EN

Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–19

SLOVENIA

Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies

Cedefop monitoring of vocational education and training policies and systems

Progress towards the medium-term deliverables
of the Riga conclusions

Country chapter

SLOVENIA

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in 2015-19

Contents

Tables and figures

Tables

Figures

Introduction

In June 2015, the ministers in charge of vocational education and training in the EU Member States, the candidate countries and the European Economic Area countries, convened in Riga, agreed on objectives for vocational education and training (VET) policies for 2015-20 ([1]).

Cedefop has been entrusted with monitoring the countries' policies implemented towards reaching these objectives.

This country chapter is part of the monitoring process. It was drafted based on input from the national ReferNet team. It presents an overview of the major policy developments that have taken place in the country in 2015-19, in the areas covered by the Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs).

The country chapter is structured as follows:

(a) the introductory section Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015 briefly sketches the VET context in the country in 2015, highlighting selected figures and major policy initiatives that were just being adopted or started at that time. This introductory section is targeted at setting a baseline to put in perspective the policy choices and developments that have taken place since the beginning of the Riga cycle;

(b) five thematic chapters then follow, devoted to the five respective MTDs outlined in the Riga conclusions. Each thematic chapter also begins with a 2015 baseline, more specifically addressing the MTD-related topics. The baseline is followed by the presentation of the major policy developments in the MTD since 2015;

(c) the country chapter ends with a conclusion summarising the main lines of the 2015-19 policy developments and highlighting possible priorities for the future.

This country chapter is part of the information which the European Commission has been used to prepare the European Semester exercises ([2]) in

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([1]) *Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-20, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué:*
https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions_2015.pdf

([2]) European Semester: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en

2017-19. The chapter also informs the work of Cedefop and the European Training Foundation (ETF) in preparing a joint monitoring report on the implementation of the Riga conclusions. Both the joint report and the country chapter are aimed at informing the work of EU Member States' Directors General for Vocational Training (DGVTs) and Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) on taking stock of the outcomes of the Riga conclusions and preparing the next steps for the EU VET policy for the next few years.

Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the proportion of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Slovenia was well above the EU average and on the increase: 65.9% in 2013 against 48.9% in the EU (European Commission, 2015); 66.8% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 121); 67% in 2015 compared to 47% in the EU [3]. However, the employment rate of recent upper secondary graduates was low: 62.5% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015) compared to 70.8% in the EU. Adult participation in lifelong learning was high: 11.9% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015) and 2015 compared to 10.7% on average in the EU in both years (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 121) (Table 1).

VET in the country faced the challenge of meeting the demand for skilled workers, particularly through improving practical training. Plans for reintroducing apprenticeship (which had been discontinued in 2006) were being considered. A 2013-20 adult education master plan had been adopted in 2013.

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[3]   Eurostat, data for 2015.

Table 1. **Framework data: score on VET indicators in Slovenia and in the EU: 2010-15**

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	SI [f]	EU [f]	Yr	SI [f]	EU [f]	Range	SI	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	66.8 [b]	48.0 [b] [E1]	'13-'14	▪ 0.9	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	0.0 [z]	34.0 [b] [E2]	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	72.9	69.2 [E3]	'13-'14	▪ -0.3	▪ -1.4
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	43.0	38.0 [e]	'10	43.0	38.0 [e]			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	25.0	20.0 [e]	'10	25.0	20.0 [e]			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	16.4		'15	11.9	10.7 [b]	'13-'15	↘ -0.3	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	68.0	66.0 [e]	'10	68.0	66.0 [e]			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	59.7 [b]	42.7 [b] [E1]	'13-'14	▪ 1.1	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	24.0	25.0 [e]	'10	24.0	25.0 [e]			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15	54.1 [b]	33.0 [b]	'14-'15	▪ -4.5	▪ -0.3
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	7.8	5.3	'15	5.2	6.9	'10-'15	↘ -0.5	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.5		'15	2.8 [C]	4.3 [b C]	'13-'15	↘ -0.1	↘ -0.1
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	18.6		'15	13.1	9.5 [b]	'13-'15	→ 0.0	↘ -0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	12.0 [B]	9.5 [e] [B]	'11	12.0	9.5 [e]			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	69.1 [B]	80.2 [e] [B]	'11	69.1	80.2 [e]			
Skill development and labour market relevance								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13	0.60 [b]	0.56 [b] [E4]	'12-'13	▪ 0.13	▪ -0.03
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13	7.3 [b]	6.4 [b] [E5]	'12-'13	▪ 4.2	▪ 0.0
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.6	0.8 [e]	'10	0.6	0.8 [e]			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	1.3 [b]	1.0 [b] [E6]	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	34.6 [b]	30.0 [b] [E7]	'13-'14	▪ 1.8	▪ -0.4
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	14.7	9.3 [E8]	'13-'14	▪ -0.1	▪ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	44.4	41.5 [E9]	'12		41.6 [E9]			
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	78.1 [b]	77.2 [b]	'14-'15	▪ 0.7	▪ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	1.9 [b]	5.3 [b]	'14-'15	▪ -8.8	▪ -1.0
Employment premium for IVET graduates			'15	20.2 [b]	23.7 [b]	'14-'15	▪ -5.1	▪ -0.1

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	SI f	EU f	Yr	SI f	EU f	Range	SI	EU
(over low-educated)								
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	82.2	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	47.8	55.2	'15	51.0	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 0.6	▪ 0.4
Overall transitions and labour market trends								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	5.0	13.9	'15	5.0 C	11.0 C	'10-'15	→ 0.0	↘ -0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	34.8	33.8	'15	43.4 C	38.7 C	'10-'15	↗ 1.5	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-0year-olds (%)	8.9	16.6	'15	12.4	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 0.8	↘ -0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	10.9	13.1	'15	13.2	12.9	'10-'15	↗ 0.7	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	80.7	77.4	'15	71.5 C	76.9 C	'10-'15	↘ -1.8	↘ -0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	16.7	27.3	'15	13.2 C	23.5 C	'10-'15	↘ -0.6	↘ -0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	70.3	68.6	'15	69.1	70.0	'10-'15	↘ -0.3	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	50.5	53.4	'15	48.0 C	52.6 C	'10-'15	↘ -0.3	↘ -0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	91.7 D	82.8 D			

(*)   The data in this column are the data available in 2016. Where 2015 data were not available, data from previous years were used

(A)   UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

(B)   AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

(C)   2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

(D)   Forecast made in 2016.

(E1)   Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

(E2)   Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

(E3)   Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

(E4)   Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

(E5)   Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

(E6)   Partial information for NL.

(E7)   Based on 25 countries (missing: IT, HR, UK).

(E8)   Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, CY, FR, IE, UK).

(E9)   Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

(b)   Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

(u)   Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

(z)   Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

(e)   Eurostat: 'estimated'.

NB: EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified. Arrows ↗ or ↘ signal a positive or negative trend based on more than two data points and of magnitude 0.1 per year or more. Trends based on more than two data points but of smaller magnitude are indicated by →; trends based on two points only are marked ▪. Trends are estimated by means of regression models.

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 121.

CHAPTER 1.

MTD 1 – All forms of work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships

1.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period formal VET programmes included ([4]) 60% of vocational subjects and 40% of general subjects. Practical training in companies was provided on the basis of a collective training agreement signed between the school, and the employer. In vocational upper secondary three-year programmes (ISCED 353), an individual training agreement could be signed between the student and the employer. Depending on the type of programme the duration of in-company training varied: from four weeks in short vocational programmes (ISCED 353), four to 10 weeks in technical vocational programmes preparing for the vocational *matura* qualification (ISCED 354), to 24 weeks in three-year vocational programmes delivering ISCED 353 occupational qualifications; for the latter the practical training period could be extended to up to 53 weeks in case of an individual training agreement (Cedefop, 2015).); although this was not a frequent practice (Cedefop, 2017d, p. 39). In higher VET programmes (ISCED 554), accessible to those with a vocational matura, work-based learning in companies accounted for 40% of the programme duration.

