# Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Slovenia

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### Introduction

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport is responsible for the organisation of guidance and counselling services in comprehensive and upper secondary schools and in higher education. The Act on General Education No. 1/07 (amended in 2017, No. 68/17) and the Act on VET (Official Journal RS, No. 79/06) (both in Article 2) state that these two educational pathways have the objective to support lifelong learning, and career management.

#### Sources

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## **Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders**

The *Guidelines for school counsellors* define the content and the timeline for guidance activities. The guidelines are agreed by the National Board of Experts for General Education (1999) and assign responsibility for career guidance to school counsellors. The National Education Institute has the responsibility for developing the guidelines for school counsellors for career guidance actions. The National Institute for Vocational Education and Training provides labour market information to support improvement of the education, vocational

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and technical programmes. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is responsible for the organisation of guidance for unemployed. The Labour Market Regulation Act (Official Journal RS No. 80/10) regulates guidance activities such as providing labour market information; self-directed career guidance; basic career advice giving; career counselling; and obtaining career management skills.

Guidance in the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) (*Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje*) is provided by local and regional offices and career centres (in 2014 the name was changed) throughout Slovenia, and is coordinated by the Department for Employment and the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG) (*Nacionalni Center za Informiranje in Poklicno Svetovanje*)/Euroguidance Slovenia at the central office. Career counsellors in the ESS and CC provide a guidance service (giving information, advice and counselling, e-counselling, group information sessions, job-search seminars and guidance in employment programmes) for the unemployed (80%) and pupils/students (15%). The ESS also provides limited guidance activities for school students in primary and secondary schools (ReferNet Slovenia, 2013).

National coordination and collaboration was assured through the establishment of the Slovene National Guidance Forum in 2006. Currently, the coordination and collaboration is managed through a national Expert group for lifelong career guidance, which operates on an informal basis. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport has nominated this group. The first working period was from 2009 until 2014 and second from 2014 until 2020. The expert group for LLG includes representatives from:

- a. Ministry of Labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities;
- b. Ministry of Education, Science and Sport;
- c. the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy;
- d. Ministry of Economic Development and Technology;
- e. the National Education Institute;
- f. The Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia (*Javni štipendijski, razvojni, invalidski in preživninski sklad Republike Slovenije*);
- g. Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training;
- h. National school for leadership in education;
- i. Slovenian Institute for Adult Education
- j. Career Centre of the University of Ljubljana
- k. Slovene Association for Career Guidance
- I. Employment Service of Slovenia
- m. Euroguidance Slovenia.

Slovenia has not yet endorsed any strategy for lifelong guidance. Career guidance is mentioned in the Lifelong guidance strategy (2007) but it is not set as a priority. Career guidance in primary and secondary schools is regulated by the *Guidelines for school counsellors*. Career guidance for adults in education is regulated by the Act of Adult Education No. 6/18. Career guidance for those not in education is regulated by the Labour Market Regulation Act 80/10.

#### Sources

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Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. https://www.gov.si/en/stateauthorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/

Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-labour-family-social-affairsand-equal-opportunities/

National Education Institute. https://www.zrss.si/en/

National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. http://www.cpi.si/en/



National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance, NRCVG (Nacionalni Center za Informiranje in Poklicno Svetovanje)/Euroguidance Slovenija. https://www.ess.gov.si/ncips/ncips

Pravno-informacijskega sistema Republike Slovenije (2010). *Labour Market Regulation Act* (Zakon o urejanju trga dela). http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO5840#

Pravno-informacijskega sistema Republike Slovenije (2018). *The Adult Education Act (Zakon o izobraževanju odraslih).* http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO7641

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### Access to guidance

Schools have the main responsibility for vocational and educational guidance, which is provided by school counsellors. The following activities have been provided for students:

- a. access to the information needed for an appropriate decision on further schooling;
- b. career education of a minimum two hours annually per class (grade nine);
- c. testing of educational and vocational intentions of the students in grade nine;
- d. one counselling session for each student in grade nine.

