



# **The future of vocational education and training in Slovenia**

Report from Slovenian workshop in Smlednik 17 November 2022

Ljubljana, April 2023

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The project Modernisation of upper-secondary vocational and technical education, including apprenticeships, the renewal of higher vocational study programmes and the creation of digitally supported training places 2022-2026 is co-financed by the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Education and the European Union - NextGenerationEU. The project is implemented in accordance with the plan under the development area "Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth", component Strengthening competences, in particular digital competences and those required by the new professions and the green transition.

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## Introduction

The project "*Modernisation of upper-secondary vocational and technical education including apprenticeships, renewal of higher vocational study programmes and establishment of digitally supported training places 2022-2026*" is funded from the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), which is a national reform and investment programme aimed at mitigating the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Slovenia. The planned actions of the RRP aim to support long-term sustainable growth and address the challenges of the green and digital transition by 2026.

The main objective of the project is to modernise upper-secondary vocational and technical education (VET) in a way that strengthens competences for the digital and green transition, makes VET more flexible, resilient and responsive to the needs of the labour market, the environment and consequently improves its relevance for economic recovery, productivity gains and a balanced social, environmental and economic development.

The following activities are carried out under the project:

- Activity 1: Competences and qualifications for the digital and green transition ,
- Activity 2: Quality of planning and delivery of VET programmes at provider level,
- Action 3: Further development of apprenticeships and link schools with enterprises,
- Activity 4: Digitally enabled training places in the fields of health and social care and also early childhood education,
- Activity 5: Renewal of higher vocational study programmes (for the green and digital transition) and
- Activity 6: Organising events to increase the attractiveness and quality of VET.

The workshop, *The Future of Vocational Education and Training in Slovenia*, took place on 17 November 2022 in the framework of the project activity 1: "Competences and Qualifications for the Digital and Green Transition", whose main objectives are:

1. To define the development of VET in Slovenia towards greater integration with the labour market, the needs of the circular economy and the digital and green transition.
2. To redesign upper-secondary VET curricula in a way that supports the digital and green transition.

## Workshop starting points

The workshop entitled Future of Vocational Education and Training in Slovenia was organised by the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) in cooperation with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) as one of the activities of the project Modernisation of Upper-Secondary Vocational and Technical Education 2022 - 2026. In line with the project's aim to modernise upper-secondary VET for a balanced social, environmental and economic development, the workshop aimed to open the floor for a broader professional debate on the future of VET in Slovenia.

In recent years, Cedefop has carried out a broad analysis of trends in VET in European countries over the period 1995-2015. Based on the extensive material produced since 2015, a set of possible future scenarios has been developed, explaining alternative and possible changes to

the systems and the opportunities and challenges they present.

That is why we invited the project partners Anastasia Poulidou, Cedefop Associate, and Jörg Markowitsch, PhD, co-founder of 3s in Austria and a researcher in the field of VET, to design and deliver the workshop.

### Course of the workshop

We invited representatives from schools, employers, trade unions and researchers in the field of VET in Slovenia. As an introduction to the discussion, Klara Ermenc Skubic, PhD (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts) and Darko Mali (CPI) summarised the key challenges for VET in Slovenia<sup>1</sup>. Markowitsch, PhD concluded the introductory part by presenting three typical scenarios of VET development, which illustrate possible development paths also in the Slovenian environment.

The workshop continued with work in four moderated groups. In the first part, we invited the participants to develop a vision for VET in Slovenia in 2035 or 2040, and in the second part to reflect on the pathways that would lead to the realisation of the defined vision. In the first phase, group members individually wrote down their ideas in the form of key ideas. The author then gave a brief oral presentation of the idea. The written ideas were collected on a whiteboard in each group. During this phase of idea collection, the group members did not discuss the ideas, as the aim was to collect as many ideas as possible. The ideas collected were then structured according to the content and aspects of the VET by discussion within the group. At the end of the day, the facilitators gave a brief verbal summary of the content that each group had developed.