Upper secondary VET falls under the remit of the Education Ministry; social partners' partnership is established in various regulations. They participate through sectoral committees in the design of occupational standards while chambers keep and update registers of available training places published annually, validate training workplaces and provide interim tests for students (Cedefop ReferNet Slovenia, 2014, p. 23). Companies that offer training places receive a financial bonus per learner and other financial incentives for each student successfully completing training (Cedefop, 2015).

Due to the economic crisis, SMEs capacity to respond to the system and provide work-based learning had been very limited in previous years while enrolment in vocational upper secondary education decreased in the period 2005-13 (Cedefop ReferNet Slovenia, 2014, p.10, Table 4).

([4]) According to the 2006 VET reform that was fully implemented in 2011.

At the beginning of the reporting period, national priorities were focusing on improving the quality and relevance of VET offer and its attractiveness for companies through ([5]):

(a) modernisation of the VET act to allow for more flexibility in the training offer, such as amending the legal status of upper secondary students/apprentice to be considered employee;

(b) promoting VET in particular in sectors with skill shortages and rare professions and providing incentives for companies to engage in work-based learning;

(c) reinforcing the role of the 20 inter-company training centres (MICs), already well established (between 2010 and 2014) at different sectors across the country. MICs were part of school centres and their role was to bring together schools and local businesses to offer training opportunities to VET learners and (un)employed adults alike;

(d) forming *coordination working group for VET and technical education* with strong social partners representation.

Reintroducing apprenticeships in formal VET was part of the social agreement in 2015 ([6]). In the same year, Slovenia volunteered to undertake together with Cedefop a review of existing work-based learning and apprenticeship schemes. The review was aimed at helping key VET stakeholders to get a better understanding of work-based learning especially of how to optimise apprenticeships, improve the quality of the training offered to support youth employability and economy growth.

1.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

Slovenia assigned overall a high priority on the work related to work-based learning and apprenticeship compared to the other MTDs agreed in the Riga conclusions. The country's priorities for 2016-20 in this area are to:

(a) reintroduce an apprenticeship system (including the related programmes and adapting the legislation accordingly);

([5]) Cedefop (2014). *DGVT survey on progress towards the Bruges objectives and future priorities*. [unpublished].

([6]) http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/slovenia-new-apprenticeship-act

(b) set specific arrangements for introducing the apprenticeship system in VET schools, alongside the work-based learning system already in place.

1.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

1.3.1. The 2015-16 social pact

A 2015-16 social pact was concluded between representatives of the government, trade unions and employers. This acknowledges the need for apprenticeships and considers their reintroduction, especially in sectors where skills shortages are observed.

1.3.2. The 2015 thematic country review on apprenticeships in cooperation with Cedefop

A thematic country review on apprenticeship was conducted in close cooperation with Cedefop in the years 2015-17. The aim was to carry out an in-depth analysis of the situation to support Slovenia on reintroducing apprenticeship. The review involved a broad range of VET stakeholders: directors of VET schools, students, recent graduates who are in employment, providers of in-company training, directors of intercompany training centres, company directors and in-company mentors. Several sectors were surveyed [7]. A steering group has been nominated by the ministry of education to discuss and validate the outcomes of the review and support discussions at national level: the group included members from the education and labour [8] ministries, the VET institute of the republic of Slovenia (hereinafter CPI), the chamber of commerce and industry, the chamber of craft and small business and VET providers. The final report was published in September 2017 [9] suggesting:

   (a) the setting up of a clear vision for apprenticeship by all stakeholders;
   (b) piloting the new scheme based on the existing knowledge;
   (c) to motivate companies and learners with customised support and improved career guidance;
   (d) increasing communication and cooperation among all actors also through accepting responsibilities;

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[7] Hospitality and tourism; masonry; carpentry; metal, glass and paper industry.

[8] The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, hereinafter the Ministry of Labour

[9] See Cedefop (2017).

(e) ensuring competent mentors and to sustain a funding model also by non-financial support.

Follow-up actions are described in Sections 1.3.3 and 1.3.4.

1.3.3. New Apprenticeship Act

The new Act on apprenticeship, published in 2017 ([10]), is the result of joint work and consultation with all main VET stakeholders ([11]). It defines apprenticeships as a means to accomplish three-year upper secondary VET programmes, equal to school-based programmes. The act strengthens the role of chambers in monitoring the scheme, defines the roles and responsibilities of companies offering practical training, the terms of the apprenticeship contract and the rights and obligations of apprentices, considered students ([12]).Monthly remuneration is foreseen for the whole duration of the practical training in companies. The scheme is open to the unemployed. The first pilot programmes (Section 1.3.4.) were initiated in 2017 ([13]).

1.3.4. Reforming upper-secondary VET and piloting apprenticeships

A five year project *Reform of upper-secondary vocational education*, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), started in November 2016. The main objectives are twofold: to reform school-based VET and to reintroduce apprenticeship. It includes the following activities:

(a) test and identify the tools and methods to create a sustainable system to match the needs of the labour market;

(b) develop flexible and individualised teaching methods and learning pathways;

(c) support companies to engage in work-based learning;

(d) test and evaluate the apprenticeship system;

(e) define learning outcomes for work-based learning;

([10]) http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO7512

([11]) The ministries of education, labour and economy, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI), schools and social partners (chambers and trade unions)

([12]) See also: European Commission (2018). *Teachers and trainers matter: how to support them in high-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning: 12 policy pointers.* Luxembourg. Publications Office, p. 8
https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8131&furtherPubs=yes

([13]) See also: Cedefop ReferNet Slovenia (2018): *New Apprenticeship Act.* National news on VET; 21.5.2018. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/slovenia-new-apprenticeship-act

(f)   improve the training of mentors in companies.

Close cooperation with social partners and companies is embedded in the project.

A new apprenticeship system is a major part of the project and a pilot started in the school year 2017/18. At the beginning of the 2018/19 school year there were approximately 126 apprentices enrolled in their first year in eight programmes, compared to the 50 apprentices in four programmes in the previous academic year. It is foreseen that in 2019-20 apprenticeship programmes will increase to 12 and will be offered in 16 upper secondary schools ([14]). In 2018, the VET Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (CPI) conducted the first evaluation of the 2017-18 pilot phase, showcasing a positive feedback from apprentices and participating companies and identifying some areas for improvement. These include:

(a)   the need for more support mechanisms for companies as well as adjusting the content and organisation of training in the companies;
(b)   further develop the partnership between schools and companies, where the company will be an active partner and not simply a passive receiver of apprentices;
(c)   more active involvement of apprentices in their training path; improve the assessment of apprentices based on examples of good practices from other countries;
(d)   in cooperation with chambers develop methods of verifying learning places in the companies.

As a result of the evaluation, CPI drafted the *Framework model of further development of modern apprenticeship* and will prepare, with relevant stakeholders, practical guidelines on the following areas:

(a)   planning the apprenticeship path;
(b)   implementation of apprenticeships;

([14]) Metal shaper-toolmaker (*SC Škofja Loka*, upper secondary VET school *Bežigrad*); mason (upper secondary construction, geodetic and environmental school *Ljubljana*); joiner (*SC Slovenj Gradec, SC Novo mesto*); gastronomy and the hotel services (upper secondary school *Izola*, secondary school of catering and tourism *Radenci*); painter – signpainter (SC *Kranj*), Bricklayer (ŠC *Kranj*, SGGŠ *Ljubljana*), machine engineering mechanic (SC *Škofja Loka*, SC *Novo Mesto*, SC *Velenje*), industrial mechanic (SC *Novo Mesto*, STŠ *Koper*, SIC *Ljubljana*), electrician (SC *Kranj*, SC *Velenje*), paper maker (SIC *Ljubljana*), tinsmith – roofer (SC *Ptuj*), glassmaker (SC *Rogaška Slatina*). See also http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/slovenia-piloting-apprenticeship-upper-secondary-vet.

