.</p> <p>An examination catalogue for a product or service with a presentation for NPI programme is prepared at national level.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Final examination certificate (<i>Potrdilo o zaključnem izpitu</i>)</p> <p>This certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p> <p>Students also receive a Europass certificate supplement, which is individualised for each student and prepared in Slovenian and English languages.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p>Woodworker (also adjusted for the hearing impaired).</p> <p>Assistant construction worker, biotechnology and care assistant, assistant in technology processes (also adjusted for physically disabled students as well as hearing impaired).</p> <p>Auxiliary administrator (also adjusted for physically disabled students), textile reworker (also adjusted for the hearing impaired and students with speech disorders).</p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Upon completion of the final exam, NPI graduates may be employed (as an assistant) or may continue their education by enrolling in vocational upper secondary education (SPI).
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	<p></p> <p>In formal VET receiving a school leaving certificate through validation is not possible. What is possible is recognition of a part of a programme (professional module or a subject) exemption and shortened education.</p>
<b>General education subjects</b>	These programmes contain (76) a minimum 675 hours of general education subjects, such as Slovene language, maths, social and natural science and sports education.

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**Key competences**

The upper secondary programmes are competence-based, which means that there is an emphasis on development of key and professional competences. This is done by connecting the vocational/theoretical education with practical education and systematic inclusion of key competences.

The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge. Schools may also include key competences in the open part of the curriculum, where competences, objectives and content may be added to existing content categories, or additional (new) content categories may be designed for the specialised part of the programme.

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**Application of learning outcomes approach**

All IVET programmes were modularised in 2006. Several professional modules together enable the acquisition of a vocational qualification.

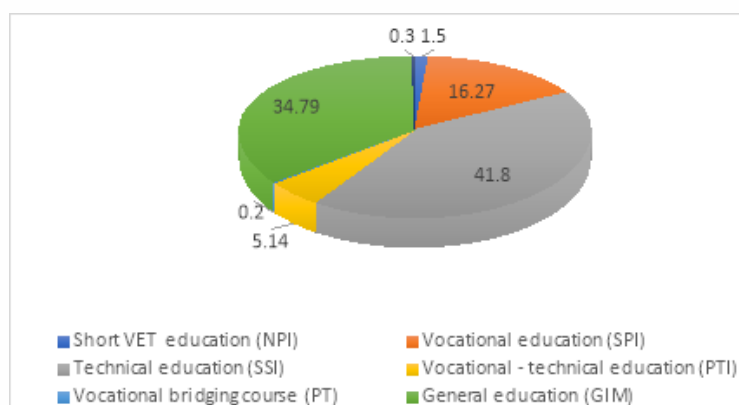
Professional modules are competence-based and include vocational theory and practical training at schools. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at national level. It includes general objectives of a module, vocational competences, defined by informative and formative learning outcomes.

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**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the 2020/21 school year 1.5% of learners were enrolled in these programmes (share of all students enrolled in upper secondary programmes).

A share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

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- [75] Attending 9 years of basic education is obligatory; this requirement is deemed fulfilled when the learner is enrolled in basic education for 9 years. Basic education is successfully completed when the learner achieves the minimum learning outcomes.

[76] In line with the guidelines for the preparation of the upper secondary programmes.

EQF 4
Vocational bridging courses, 1 year ISCED 354

### Vocational bridging programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (poklicni tečaj, PT)

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	14	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	19	Usual completion age	20
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	Y for young learners, N for adults	Is it available for adults?	

**ECVET or other credits** 60 credits

Exception: Computer technician 77 credits

**Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)**

The course is primarily intended for learners who wish to transfer from general education to vocational education.



It is a route to technical education level; general education subjects are recognised, so the programme consists solely of professional modules with WBL.