*Table 1: Contributors to the discussions in the four working groups*

| Working Group                | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4   |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Moderators                   | Jörg Markowitsch (3s), Anja Dolžan (CPI)  | Gabi Ogulin Počrvina (CPI)   | Simona Knavs (CPI)  | Barbara Velkov (CPI)  |
| Members of the working group | Klara Skubic Ermenc (UN LJ, FF), Simon Ogrizek (OZS), Anastasia Poulidou (Cedefop), Darko Mali, Metka Šlander (CPI)<br><i>The debate was held in English.</i> | Barbara Kresal (MoE), Boris Dular (VET Expert Council), Matej Forjan (ŠC NM), Slava Pevec Grm, Boris Klančnik, Majda Stopar, Helena Žnidarič (CPI) | Egon Pipan (ŠC Nova Gorica), Uroš Ocepek (STŠ Trbovlje), Jelka Čop, Barbara Krapež Kunčič and Matej Urbančič (CPI), | Danijela Makovec Radovan (UN LJ, FF), Mitja Korunovski (OZS), Nives Počkar (ŠC LJ), Tina Klarič, Metod Česarek, Velesa Mrak (CPI) |

<sup>1</sup> Annex 6 presents the full paper on the Challenges of VET in Slovenia.

The summaries of each group's work were structured in the form of key highlights for each scenario element, following the Cedefop survey template. The scenario description includes the following elements: understanding VET and its role, target groups, learning and teaching, learning pathways, providers, governance and funding, the role of the EU, and potential risks.

After the workshop, the moderators drafted four scenarios, which were shared with the rest of the group for review. On 14 February 2023, the CPI Working Group held a discussion with a view to developing a comparative table of the four scenarios.

The evaluation of the workshop proved the method used, and the workshop as a whole, to be very successful. The method could be complemented by a follow-up session in which each group would discuss the written scenario and its elements and define the nature of the scenario from three perspectives (epistemological-pedagogical, systemic and socio-economic).

### **Four scenarios – two possible development paths**

While the Cedefop survey identified three most common scenarios for the development of VET in Europe, the workshop in Slovenia mainly discussed two directions of development that emerged from the four scenarios described in slightly different ways.

Despite the proposed structure for the description of each scenario, the resulting scenarios are described in a variety of ways. The different groups were able to discuss the different aspects in a more or less concrete way in the limited timeframe. In some cases, the participants were not able to elaborate on specific elements of the scenario, while in others they focused on aspects that they identified as an additional element of the scenario.

However, all four scenarios are very short notes that attempt to sketch rather than really describe the otherwise very complex elements of VET. The scenarios are therefore not able to provide complete information about a future VET. Their purpose is to stimulate reflection and debate in preparation for decisions on future changes.

Here, we try to briefly outline the four scenarios that emerged. Full descriptions of the scenarios can be found in Annexes 1-4.

#### **Scenario 1 - Inclusive Excellence**

VET is a separate entity from the general education system. It is run by specialised vocational centres managed and co-financed by the state and the social partners. Career and talent centres provide lifelong career guidance. The emphasis is on work-based learning at an employer, while the acquisition of generic and transversal competences through cooperative, project-based and problem-based learning is the responsibility of the school. Access to traditional learning pathways is widely open to all population groups and VET has a strong socially integrative role.

#### **Scenario 2 - Rainbow**

VET is a part of an overarching lifelong learning system. It is delivered by a wide range of diverse providers with a shared governance and funding from government, business and the EU, underpinned by a quality system. The emphasis is on a modular and selective approach to general and vocational content, with a focus on vocational pedagogy, which allows for the individualisation of educational pathways and high transversality for all population groups.

### **Scenario 3 - Developing Potentials**

VET and general education system are not separated. All target populations are supported by a mentoring system that guides them through career choices for integration into modular education, training programmes and qualification recognition procedures. Public and private accredited non-profit schools form a regional network complemented by institutions for external evaluation. The operation of the system is publicly funded and its development is a public-private partnership. The proportion of work-based learning is maximised, with a predominance of cooperative, project-based and problem-based learning.