(c) monitoring and assessment of apprentice competences, as well as evaluation of the process;

(d) training of in-company trainers.

CPI will continuously evaluate and monitor the reform activities and report annually to the national expert council for VET.

Financial incentives for companies to offer practical training in apprenticeship-type schemes or in school-based VET programmes are available from national and EU sources. The Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia manages these incentives.

1.3.5. Promoting VET

The 2016-20 ESF-funded project *VET promotion* coordinated by CPI promotes VET as an attractive education option and supports the young and talented in moving forward in their career. Promotion has been done mainly though the national and European skills competitions and National VET promotion activities

In 2016 and 2018 two national skills competitions – SloveniaSkills – were organised. More than 20 000 students and their parents attended the 2018 competition. More than 70 young professionals (aged 18 - 25) competed in 10 professions (ICT, woodcraft technology, floristry, visual merchandising, mechatronics, painting and decorating, cooking, restaurant service, architectural stonemasonry). The winners of the competition represented Slovenia in the 2016 Euroskills competition in Gotheburg and 2018 Euroskills competition in Budapest.

95% of the target population (14 to 15-year-old students and their parents) was reached through the national VET promotion campaigns run on different media such as TV, digital media, radio, print and outdoor media spaces. In addition, student visits to companies, craftsmen workshops and craft fairs have taken place. The campaign also focuses on professions of the future and foresees an exhibition that aims to present them in schools.

Attracting young people in VET has also been supported through the Scholarship policy 2015-19, adopted by the Government of Slovenia in 2015. The Scholarship policy falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and its main objective is to encourage young people to enrol in vocational and technical education programmes in upper secondary education. To achieve this goal approximately 1 000 scholarships are awarded each academic year by the Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia.

MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET

2.1.   Baseline 2015

Appointed in 2008 as the quality assurance national reference point (EQAVET NRP in Slovenia), CPI covered publicly funded initial vocational education and training (IVET). The Organisation and Financing of Education Act (2007) envisaged the preparation of an annual self-evaluation report; the Vocational Education and Training Act (2006) stipulated preparation of an annual quality report([15]), which VET providers should also post on their websites. The self-evaluation report was considered to be more detailed: it was intended for school employees and to support the school's development and further steps. The quality assurance report should contain short descriptions of the quality assurance activities carried out in the past year and summaries of the self-evaluation report findings, together with proposed measures. It must be posted on the school website every year ([16]). The Vocational Education and Training Act additionally provided for the quality commission, which should be composed of a chair and members appointed from among the school's professional staff and representatives of employers, students and parents. The inspectorate carried out external evaluation based on whether the school was performing according to the law.

Since 2007, the national council of experts for VET has approved 7 national quality assurance indicators which were in line with the European quality assurance in vocational education and training (EQAVET) recommended indicators. VET providers were supposed to take into account all indicators during self-evaluation and report on them to the EQAVET NRP to allow for

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([15]) Originally the report is entitled *Report of the Quality Commission*.

([16]) The relationship between self-evaluation report and quality assurance report and the frequency of each is under scrutiny in the context of a national project to develop a common model of quality assessment and quality assurance in Eeducation (including kindergarten, elementary school, upper secondary general school and upper secondary IVET). The project will be concluded in August 2019.

preparing the annual national quality report and presenting it to the council of experts for VET.

Similar to IVET, all adult education organisations that offer vocational training had to carry out self-evaluation. They had to establish a school quality commission and prepare a self-evaluation report every year. A model for self-evaluation *Offering quality education to adults* (OQEA) ([17]) was developed within an ESF funded project. The role of quality counsellor in adult education has been developed to support quality development at provider level. The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) was in charge of coordinating the national network of quality counsellors ([18]).

According to EQAVET surveys, the national approach to quality assurance in VET did not yet include at the beginning of the reporting period a systematic collection of information relating to IVET and/or continuing vocational education and training (CVET) graduates. In 2010-11, pilot data collection and analysis took place for three large VET schools (covering destination, occupation, and salaries). A second pilot in 2012 evaluated VET graduate transitions and collected opinions about schools, programmes and work-based learning. The results and recommendations were provided to schools. Some schools regularly monitored transition to work, provide information on their webpages, and consider the data when designing their curricula.

By 2015 there was not a comprehensive and systematic system for forecasting skills needs in Slovenia. Some sectorial and regional analyses were performed, mostly in the framework of development of occupational standards. Some initiatives were in place, mostly through ESF funded projects, that aimed to improve the knowledge on the forecasting methodology into local environment. Other initiatives include the employment forecast survey, through which, companies report their intentions regarding employment (EEPO, 2015).

2.2. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET in 2015-19

In the reporting period, Slovenia is running a national project to develop, by August 2019, a common model of quality assessment and quality assurance at all levels of formal education, from kindergarten to high school. This would

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([17]) http://kakovost.acs.si/oqea/

([18]) http://kakovost.acs.si/counsellors/

include recommended standards and indicators in five areas [19]: learning achievements and achievements of children in development and learning; professional learning and performance of teachers; safe and facilitating learning environment; leadership of kindergartens and schools; and assessment and quality assurance with self-evaluation. The common quality assurance national framework has 18 standards for providers (school or kindergarten), which are divided into 50 indicators, further described and illustrated with questions. For standards, examples of descriptors/measures and sources of evidence are available. Standards and indicators are formulated as directions toward 'good school/kindergarten'. The national project also included collaboration in development of the model, piloting the model in 32 schools/kindergartens from all included educational subsystems, and cases of good practice developed through piloting. Self-evaluation and peer review [20] are defined methods for quality assurance in school/kindergarten in the common national model for quality assessment and quality assurance in education. All relevant national institutes are involved in the preparation of the model: National School for Leadership in Education, the National Institute for VET, the National Education Institute and the National Examinations Centre. The idea of systematic common and coordinated support to schools/kindergartens from all four institutes was revised and upgraded. The project has been ordered by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and has been extended until August 2019, when implementation and support by all four national institutes will be developed.

In 2017, the set of indicators to monitor VET was expanded from 7 to 11 (including all 10 EQAVET indicators) and was adopted by the National Council of Experts for VET in April 2017. The 11 national indicators for VET were integrated into the national framework for quality assurance in 2018 (only for IVET providers). The council of experts at the Ministry for Education, Science and Sport decided in April 2019, that the 11 national indicators are obligatory for VET schools and also for self-evaluation.

The EQAVET NRP (located at the National Institute for VET) and National Institute for VET as a whole are using *Erasmus+* funding for different development projects on quality assurance in VET. Results are usually focused on both system and provider level.

Further support for VET providers to implement the EQAVET framework was developed through the *Erasmus+* project *Support for policy reform, action*

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[19] http://solazaravnatelje.si/index.php/dejavnosti/zaloznistvo/zbirka-kakovost-v-vrtcih-in-solah

[20] Peer review is voluntary for school/kindergarten.

EQAVET network - restricted call for EQAVET NRPs. Support activities include a manual for implementation of the EQAVET (and EQAVET+) [21] framework, an annual national conference on quality in VET, training for quality commissions at VET provider level, translation of case studies from the EQAVET website, development of national website for quality assurance in VET [22], and developing/piloting quality indicators for international peer-review of VET providers. The EQAVET NRP in Slovenia organised a peer learning activity on Balancing external evaluation with self-evaluation in VET systems across the Europe.