Guidance in higher education is provided by career centres for students, which perform and organise various activities for students, graduates and prospective employers. With the help of shared financing from the ESF, career centres have been active in the development and execution of activities in higher education since 2010. Activities are designed to contribute to the better recognition of students and future graduates, their knowledge, key skills and competences, their successful transition to the labour market and higher employability (ReferNet Slovenia, 2013).

Career centres were founded at the time when the employment of highly educated young people came to a halt, partly obscuring the primary mission of the centres, which goes beyond current conditions on the labour market. The main tasks of the centres include:

- a. raising awareness,
- b. acquiring and developing knowledge, skills and competences for lifelong learning,
- c. timely lifelong career development
- d. establishing quality and effective connections between the worlds of creation and knowledge application (ReferNet Slovenia, 2013).

Career Centres enable students and graduates to establish professional contacts that help them in their search for a quality study practice, student work, traineeship and their first employment. They cooperate in various ways with employers, representatives of work organisations, companies and public services.

Guidance in adult education is provided by the Information and Counselling Service for Adults in Education (ICAE) (*Informativno svetovalna dejavnost v izobraževanju odraslih* (ISIO) and by other public education organisations as a part of learning process. ICAEs have functioned under the auspices of 14 regional folk high schools. They provide adults with free, impartial, confidential quality information and guidance for their education and learning. ICAEs are open to all adults in the region, but particular attention is given to those groups of adults who are marginalised, have more difficulties accessing learning, are less educated and less active in relation to their education. Each year around 25,000 adults look for information, advice or counselling via ICAE. Their work is supported by the Slovene Institute for Adults in Education (SIAE) (*Andragoški center Slovenije* (ACS).

Guidance in the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) (*Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje*) is provided by local and regional offices and career centres for the unemployed (in the year 2014 the name was changed) throughout Slovenia; it is coordinated by the Department for Employment and the National Vocational Information



and Counselling Centre (NCIPS) which is actually Euroguidance Slovenia. Career counsellors in the ESS and CC provide a guidance service (giving information, advice and counselling, ecounselling, group information sessions, job-search seminars and guidance in employment programmes) for unemployed persons (80%) and pupils/students (15%). The ESS also provides limited guidance activities for school students in primary and secondary schools (ReferNet Slovenia, 2013).

In 2007, Euroguidance Slovenia started working on developing E-Counselling (*eSvetovanje*) with the aim of improving access to online career guidance for unemployed and employed individuals, to increase their self-awareness and self-understanding. With this tool, users can assess their skills, identify interests, needs, create their application, CV and cover letter, prepare for and interview, learn more about career management skills and labour market information. The website results from international collaboration with VDAB (Belgium) and AMS (Austria).

Krka, a pharmaceutical company from Slovenia, provides access to career information (jobs, training opportunities), career guidance and career support for its employees using an intranet system, career experts (from the HR department) and also printed materials.

#### Sources

Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

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Information and Counselling Service for Adults in Education, ICAE (Informativno svetovalna dejavnost v izobraževanju odraslih, ISIO). https://isio.acs.si/

Krka. https://www.krka.biz/en/about-krka/company-presentation/generic-pharmaceuticals/

National Vocational Information and Counselling Centre, NCIPS (Nacionalni center za informiranje in poklicno svetovanje, NCIPS. https://www.ess.gov.si/ncips/ncips

ReferNet Slovenia (2013). *VET in Europe – Country Report.* http://www.refernet.si/sites/default/files/porocila/refernet country report final.pdf

Slovene Institute for Adults in Education, SIAE (Andragoški center Slovenije, ACS). https://www.acs.si/

### **Quality assurance**

In 2015, the Employment Service of Slovenia published the Cross-sectorial guidelines for quality assurance in lifelong guidance. The guidelines aim to:

- a. ensure that a common framework for quality assurance is introduced in all areas and levels of career guidance in Slovenia;
- b. ensure that the Slovene framework for quality assurance is in line with the European quality assurance framework and data collection;
- c. help partner organisations to develop or complement their quality assurance systems in LLG in a way that contributes to better quality and efficiency;
- d. ensure that LLG users will develop the competences of planning and managing careers in different life stages.