### **Scenario 4 – Exceeding Limits**

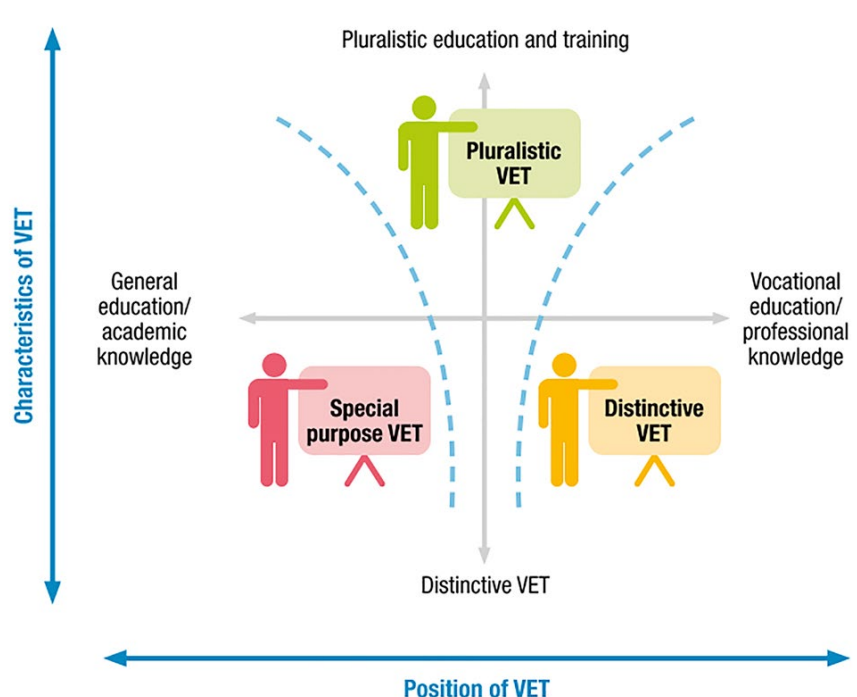
VET is a separate and majority system from the general system, preferably aimed at young people and young adults, but open to all population groups, who can also participate in VET at a higher education level. It is a classic sharing of delivery between schools and employers, complemented by sectoral inter-company training centres set up by employers. Training programmes cover broadly defined occupations, with a strong emphasis on transversal competences. There is an emphasis on a cross-curricular approach, individualisation, vocational pedagogy, recognition, and, through apprenticeships, fast-tracking technological developments.

### **Two-dimensional model**

The figure below shows different aspects of possible VET systems, depending on the extent to which VET includes general education content or focuses on vocational skills (horizontal). On the other hand, the extent to which VET develops as a separate educational subsystem on the one hand, or evolves into a system of skills acquisition in a lifelong learning context on the other (vertical).



Image 1: Three scenarios for PIUs in Europe in 2035.