The systematic use of EQAVET indicators to monitor the VET system ('always used' item in Figure 1), has improved compared to 2013. Slovenia is above the EU average in IVET using systematically all EQAVET indicators in 2018. In the reporting period, methodology for monitoring the national indicators for VET, especially indicators 5, 6 and 9 [23] is under scrutiny and the concept of national quality report on VET is being further developed accordingly (through a restricted call for EQAVET NRPs 2017-19 and through regular work of the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET).

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[21] Between 2015 and 2017 the EQAVET network complemented the EQAVET Recommendation with indicative descriptors of the quality assurance process (all four phases of quality cycle: plan – do – check – act). EQAVET+ is about several descriptors in a number of additional areas (including work-based learning, learning outcomes, pedagogy which focuses on meeting the needs of individual learners).

[22] http://www.eqavet-nrp-slo.si/

[23] Indicator 5 is about placement rate in VET programmes, indicator 6 looks at utilisations of acquired skills at the workplace and indicator 9 refers to mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market.

Figure 1. **Use of EQAVET indicators**
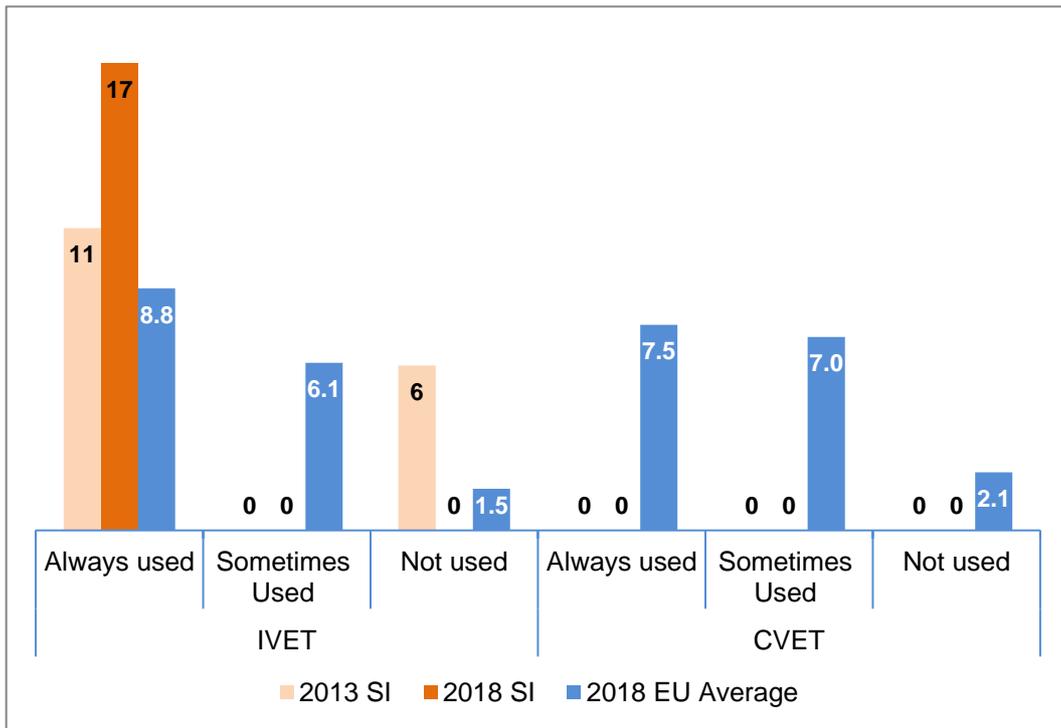
NB: Of the 17 indicators suggested by the 2009 EQAVET Recommendation, 11 were 'always used' in IVET
in 2013 and 17 were 'always used' in Slovenia compared to 8.8 in the EU on average in 2018.
No information was provided for the use of EQAVET indicators in CVET.
EU average was calculated based on available information for 31 out of 35 VET systems.
Source: Cedefop calculations based on EQAVET Secretariat surveys for 2013 and 2018 data.

2.3. Continuous information and feedback loops in IVET in 2015-19

The country's priority in this matter for 2016-20 is to continue implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in schools.

The methodology and the first eight catalogues for practical training were prepared as part of the ESF project *Reform of upper-secondary vocational education 2016-21*(Section 1.3.4).

2.4. Continuous information and feedback loops in CVET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this matter is to ensure collection of information on labour-market relevance of CVET courses and then carry out training of the unemployed in compliance with labour-market needs.

The public employment service of Slovenia completed a pilot project in 2018, the 'occupational barometer', to forecast future changes in the labour market. The qualitative research was conducted for seven (out of 12) regional offices classifying occupations in three groups:

(a) shortage;
(b) balance;
(c) surplus.

For the shortage occupations the main reasons were identified in terms of:

(a) lack of candidates for the occupation;
(b) lack of knowledge, skills and competence for the specific occupation;
(c) poor working conditions (wages, shift-work, hard physical work, etc.).

Methodologically, the research project followed examples of short-term (one-year) forecasts of the supply and demand in Estonian, Poland, Finland and Sweden. Research findings will be used to determine training for the unemployed.

CHAPTER 3.

MTD 3 – Access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible/permeable systems, guidance and validation of non-formal and informal learning

3.1.　2015 Baseline

At the beginning of the reporting period adult learning had been among the main priorities of the national reform programmes (2011-12 and 2013-14) and the structural funds (2007-13). The adult education master plan (2013-20) defined the national policy for adult learning based on the principle of equal access for all. It established the priorities, regulation and financing framework for adult education development led by the education ministry and in cooperation with other six ministries ([24]). The Council Recommendation of 2015 ([25]) also suggested increasing the employability of low skilled and older workers.

　　Career guidance had been provided by PES, schools and adult education guidance centres (ISIOs). In 2008, the education ministry established the national expert group for lifelong guidance (LLG) to act as an advisory body to guide policy-makers and guidance practitioners. The group published recommendations for policy-makers on the improvement of LLG in Slovenia in 2015.

　　The Slovenian qualifications framework (SQF) was developed in 2011 and was referenced to the EQF and the QF-EHEA ([26]) in 2013. It comprises 10 levels, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

　　Legislation from 2000 and 2007 had provided for validation in different education and training subsystems but there was no single national strategy in

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([24])　See *Education and training monitor,* 2015, Slovenia, p.9.

([25])　Council of the European Union (2015). Recommendation of the Council of 14 July 2015 on the 2015 National Reform Programme of Slovenia and delivering a Council opinion on the 2015 Stability Programme of Slovenia. *Official Journal of the European Union,* C 272, 18.8.2015, pp. 6-9. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2015.272.01.0006.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2015:272:TOC

([26])　Qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area.

place. In 2015, the NVQ (27) regulations relating to methods and procedures for validating professional qualifications were revised to improve quality and transparency of validation/recognition, reduce the number of institutions in charge, and clarify responsibilities and obligations. The Ministry of Education planned to prepare a validation system including common standards and quality assurance for all levels.

3.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

The country's priorities in this area for 2016-20 are threefold:
- (a) for young people:
    - (i) develop systemic solutions for recognition of non-formal and informal learning for IVET;
    - (ii) improve access to formal and informal education, training and employment for young people who left education and training early;
- (b) for adults:
    - (i) develop systemic solutions for recognition of non-formal and informal learning for CVET;
    - (ii) increase participation of older workers in lifelong learning to improve their employability and increase the employment rate of the 55-64 age group;
- (c) for refugees and migrants: develop, by the end of 2016, a high capacity solution that allows recently arrived refugees and migrants to have their skills and competences identified and documented in the quickest and best possible way.