The implementation of the guidelines has been put on hold.

Sources



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Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

### **Career management skills**

Guidelines for school counsellors in primary and secondary education include the teaching of career management skills within career education. The aim of the career management skills approach is to develop self-awareness, self-understanding and self-management skills. No details on implementation were specified in these guidelines. In universities, career centres provide career support and career counselling for students. The services focus on career management skills, data about learning and working opportunities and career events (seminars, workshops and trainings).

### Evidence, monitoring and assessment

No systematic evidence, monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of career guidance in schools has been done to date. In 2015, within the project CAREER (EU Commission funded), interviews with school counsellors in primary and secondary school were done. The results confirmed that mainly information activities have been carried out in Slovene schools. An inventory has been developed to support the career guidance service for adults. The inventory has different sets of self-evaluation questions.

There is evaluation of career guidance workshops developed by The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The public employment service develops studies on further improvement of career guidance services and organises career training for professionals. The employment service was also monitored by the EU PES network in 2017. The main conclusion was that the training of career counsellors has to be improved. In addition, ESS provides monitoring of career counselling, with three counsellors being monitored in each regional office every year.

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Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-labour-family-social-affairsand-equal-opportunities/

## **Career information, ICT in guidance**

Aiming to reach to a higher number of users, national guidance providers have introduced access to ICT-based services. Self-help tools started being developed and used by career professionals. The aim is to improve access to career services, while orienting face-to-face individual career services toward those target groups who need it the most.

The Employment Service of Slovenia provides the online application Kam in kako (Where and how) that uses multiple choice types of question based on users' interests. The Institute Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices -Slovenia



of the Republic of Slovenia for VET provides a web site with the information on schools, programmes and professions.

For unemployed and employed adults, the ESS has provided an e-counselling service since 2008. E-counselling leads the client through a decision-making process on education and employment. The web site was revised in 2013.

The ESS has also developed several questionnaires, published on the Make your career website and available for free to consultants and users. The ESS adds new questionnaires and tools to the website every year.

In 2007, Employment Service of Slovenia started working on developing *eSvetovanje* (ecounselling) with the aim of improving access to online career guidance for unemployed and employed individuals, to increase their self-awareness and self-understanding. With the tool, users can assess their skills, identify interests, needs, create their application, CV and cover letter, prepare for and interview, learn more about career management skills and labour market information. The website results from international collaboration with VDAB (Belgium) and AMS (Austria).

Krka, a pharmaceutical company from Slovenia, provides access to career information (jobs, training opportunities), career guidance and career support for its employees using an intranet system, career experts (from the HR department) and also printed materials.

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eSvetovanje (E-Counselling). https://esvetovanje.ess.gov.si/

Krka. https://www.krka.biz/en/about-krka/company-presentation/generic-pharmaceuticals/

National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. http://www.cpi.si/en/

### **Training and qualifications**

There is no systematic training of career guidance practitioners in Slovenia. The career counsellors in the educational centres for adults and at the Employment Service of Slovenia have to complete a 48-hour internal mandatory course. The trainees obtain knowledge on:

- a. learning processes for adults;
- b. motivation mechanisms for adult learning;
- c. methods for encouraging adults in learning;
- d. planning the learning process;
- e. how to evaluate achievements in education;
- f. how to plan personal and career development for individuals.

There are no special requirements. Entrance conditions are: academic degree (Bologna degree) in any humanistic social science studies, certificate in pedagogical-andragogical skills, and an expert certificate for workers in education. The National Institute for Vocational Education and Training provides career guidance and training for teachers and guidance counsellors. School teachers have access to continuing professional development courses on entrepreneurship.

The Faculty of Arts from the University of Ljubljana developed a 3+2-year master programme in education sciences/psychology which includes also courses on career guidance. Master programmes in pedagogy, social and special pedagogy, social work, and

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education sciences have been developed at the University of Ljubljana and University of Primorska. These master programmes do not provide a basis for guidance work.