Vocational course is available for 4 programmes, 34 weeks each

- Economic technician
- Gastronomy and tourism
- Preschool education
- Computer technician

**Main providers** VET Schools

<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic technician, 1150 hours</li> <li>• Gastronomy and tourism, 508 hours</li> <li>• Preschool education, 304 hours, just in-company training</li> <li>• Computer technician, 418 hours</li> </ul>
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical training at school</li> <li>• In-company practice</li> </ul>
<b>Main target groups</b>	Young people, adults
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>Completed 4 years of upper secondary general programme (<i>gimnazija</i>) or technical programme (without vocational matura).</p> <p>Learners are usually 19 years of age.</p>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Vocational bridging programmes are completed with a vocational matura (<i>poklicna matura</i>). It is composed of two parts, two exams each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● compulsory part: written and oral exam in (1) <b>mother tongue</b> (Slovenian but also Italian/Hungarian in some areas) and (2) <b>theoretical subject</b> (depending on the programme);</li> <li>● elective part: oral and written exam in either (3) <b>foreign language or maths</b>, and (4) <b>a practical assignment</b> as product, service or project work with a presentation or seminar. For the practical assignment a student can choose the topic in cooperation with teacher of professional module.</li> </ul> <p>For the fourth exam, an employer representative as an external member may be part of the examination board. This member is required to possess, as a minimum standard, technical upper secondary education in the appropriate field, at least 5 years of relevant professional experience, and to have met all the requirements for the vocational matura set by the National Committee for the vocational matura.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Upon passing the examination, learners obtain a vocational matura certificate (<i>spričevalo o poklicni maturi</i>).</p> <p>The certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p> <p>Students also receive an Europass certificate supplement, which is individualised for each student and prepared in Slovenian and English languages.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic technician</li> <li>• Gastronomy and tourism</li> <li>• Preschool education</li> <li>• Computer technician</li> </ul>

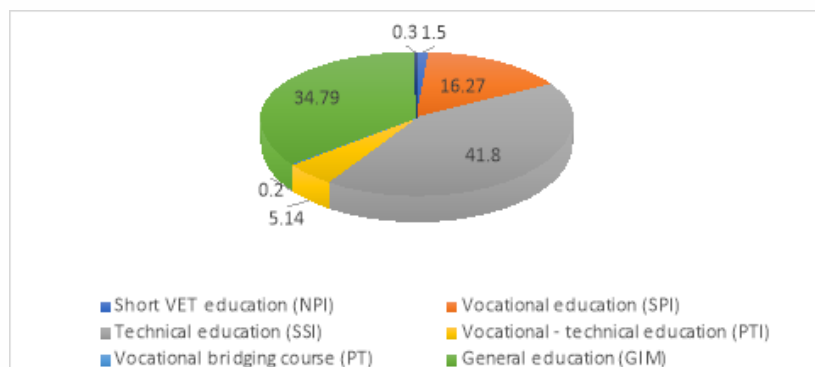
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>After passing the vocational matura, learners can enter the labour market or continue their education in higher vocational education (ISCED 554) programmes or first cycle professional education (ISCED 655).</p> <p>It is possible for students with a vocational matura to pass one additional exam (fifth subject) from the general matura subjects, which then enables learners to enrol in some of the first cycle academic programmes (ISCED 645).</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Official data unavailable
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	Information not available
<b>General education subjects</b>	
<b>Key competences</b>	 <p>The upper secondary programmes are competence-based, which means that there is an emphasis on development of key and professional competences. This is done by connecting the vocational/theoretical education with practical education and systematic inclusion of key competences.</p> <p>The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge.</p>
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	<p>All IVET programmes were modularised in 2006. Several professional modules together enable the acquisition of a vocational qualification.</p> <p>Professional modules are competence-based and include vocational theory and practical training at schools. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at a national level. It includes general objectives of a module and vocational competences defined by informative and formative learning outcomes.</p>



**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the 2020/21 school year 0.2% of learners were enrolled in these programmes (share of all students enrolled in upper secondary programmes).

A share of all students enrolled in upper secondary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS).