3.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

3.3.1. Guidance

In 2017 benchmarks for quality in lifelong guidance (LLG) have been suggested to the national working group for quality in education. The Expert Group for LLG contributed to national legislation regarding VET and general education in 2017. Career management appears in the amended acts as one of the key tasks in educational paths. In 2016 the Expert Group for LLG recommended the chapter

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(27) National vocational qualifications.

on career guidance in the renewed national guidelines for school counsellors in primary and secondary schools.

The Ministry of Labour is implementing the programme *Career centres for youth*, jointly 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 programme is in its initial phase of implementation; it will provide better access to career guidance services for the young (six to 19 years of age). Two career centres will be set up, one in cohesion region Zahodna Slovenia (west Slovenia) and one in cohesion region Vzhodna Slovenia (east Slovenia). Career centres will:

    (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 career centre and career guidance promotional activities.

Despite the lack of systemic approach, developments are continuing through ESF projects coordinated by the national coordination point for lifelong career guidance within the employment service of Slovenia (ESS, the public employment service) and its branches:

    (a) the 2015-22 project *Strengthening counselling work with young people at the employment service of Slovenia ([28])* aims at finding new ways to increase accessibility of the services for unemployed young people in compliance with the Youth Guarantee and offering them individualised activation measures;

    (b) the 2016-22 project *Service development of lifelong career guidance and further strengthening of national coordination point for lifelong career guidance* ([29]) aims at supporting integration and coordination of stakeholders, and at developing new tools for career orientation of primary and secondary school learners;

    (c) the 2016-22 project *Performing services for the unemployed, other jobseekers and employers* ([30]) is oriented towards:

        (i) increasing the quality of counselling services;

([28]) https://www.ess.gov.si/

([29]) ibid

([30]) http://english.ess.gov.si/about_ess/projects/current-projects/project/performing-services-for-the-unemployed-other-job-seekers-an

(ii) finding new ways of supporting employers who are searching for employees;

(iii) encouraging the use of ICT and other communication channels in counselling.

(d) the 2016-22 project *Development of services for workers' transnational mobility facilitation, EURES (³¹)* will create more efficient advice services for transnational mobility of workers, especially the young, as part of EURES services.

(e) the 2016-22 project *Increasing effective coordination of supply and demand in the labour market (³²)* aims at offering multi-channel services and will develop a competence model as skills profiling, matching and forecasting tool.

ESF projects coordinated by the National School for Leadership in Education also contribute to developing guidance:

(a) the 2016-18 project *Leadership support programme for school staff*, produced for staff in schools and kindergartens in order to develop knowledge and skills in lifelong career guidance;

(b) the 2016-19 project *Managing and leading innovative learning environments* aiming to design a model of comprehensive support to head teachers in pedagogical leadership and management, including developing head teacher capacities for critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, reflexion and cooperative learning. The model will be extended to career managements skills of head teachers.

The 2016-20 ESF project *VET promotion* coordinated by CPI also contributes to developing guidance. The project (see also Section 1.3.4) aims to support the young and talented in moving forward in their career.

Slovenia also participated in *Erasmus+* projects that refer to guidance:

(a) the 2015-17 *Erasmus+* project *Guidance and orientation for adult learners* (GOAL) (³³) to improve guidance and orientation for adult learners. The project focused on those aged 50+, immigrants, and low-qualified job seekers and employees, producing recommendations for guidance practitioners and policy makers. Project partners included the ministry for education, SIAE and CPI;

(³¹) ibid

(³²) ibid

(³³) http://www.projectgoal.eu/

(b)   the 2015-17 *Erasmus+* project *Lead career*. The main aim of the project was to develop school leadership knowledge and skills for career development of education staff.

ESS is active in the *Euroguidance* network since 2000. The network aims at promoting the European dimension in guidance and providing quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes.

3.3.2.   Preventing early school leaving

A 2014-17 Erasmus+ project *CroCooS* addressed the prevention of early leaving of education and training (ELET). Since 2017 CPI, a partner in the project, disseminated the project results through the in-service training of VET teachers. CPI also, in cooperation with the National Education Institute, proposed in its 2018 publication *Methodology for monitoring and preventing ELET* that ELET data are collected via the student registry in addition to the Labour force survey. It also suggested the development of prevention activities and strategies at national, school and teacher level to support students at risk of dropping out.

3.3.3.   Transparency, recognition, validation

3.3.3.1.   *National qualifications framework* (34)

In July 2016, the Slovenian qualifications framework Act (35) came into force, serving as the legal basis for SQF implementation and full operationalisation. The SQF register describes qualifications in accordance with SQF and EQF levels and includes 1 549 qualifications (1 222 educational qualifications and 321 national vocational qualifications). The adoption of the SQF Act in 2016 opens up the system to supplementary qualifications awarded on the labour market, establishing accreditation procedures and the criteria for placement into the SQF. It also stipulates the inclusion of SQF and EQF levels on certificates, diplomas and Europass documents, enabling the country to meet the second milestone of EQF implementation.

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(34) Source: Cedefop, 2017b.

(35) The SQF Act is available in Slovenian at: http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=124645#!/Zakon-o-slovenskem-ogrodju-kvalifikacij-%28ZSOK%29

3.3.3.2. *Recognition of prior learning for refugees and migrants ([36])*

To support refugees and migrants, a two-stage procedure for validating the knowledge and skills of minors and adults who do not have proof of their educational attainment has been introduced:

(a) based on interviews, their personal situation and (career) ambitions are identified;

(b) then a process of testing their maths and science skills, as well as their social competences, is carried out, to identify the most suitable paths/programmes for them. Certificates are issued as a result of the testing as entry requirement for upper secondary or higher education.

The government formalised the process with a Decree in December 2017.

3.3.4. Training, reskilling and upskilling vulnerable groups, jobseekers and employees

3.3.4.1. *Training for the young*

The *Youth guarantee* implementation plan for 2016-20 ([37]) (following the 2014-15 round) was adopted in May 2016. One of its activities *Project learning for young adults (PUM-O)* targets those aged between 15 and 26 who left education and training early or dropped out, to help them complete their education and/or find a job. The activity consists of project work that combines work-related content with fun experience and encouragement for active job search, continuing education and achieving personal goals.

The 2014-20 ESF-supported programmes such as *Non-formal education and training for young* and *On-the-job training* address the employability of young, unemployed people, through non-formal and on-the-job training programmes to raise competences in demand in the labour market (key competences, work specific competences).

The Ministry of Labour runs an ESF-supported project Co-*financing of innovative projects for employment of young people in the period 2018–20*. The project aims to activate the unemployed young through connecting key stakeholders at regional and national levels.

To support NEET efficiently, counsellors from different public services should align their efforts to provide the right support for specific issues NEET

([36]) Source: Cedefop, 2017b; Košmrlj, 2016.

([37]) http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/Jamst vo_za_mlade_prevod_EN.pdf

might have. Therefore, CPI joined the *Erasmus+* project *Youth in transition* ([38]) within which also vocational maturity (readiness to work) will be addressed with an online tool for counselling NEETs.

3.3.4.2. *Training for the elderly, long-term unemployed and low skilled* ([39])

An *Elderly and the labour market in Slovenia* action plan was adopted by the government in December 2016. It provides for measures in support to lifelong learning and validation of non-formal skills for people aged 50+.

The 2014-20 ESF-supported programmes such as *Non-formal education and training* and *On-the-job training* that target the long-term unemployed and low-skilled aged 50+ were also adopted under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. They seek to improve employability through programme training for competences in demand in the labour market.