The Employment Service of Slovenia provides 160 hours of informal training for career counsellors from all areas (schools, universities, ESS, adult education, human resource departments, and policy makers). Training focuses on job interviews, individual and group counselling, and counselling difficult target groups. There are five training modules:

- a. professional aspect of career guidance;
- b. advisory work;
- c. CG tools;
- d. working with different social groups
- e. one optional module (module for school counsellors, for the unemployed, for individual counselling and for the NGO sector).

In 2015, 56 counsellors completed this programme and about 50 in 2018. The public employment service and Euroguidance Slovenia develop international collaboration with other career organisations from Europe and provide access to academic study visits through the Academia study exchange project.

#### Sources

Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

Euroguidance Slovenia (n.d.). *Academia study exchange project*. https://www.euroguidance.eu/international-mobility/academia

National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. http://www.cpi.si/en/

# **Funding career guidance**

Responsibility for the management of the guidance services is divided between the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The former finances school counselling services (providing salaries for counsellors). The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs finances guidance services in the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS).

#### Sources

Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. https://www.gov.si/en/stateauthorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/

Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-labour-family-social-affairsand-equal-opportunities/

### **Career guidance for school pupils**

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport coordinates the career guidance provided in schools, universities and adult education institutions. The activities of the ministry focus on providing information on schools and school programmes and on administrative procedures
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during the transitions. The schools provide the following activities for students:

- a. access to the information needed for an appropriate decision on further schooling;
- b. career education for a minimum two hours annually per class (ninth grade);
- c. testing of education and vocational intentions of the students in ninth grade;
- d. one counselling session for each student in the ninth grade.

The My experience programme allows young people aged 15 to 30 to record their student work experiences and non-formal work in a digital portfolio that employers can validate. The portfolios allow candidates to demonstrate their work-related skills and employers to find good workers for entry-level positions. All students and secondary school pupils carry out student work through e-Studentski Servis. An individual with a legal student status, can register at the nearest eStudentski service office or online, creating a digital portfolio which automatically consists of all previous working experience. It includes the name of the company where they worked, number of hours of student-work, basic competence and additional competences gained by the work. After that, they can either find work or the employer can find them through searching the database. The hourly allowance could be negotiated between the employer and the student. Before starting work, students receive a formal document that provides them with a proper legal basis for a working relationship with the employer (including taxation).

The competences, registered on the knowledge-skills-competences platform, include technical skills and job-specific skills as well as soft/life skills and IT skills and foreign languages. There is no career guidance on portfolio design; it is restricted to administrative procedures. Young people can show the portfolio to the potential employer and through it present their working experience, knowledge, skills and competences gained. To develop the programme, young people and companies were consulted at various junctures, through online channels, office visits, focus groups, and surveys. The programme is implemented by Slovenian government-run employment agency e-Studentski Servis, in cooperation with the Institute Nefiks (Institute for the validation of non-formal knowledge). The programme started in 2010 and is still operational.

#### Sources

e-Studentski Servis. https://www.studentski-servis.com/studenti

Institute Nefiks (Institute for the validation of non-formal knowledge). https://nefiks.si/

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. https://www.gov.si/en/stateauthorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/

### **Guidance for VET participants**

In order to increase the attractiveness of the VET system, Slovenia organised awareness campaigns and improved the quality of its VET programmes. Guidance provision for VET students has been restricted to the provision of access to the information needed during transitions in order to make an appropriate decision on further schooling.

Please see the description of VET system in Slovenia here.

#### Sources

Cedefop; Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (2019). *Vocational education and training in Europe: Slovenia* [From Cedefop; ReferNet. Vocational education and training in Europe database]. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-ineurope/systems/slovenia



### Guidance for higher education students

There are career centres at all universities and higher schools providing information and counselling. The quality of service varies as there is no central regulation. One of the career centres, of high quality, provides the following:

- a. career counselling;
- b. workshops organised at individual faculties and academies;
- c. career camps open to all students, with topics such as self-assessment, job search, career plan, interview, written presentation, occasional language and computer courses, public speaking, project management and other topics to provide generic competences for the 21st century;
- d. consultations about opportunities abroad, entrepreneurship, internships;
- e. career days at faculties and academies;
- f. skype consultations with career counsellors from abroad;
- g. 'speed dating' events with employers;
- h. presentations of employers at faculties and academies, as well as visits to their premises, for actual working environments.