## EQF 4

Craftsman/foreman/


shop manager exams

ISCED 354

**Master craftsman, foreman and shop manager exams (mojstrski, delovodski ali poslovodni izpiti). EQF level 4, ISCED 354. Each exam is under the auspices of the individual chamber that organises the exams. Candidates study independently, though preparatory courses may be prepared due to market demand and literature may be also offered.**

<b>EQF level</b>	4	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	354
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	Not applicable
<b>Usual entry age</b>	Not applicable	<b>Usual completion age</b>	Not applicable
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	Not applicable		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✗	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✗
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	✗ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master craftsman: EUR 1 284 - 1 683, depending on the profession.</li> <li>• Foreman: EUR 1 264.86</li> <li>• Shop manager: EUR 717.74</li> </ul> <p>Occasionally the cost can be co-financed through the public tender for shared financing of tuition.</p>	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	Not applicable		
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	Independent study, though preparatory courses may be prepared due to market demand and literature may be also offered.		

<b>Main providers</b>	<p>The Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia conducts the Master craftsman examination.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia conducts the foreman examination.</p> <p>Slovenian Chamber of Commerce conducts shop manager exam.</p>
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Not applicable
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Main target groups</b>	<p>The exams are intended for those with vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353), and at least 3 years of relevant work experience.</p> <p>Adults who would like to improve their level of education, and/or become a mentor to a student or an apprentice in a company.</p>
<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<p>For Master craftsman and Foreman:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational education and at least 3 years of work experience in the relevant profession</li> <li>• technical education and 2 years of work experience in the exam profession</li> <li>• at least higher VET education and 1 year of work experience.</li> </ul> <p>For Shop manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational education and 3 years of work experience</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	<p>Master craftsman/foreman/shop manager exams are conducted based on the national catalogues and carried out in accordance with the Rules on Master craftsman examinations and the Rules on examinations for Foreman and Plant manager (Ministry for Economy 2009, 2004).</p> <p>The examinations consist of four units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practical unit</li> <li>• specialised theoretical unit</li> <li>• business/economics unit</li> <li>• pedagogical/andragogical unit</li> </ul> <p>Each unit consists of one or several exams.</p>
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>After passing one of the examinations, candidates obtain a master craftsman/foreman/shop manager certificate (<i>spričevalo o opravljenem mojstrskem, delovodskem, poslovodskem izpitu</i>) and gain technical upper secondary education (ISCED 354).</p>

<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	<p><b>Master craftsman:</b> Master confectioner, Master joiner, Master butcher, Master beekeeper, Master watchmaker</p> <p><b>Foreman:</b> Foreman in electro-energetics, Construction foreman, Food foreman</p> <p><b>Shop manager</b></p>
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	Candidates with prior lower level of education who pass this examination gain a technical upper secondary education level (ISCED 354) and, by passing the general exams of the vocational matura, can enrol in higher vocational education programmes.
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	
<b>General education subjects</b>	Not applicable
<b>Key competences</b>	Not applicable
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	Not applicable
<b>Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners</b>	Information not available