A 2016-22 project *Comprehensive support to companies for active ageing of employees* targeting the employed over 45 (with emphasis on those older than 50) has also been carried out under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. The aim of the programme is to encourage delayed retirement and increase the employability of older workers. The programme aims to provide support to employers for more efficient management of the ageing workforce, improve motivation and skills upgrading of older employees, and to raise awareness of the challenges that an ageing workforce is facing. The Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia manages these incentives. The *Learning workshops* (2019-20) is a programme of the Employment Service of Slovenia for those registered unemployed for at least two years or who have completed primary school at the most or are more than 55 years of age. The programme offers new skills, competences and experiences at an employer from the field of social entrepreneurship. The workshop is organised as a six-month practical training under the professional guidance of mentors.

3.3.4.3. *Upskilling adults*

The project *Development of programmes for upskilling in continuing vocational education and training 2017–22* (the PINPIU project) aims to develop formal VET programmes for upskilling employees, helping them to respond to changing needs in the labour market. It targets mainly employees in small companies

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([38]) https://youth-it.cool/

([39]) To be eligible for the programme one of the conditions has to apply: older than 55, younger than 30 long-term unemployed.

which are less likely to participate in CVET. CPI coordinates the project preparing 20 pilot programmes in cooperation with employers and training providers ([40]).

In 2018, the Ministry of Education financed the following projects for upskilling adults:

(a) the 2018-22 *Munera 3* project targets employed individuals who require additional training in line with the labour market needs. These programmes are prepared by the schools in close cooperation with the interested companies and are approved by the school council;

(b) the 2018-22 projects *Panup* and *Atena* (one for each cohesion region) ([41]) are addressed to adults without completed VET or general upper secondary education, master craftsman, foreman or shop manager exam. Adults with completed primary education at the most, and/or aged 45 or more, have an advantage. The purpose of the project is to provide them with competences necessary for the labour market and increase their employability.

The Ministry of Labour runs the 2017-21 ESF-supported project *Practical employment promotion programme* for the unemployed older than 50 years to increase their employability through qualification and requalification. Training is provided by inter-company training centres and designed in line with labour-market needs.

3.3.4.4. *Training for refugees*

At the Employment Service of Slovenia, a pilot project targeting the beneficiaries of international protection took place in 2016, 2017 and 2018. This facilitates the integration of refugees into the labour market and into Slovenian society through workshops in which participants gain job-searching skills and information on the Slovenian labour market and employment legislation. Interpreters were involved in the project and participants were linked with employers.

Beneficiaries of international protection have also been able to participate in on-the-job training for up to six months since 2017. A bilingual dictionary with the most common words encountered in the workplace was introduced in Slovenian and in the native language of the participant. Until early 2019 training

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([40]) *Slovenia: Development of new continuing VET programmes.*
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/slovenia-development-new-continuing-vet-programmes

([41]) There are two cohesion regions in Slovenia: East and West.

was offered in construction, marketing and metallurgy, as well as in NGOs, restaurants and retail.

CHAPTER 4.
MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

4.1. Baseline 2015

In 2015, 10 key competences ([42]) in vocational and technical upper secondary education programmes were included in the so-called catalogues of knowledge to guide the preparation of general subjects and professional modules in VET programmes. National guidelines for designing VET programmes at upper secondary level have emphasised competences and the competence-based approach already since 2001. The nature of key competences was transversal or cross-curricular, so was their implementation that was not limited to a single subject ([43]). VET providers included key competences in the open part of the curriculum or add as new content categories for the specialised part of the programme ([44])([45]).

Compared with general education graduates, those who completed VET programmes feel they have slightly (Cedefop, 2017):

(a) stronger (ranged by priority):

(i)sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;

(ii) ability to work with others;

(b) weaker:

([42]) Communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, competence in mathematics, aesthetic competence, intercultural competence, learning to learn, entrepreneurship and career planning/management, digital competence, occupational health and safety, environmental awareness and social skills.

([43]) Source: Medveš, Z. (2004). Kompetence – razmislek o razvoju koncepta splošne izobrazbe (Sklepno poročilo mednarodnega posveta o splošni izobrazbi). [Competence - development of the concept of general education (final report of the international conference on general education]. Vzgoja in izobraževanje: revija za teoretična in praktična vprašanja vzgojno izobraževalnega dela, 35, num. 3, p. 4-8.

([44]) Source: Pevec Grm, S. Škapin, D. (ur.) (2006). Kurikul na nacionalni in šolski ravni v poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju. Metodološki priročnik. [The curriculum at national and school level in vocational education and training: methodological guide]. Ljubljana: CPI, Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje.

([45]) For more information on key competences in VET see: see Makovec Radovan et al., 2016.

(i)foreign language ability;

(ii)   cultural awareness;

(iii)   mathematical skills (Figure 2).

Figure 2.   **Self-evaluation of acquired skills in general education and VET**
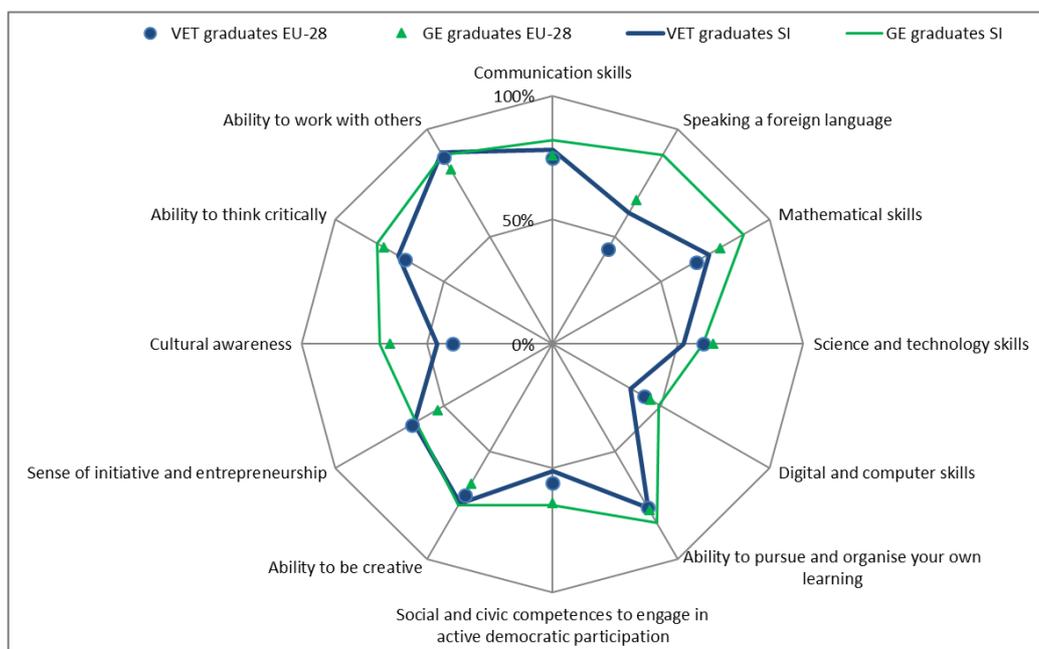
The context of key competences in 2015 was mainly characterised by a decreasing share of young low achievers in reading and maths, and increasing share in science compared with 2012 (Figure 3). The share of low achievers in Slovenia was lower than in the EU on average, where the trend is the reverse (except for science).