The Slovenian Rectors' Conference (Univerza na Primorskem) has established an intranet tool to provide entrepreneurship support for students and to increase networking between students and entrepreneur graduates. Business plan competitions are organised at university level. Gea College of Entrepreneurship has developed games/simulations to support the development of entrepreneurship skills. An analytical information system for higher education (eVŠ) has been introduced with the aim of contributing to the development of an evidence-based policy process. The system centralises data about students, study programmes, accommodation, and teaching staff. The system gathers many types of statistical data related to the indicators.

Sources

eVŠ web portal. https://portal.evs.gov.si/prijava/?locale=en

Gea College of Entrepreneurship. https://gea-college.si/en/fakulteta/entrepreneurship/

Slovenian Rectors' Conference. http://www.rkrs.si/en

## **Guidance for adult learners**

The project Learning for young adults (PUM) is a one-year programme aiming to provide support for ESLs and the unemployed aged under 25. It gives young people the opportunity to discover their talent, develop manual skills, learn various techniques for creating and learning, listen to presentations of professions, gain a lot of skills in different areas of interest and gain the motivation to continue with the mentor study or finding a job.

#### Sources

Project Learning for Young Adults (PUM). http://www.ric-nm.si/en/completed-nationalprojects/project-learning-for-young-adults/

### Guidance for the employed



The Labour Market Regulation Act (Official Journal RS No. 80/10) introduced various measures aiming to promote flexicurity, with the goal also to extend labour market measures (career guidance, preparation for employment) to cover both the unemployed and those who are in the process of losing their employment.

#### Sources

Pravno-informacijski sistem Republike Slovenije (2010). *Labour Market Regulation Act* (Zakon o urejanju trga dela). http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO5840#

### Guidance for unemployed adults

Active employment policy (AEP) consists of a series of labour market measures aimed at increasing employability. The unemployed and other jobseekers have a right and obligation to participate in AEP. One of its priorities of the 2016-20 implementation period is reducing the number of the long-term unemployed (LTU) by aiding and motivating them to be active and enter the labour market as soon as possible. Each unemployed individual has a counsellor who also provides guidance. The unemployed are obliged to attend workshops on career guidance that mainly focus on presentation skills and information sicking skills.

The Annual adult education programme 2017 includes measures like counselling workshops aimed at LTUs who need help with motivation and activation, support in changing attitudes that hinder their active job search and overcoming obstacles. The purpose of the workshop is to help participants identify their position in the labour market, and to inform them about any limiting beliefs and attitudes they have to finding a job.

The Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) is responsible for the implementation of Training at a workplace, which is part of the Operational programme for the implementation of the EU Cohesion policy 2014-20. During training or after its completion, more than 70% of the participants found employment, almost 40% of these at the employer where they were trained.

#### Sources

Employment Service of Slovenia, ESS (Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, ZRSZ). https://www.ess.gov.si/

#### **Guidance for early leavers**

The Youth guarantee scheme has been set up. Employers receive tax reductions for creating positions to be occupied by young people.

### **Guidance for NEET**

The Youth guarantee scheme has been set up. Employers receive tax reductions for creating positions to be occupied by young people. In line with the Recommendation for the establishment of a Youth guarantee adopted by the Council of the European Union in April 2013, programmes involving young people aged 15 to 24 should be introduced.

The project Learning for young adults (Projektno učenje za mlajše odrasle –PUM-O) is coordinated and administered by the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and



Equal Opportunities. The programme takes into account the Operational programme for the implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2014-20 and falls under the ninth priority axis *Promoting social inclusion and countering poverty*. It targets young adults (aged 15 to 26) at risk of dropping out, and early school leavers threatened with long-term unemployment. The objective of the programme is to provide guidance to young people looking to enter the labour market.

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