## EQF 5

Higher VET programmes,



WBL 40%

2 years

ISCED 554

### Higher Vocational programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (višje strokovno izobraževanje, VSI)

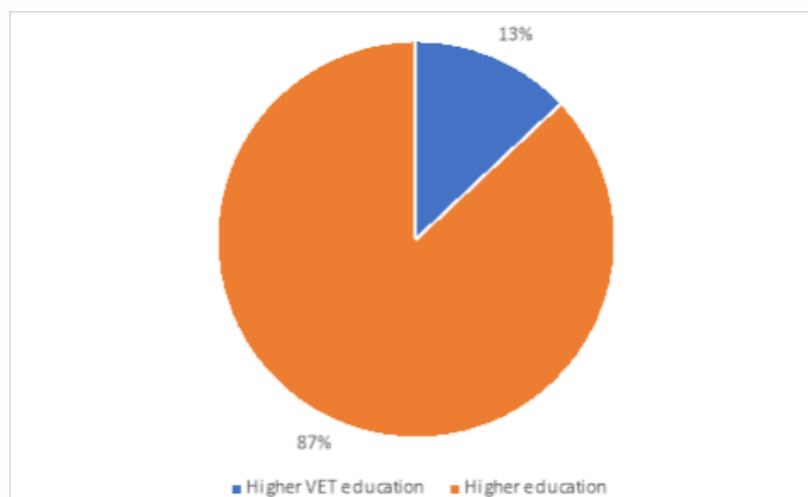
<b>EQF level</b>	5	<b>ISCED-P 2011 level</b>	554
<b>Usual entry grade</b>	14	<b>Usual completion grade</b>	16
<b>Usual entry age</b>	19	<b>Usual completion age</b>	21
<b>Length of a programme (years)</b>	2		
<b>Is it part of compulsory education and training?</b>	✗	<b>Is it part of formal education and training system?</b>	✓
<b>Is it initial VET?</b>	✓	<b>Is it continuing VET?</b>	✗
<b>Is it offered free of charge?</b>	Y for full-time learners N for part-time learners	<b>Is it available for adults?</b>	✓
<b>ECVET or other credits</b>	120		
<b>Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)</b>	Higher vocational programmes are school-based but include 20 weeks of in-company training. In-company training is based on a learning contract signed between the student, the school and the company. The learning contract is not an employment contract.		
<b>Main providers</b>	Higher vocational schools public and private.		
<b>Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies</b>	Approximately 40% (of which 100% is in-company training)		
<b>Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-company training (at least 20 weeks)</li> <li>• practical training at school (school estates or intercompany training centres or school workshops)</li> </ul>		
<b>Main target groups</b>	Young people, adults		

<b>Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general or vocational matura, or</li> <li>• 3 years of working experiences, master craftsman, foreman or managerial examination and vocational matura general subject exams.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of learning outcomes</b>	The diploma exam consists of a practically oriented diploma thesis and a thesis defence. As part of the thesis, the learner can also carry out project work or services with a theoretical defence.
<b>Diplomas/certificates provided</b>	<p>Diploma of higher vocational education (<i>diploma o višji strokovni izobrazbi</i>), an integral part of which is a diploma supplement in Slovene and one official language of the European Union and title of engineer or title that corresponds to the same level.</p> <p>The certificate is nationally recognised by the education and labour authorities. With this certificate, someone can access the next level of education or enter the labour market.</p>
<b>Examples of qualifications</b>	Mechanical engineer, Bionics engineer, Forestry and hunting engineer, Social network organiser, Woodworking engineer, Higher ballet dancer,
<b>Progression opportunities for learners after graduation</b>	<p>A transition from higher vocational study programmes to higher professional and university study programmes is possible.</p> <p>University/faculty can recognise subjects and validate them, enabling a student to enrol into the second year of study with some additional exams.</p>
<b>Destination of graduates</b>	Information not available
<b>Awards through validation of prior learning</b>	In formal VET, receiving a school leaving certificate through validation is not possible. What is possible is recognition of a programme part (professional module or a subject) exemption and shortened education.
<b>General education subjects</b>	
<b>Key competences</b>	The key competences are defined in national catalogues of knowledge and integrated into the professional modules.
<b>Application of learning outcomes approach</b>	 <p>Professional modules are competence-based and include school studies and practical training at a company. For each professional module, a catalogue of knowledge is prepared at a national level. It includes general objectives of a module and specific vocational competences, defined by informative and formative learning outcomes.</p>

**Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners**

In the school year 2020/21, 13% enrolled in Higher Vocational Education.

A share of all students enrolled in tertiary level by the type of the programme (%).



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic Slovenia (SURS).

## References

- [4] 178 out of 317 qualifications that are foreseen in the NVQ catalogue.
- [21] Regulated profession or legally regulated professional activity is a profession or professional activity for which the conditions for work in a certain legally regulated profession in the Republic of Slovenia are determined by legislation. All legally regulated professions and professional activities in the Republic of Slovenia are in the register of regulated professions or professions in the Republic of Slovenia
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