Figure 3. **Share of 15-year-olds with low achievement in reading, maths and science**
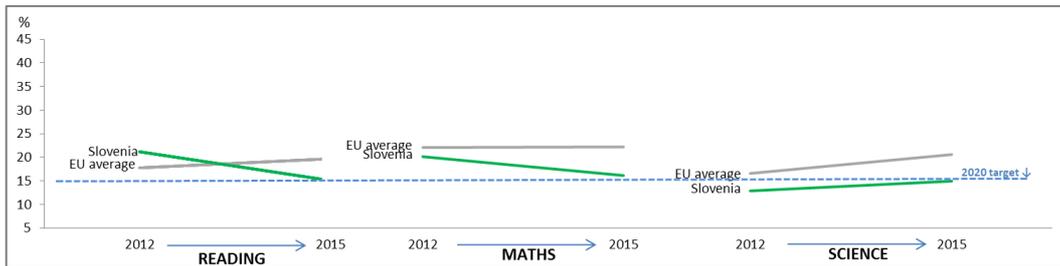
NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international student assessment) scale.

Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

As VET enrols 67% of all upper secondary learners in the country ([46]), this trend is likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes.

In 2015, the European Commission and the Council recommended Slovenia to increase the employability of low skilled and older workers ([47]). To do so, acquisition of key competences was a must for candidates and a challenge for policy makers. Another challenge was a lack of the national monitoring system of acquisition of key competences at programme and learner levels. While it was possible to make indirect conclusions from the results in the vocational *matura* examination, it did not cover all key competences, especially a social one ([48]).

4.2. Key competences addressed in the reporting period

Table 2 outlines/gives a summary of key competences in initial and continuing VET that were addressed in the reporting period. A description of policies is provided in the following sections.

([46]) Eurostat, data for 2015.

([47]) Council of the European Union (2015). European Semester: Country Specific Recommendations. https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2015-european-semester-country-specific-recommendations-council-recommendations_en

([48]) For more information on key competences in VET see Makovec Radovan et al., 2016.

Table 2. **Key competences addressed in 2015-19**

	IVET	CVET
Country language(s) and literacy		
Foreign languages	YES	
Digital competence		
Maths		
Science		
Technology		
Social and civic competences		
Learning to learn		
Financial literacy		
Entrepreneurship competence		
Cultural awareness and expression		
Key competences as a package	YES	

NB: The list derives from the 2006 EU key competences framework for lifelong learning; it has been restructured and expanded with additional competences that can be considered key.
Source: Cedefop based on ReferNet input

4.3. Key competences in initial VET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to continue promotion of key competences in IVET education programmes, including linguistic competence.

In 2014, learner performance in foreign languages (English language) at upper-secondary level, attested through *matura* exams, has been linked to the common European framework of reference for languages. In 2017 other languages followed, so now certificates are issued for English, French, German, Italian and Spanish languages. Preparations are being made for Russian language to join the list.

4.4. Key competences in continuing VET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to ensure recognition of linguistic competence, also in CVET.

The 2016-22 ESF project ([49]) *Professional support for development of key competences of adults* focuses on encouraging participation in lifelong learning and raising the level of key competences for vulnerable groups through effective outreach, innovative instructional approaches and learning materials (e.g. videos

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([49]) The project is implemented by SIAE.

and other multimedia). The project established in 2019 a national contact point for adult skills hosted at SIAE to implement the diagnostic instrument for individual assessment of skills ([50]), a tool developed by EU and OECD. It is based on PIAAC methodology and enables comparisons of individual scores with international and national estimates. It has been adapted, translated and piloted in the early stage of the project (2016-17) and will be available free of charge for almost 20 000 adults in Slovenia in the period to 2020. It will be used as a diagnostic tool in career guidance centres, employment agencies, and adult education institutions.

([50]) See https://pismenost.acs.si/en/projects/educationskills-online-assessment/

CHAPTER 5.

MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers

5.1.   2015 Baseline

In 2015 there were four main groups of teachers and trainers in VET programmes:
   (a) teachers of general education subjects;
   (b) teachers of vocational modules of theoretical part;
   (c) teachers of vocational modules-practical training; and
   (d) in-company trainers (nationally referred to as mentors).

5.1.1.   Access to VET school teaching: entry requirements and initial training

Teachers had to fulfil the following requirements:
   (a) teachers of general subjects must have a master degree (ISCED 7), completed one year pedagogical/andragogical training and the State professional exam;
   (b) teachers of the theoretical part are expected to meet the same requirements as teachers of general subjects;
   (c) teachers of the practical training must have at least vocational upper secondary education (ISCED 354), one year pedagogical/andragogical training, the State professional exam and at least three years of relevant work experience.

The same requirements applied to teachers in adult education and teachers of special educational needs programmes (who also had to have additional relevant special pedagogical training).

Teachers could enter the teaching profession in two ways: by applying for trainee posts advertised by the education ministry or by applying for teaching vacancies advertised by schools. New teachers had to undertake a paid traineeship (for a maximum of 10 months) ([51]). A permanent contract of

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([51]) Rules on traineeship for professionals in education (Ministry of Education and Sports of Slovenia, 2006).

employment could only be concluded after succeeding in the State professional exam.

5.1.2.　In-company trainers: entry requirements and initial training

WBL was taking place in companies under the guidance of mentors and in cooperation with the WBL organiser at the school. Only companies verified by the competent chamber could offer WBL. Mentors had to:

(a) have completed vocational upper secondary education (ISCED 354), have at least three years of relevant work experience as well as pedagogical/andragogical training for mentors. If no mentors achieved this prerequisite, they could also be professionals who have completed vocational upper secondary education (ISCED 353), have at least five years of relevant work experience and have pedagogical/andragogical training for mentors;

(b) complete the master craftsman/foreman/shop manager examination in the appropriate professional field.

5.1.3.　VET school teachers: main lines for CPD

Teacher rights and obligations to pursue continuing professional development (CPD) are defined by law [52]. They could attend five days of further training per year or 15 days over a three-year period. In most cases, teachers were choosing training programmes themselves, although the school had to include their CPD in its annual work plan.

Every academic year, the education ministry was publishing CPD priority programmes which were allocating specific score points that were taken into consideration in teacher promotion to a higher position. The ministry allocated funds to schools to cover the cost of participation. Three different types of programmes of further teacher training were covered:

(a) requalification programmes qualifying teachers for a headmaster position or a position at a higher level;

(b) refresher programmes including training in new methods and elements of teaching, the use of new developments in ICT;

(c) thematic conferences, study groups, mentor networks or other schools networks.

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[52] Rules on in-service training of educational professionals (Ministry of Education and Sports of Slovenia, 2004).

A national evaluation study that was concluded in 2013 showed that almost 70% of teachers attended professional training at least once a year in the pedagogical/didactic field and in the field of ICT-assisted teaching.

5.1.4. In-company trainers: main lines for CPD

VET programmes were designed in a way to require cooperation between schools and companies, in the form of exchange of experiences and knowledge between school teachers and mentors.

5.2. Initial training for in-company trainers in 2015-19

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20 is to raise the number of mentors with the basic skills for workplace training.

A 24-hour initial training programme for mentors was revised in 2016 to update the knowledge and competences required to plan, provide and assess workplace learning. This includes understanding characteristics of adolescence, pedagogy and psychological aspects of learning and teaching, organisational issues/methods to include learners in team and project work, communication and conflict-resolution skills, education and occupational safety legislation, preparing learning and assessment material. Since 2016, this training programme has been available for free within the ESF project *Training mentors 2016-21* coordinated by the Biotechnical Centre Ljubljana and School Centre Kranj (ŠC Kranj).

As part of the ESF project *Reform of upper-secondary vocational education 2016-21* (Sections 1.3.4 and 2.3), new training and learning material for mentors are foreseen.

5.3. CPD for VET school teachers in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to increase the subject-related knowledge of teachers in VET schools.

A programme *Improving the professional competences of teachers (2016-22)* was launched in 2016, as part of an initiative of the Ministry of Education, jointly funded by ESF. It aims to improve teaching/learning quality by giving teachers and mentors the opportunity to update and complement their knowledge, skills and competences through a form of job rotation: teachers of vocational modules and organisers of work-based learning spend two to four months in a company. During this period, they are substituted by suitably qualified and trained experts from the host companies or by previously unemployed teachers. A pilot job-rotation project, jointly funded by ESF, was

carried out in 2014-15 including 20 VET schools: VET teachers were integrated in companies' regular work processes and, in most cases, were briefed and monitored by mentors.

The 2018-22 ESF project *Strengthening the competences of professionals in the field of managing an innovative educational institute* targeted teachers and other professionals in upper-secondary vocational schools and higher vocational schools. The project strengthened their competences in promoting entrepreneurship, introducing innovative methods of teaching, working with special needs learners, acquiring pedagogical/andragogical skills of higher-education lecturers and supporting quality assurance in higher vocational schools.

In addition, CPI analysed VET teachers' knowledge, attitude and use of ICT in designing and implementing digital competences in VET programmes. Results of this analysis were fed into training of approximately 6 teachers per school in 12 vocational schools in 2018-19 to help them develop their teaching approaches in developing learners' digital competence.

According to the new rules ([53]), there are two types of CPD programme for teachers:

(a) additional training required for the teaching profession for those not having followed specific training during their initial studies or special tasks (e.g. for teachers that need to work with SEN students);

(b) shorter (8-24 hours) courses on various topics that teachers can choose from a catalogue published by the education ministry. Providers can be private or public organisations, they are chosen via public tender and may be shared financed.

5.4.   CPD for in company trainers in 2015-19

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20 is to raise the number of mentors skilled in training apprentices.

The 2016-22 exchange programme of the Education Ministry for the professional competence of teachers (Section 5.3) also accommodates mentors and contributes to their CPD.

([53]) Rules on the selection and joint funding of further education and training programmes for educational professionals (2017).

Statistical overview: 2019 update

Table 3 updates the figures that were provided in Table 1. Although Table 1 may contain data for 2015, these are not systematically repeated here. In some cases, not repeating is due to breaks in time series, which prevent comparability. In other cases, values differ due to methodological changes.

Table 3.   **Score on VET indicators in Slovenia and in the EU: 2015, last available year and recent change**

Indicator label	2015				Last available year					Recent change		
	SI	f	EU	f	Yr	SI	f	EU	f	Range	SI	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility												
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	67.5		47.3	ce	'17	70.9		47.8	ce	'15-'17	3.4	0.5
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET		z	28.3	ce	'17		z	27.9	ce	'15-'17		-0.5
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET	72.3		68.1	ce	'17	70		68.6	ce	'15-'17	-2.3	0.4
Workers participating in CVT courses (%)	58.3		40.8		'15	58.3		40.8				
Workers participating in on-the-job training (%)	39		34		'15	39		34				
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	11.9		10.7		'18	11.4		11.1		'15-'18	-0.5	0.4
Enterprises providing training (%)	84.1		72.6		'15	84.1		72.6				
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	60.5		42	ce	'17	64.3		42.7	ce	'15-'17	3.8	0.7
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	42.8		30		'15	42.8		30				
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)	54.1		33		'18	52		33		'15-'18	-2.1	0
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	5.2		6.9		'18	7		7.3		'15-'18	1.8	0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	2.8		4.3		'18	2.8	u	4.3		'15-'18		0
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	13.1		9.5		'18	12		10.7		'15-'18	-1.1	1.2
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)					'16	5.7		11.4				
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)					'16	78.9		79.4				

Indicator label	2015				Last available year					Recent change		
	SI	f	EU	f	Yr	SI	f	EU	f	Range	SI	EU
Skill development and labour market relevance												
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)		d	0.5	ce	'16			0.5	ce	'15-'16		0
IVET public expenditure per student (1000 PPS units)		d	7.1	ce	'16			7.4	ce	'15-'16		0.3
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	**0.7**		0.9		'15	**0.7**		0.9				
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	**1.3**		1	ce	'17	**1.3**		1	ce	'15-'17		0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	**34.7**		29.2	ce	'17	**37.6**		29.1	ce	'15-'17	**3**	0
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates	**12.5**				'17	**16.4**		14.3	b ce	'15-'17	**3.9**	
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)					'16	**44**		37.7				
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds)	**78.1**		77.2		'18	**86.2**		80.5		'15-'18	**8.1**	3.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)	**1.9**		5.4		'18	**8.1**		6.6		'15-'18	**6.2**	1.2
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)	**20.2**		23.7		'18	**23.2**		23.3		'15-'18	**3**	-0.4
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)	**82.2**		83.7		'15	**82.2**		83.7				
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	**50.2**		57		'15	**50.2**		57				
Overall transitions and labour market trends												
Early leavers from education and training (%)	**5**		11		'18	**4.2**		10.6		'15-'18	**-0.8**	-0.4
30-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	**43.4**		38.7		'18	**42.7**		40.7		'15-'18	**-0.7**	2
NEET rate for 18-24 year-olds (%)	**12.4**		15.8		'18	**8.4**		13.7		'15-'18	**-4**	-2.1
Unemployment rate for 20-34 year-olds (%)	**13.2**		12.9		'18	**7.9**		9.4		'15-'18	**-5.3**	-3.5
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	**71.1**		75.9		'18	**84**		80.6		'15-'18	**12.9**	4.7
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	**13.2**		23.5		'18	**11.9**		21.9		'15-'18	**-1.3**	-1.6
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	**69.1**		70		'18	**75.4**		73.1		'15-'18	**6.3**	3.1
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	**48**		52.6		'18	**50.8**		56.1		'15-'18	**2.8**	3.5
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2030 (% of total)					'18	**94.5**	D	85.8	D			

EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified.
(D) Forecast made in 2018.
(ce) Cedefop estimate based on available country data
(b) Eurostat: 'break in time series'.

(u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.
(z) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.
(e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.
(d) Eurostat: 'definition differs'.

Source: Cedefop, 2020.

In 2017, 70.9% of all upper secondary students in Slovenia were enrolled in IVET. This percentage is 23.1 points above the EU average. It appears that the percentage of upper secondary students in IVET is higher by 3.4 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015.

In 2018, 11.4% of adults participated in lifelong learning activities, which is slightly lower (0.5 points less) than in 2015. The EU average is 11.1%.

In 2018, the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) was 86.2%. It appears that the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) is higher by 8.1 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015. The EU average is 80.5%.

Conclusion

Since 2015, Slovenia has taken actions to reintroduce apprenticeship to its IVET system. Steps have been taken to progress quality assurance mechanisms and the information system which guides the development of VET. Strong initiatives to boost guidance have been launched, the Slovenian qualifications framework has entered into force, the validation system was further developed, and particular attention was given to providing training opportunities for groups in need (NEETs, the elderly, refugees) and for upskilling adults. Development of key competences has been supported. Initiatives were also put in place to support the initial training of mentors, and the CPD of teachers and mentors.

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed, though information currently available to Cedefop suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration:

    (a)   using EQAVET indicators to monitor the development of continuing VET;

    (b)   support the promotion of key competences in IVET programmes;

    (c)   taking initiatives to support the initial training of VET school teachers.

Acronyms

ACS	Slovenian Institute for Adult Education
AES	adult education survey
CPI	Slovenian national institute for VET
CPD	continuing professional development
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DGVT	Director General for vocational education and training
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQAVET NRP	quality assurance national reference point
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
ESS	Slovenia 's public employment service
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GE	general education
ISCED	international standard classification of education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
LLG	lifelong guidance
MoLFSA	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NEET	not in education, employment, or training
NVQ	national vocational qualifications
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OQEA	offering quality education to adults
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
SQF	Slovenian qualifications framework
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math programmes
UOE	UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat
VET	vocational education and training

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