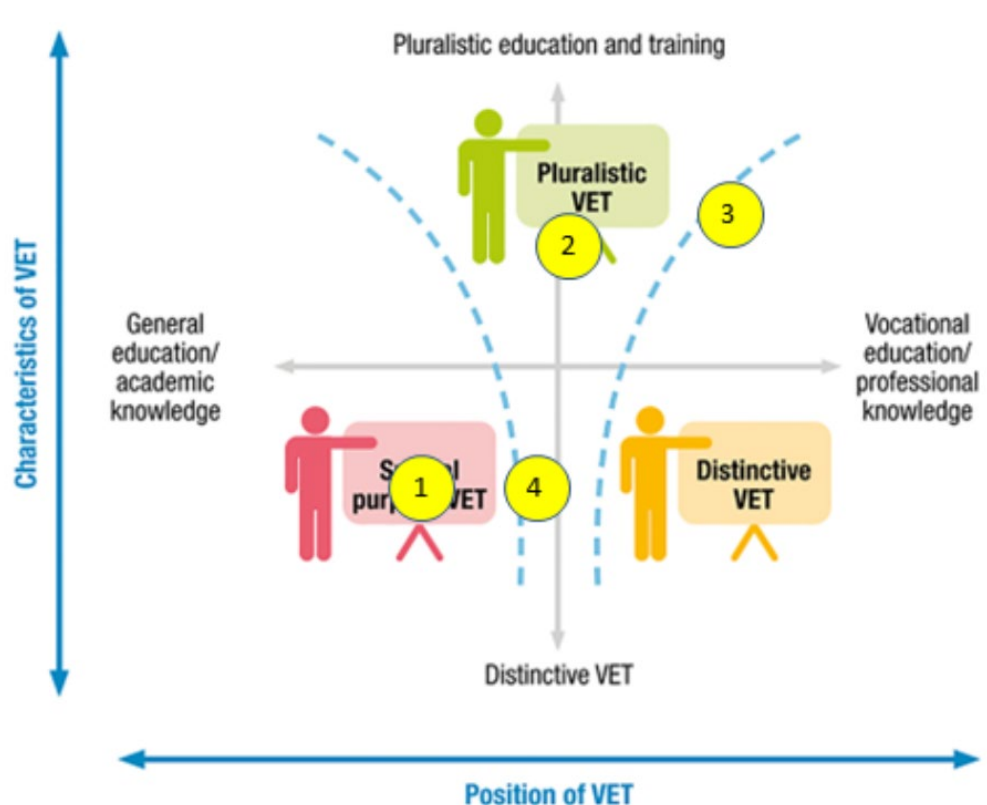


CEDEFOP (2020). *Vocational education and training in Europe, 1995-2035: scenarios for European vocational education and training in the 21st century*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop reference series; No 114 (p. 200).

Based on this model of differentiation between different systems, the Cedefop study identified three common scenarios. The *plural VET* represents learning pathways in the context of lifelong learning, where the distinction between general and vocational education is becoming less relevant. A *distinct VET* is a system that is very clearly separated from general education and focuses on the acquisition of vocational skills. *Dedicated VET* is a form of vocational education that focuses on training for specific job tasks according to current needs, which it develops within the broader education system.

The CPI WGs tried to fit the four scenarios into a two-dimensional model, which is illustrated in Figure 2 by the yellow circles with the corresponding scenario number. It follows that the discussion at the workshop went mainly in two directions.

Image 2: Estimation of the position of the four scenarios in Cedefop's two-dimensional model.



*Adapted from CEDEFOP (2020). Vocational education and training in Europe, 1995-2035: scenarios for European vocational education and training in the 21st century. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop reference series; No 114 (p. 200).*

The first direction, represented by scenarios 1 and 4, presents VET as an education system that is separate from the general education system. While both place general education content high on the scale, as well as transversal competences (the first scenario more than the fourth), they cannot be placed in the fourth quadrant, which represents VET with a maximum focus on vocational content.

The second line of thinking, represented by scenarios 2 and 3, does not see VET as a separate or sub-system, but develops the idea of a single system in which individualisation is also developed at the level of learning pathways. The second scenario seems to place more emphasis on general education content, while the third scenario, with its emphasis on supporting the career development of the individual, places more emphasis on the acquisition of vocational qualifications.

### Yet a whole series of similarities

A review of the more detailed descriptions of the four scenarios and the comparative table (Annex 5) reveals that there were many points of agreement among the participants in all four groups. Below we highlight some key similarities.

Lifelong learning is identified in all four scenarios as an important aspect of the future

development of VET.

All four scenarios highlight the importance of making VET accessible to all target groups of the population, with only the fourth scenario deviating slightly by focusing particularly on young people and young adults in terms of the importance of early attainment of vocational qualifications.

Work-based learning features prominently in all four scenarios, although perhaps not so prominently in the second scenario.

The importance of lifelong career guidance is highlighted in all four scenarios, with scenarios 1 and 3 placing it at the starting point and at the centre of support for young people.

The strengthened role of the social partners is the next point of convergence in all four scenarios, defined in particular by the increased involvement in governance also at the level of the school institutions (two scenarios) on the one hand, and co-responsibility for the co-financing of the VET (four scenarios) on the other hand.

The three scenarios emphasise individual approaches at the level of learning pathways, teaching, electives and the importance of collaborative, problem-based, situational, project-based learning. Two scenarios highlight the strengthening of vocational pedagogy.

All four scenarios are very much in favour of recognising prior learning, with the third scenario placing prior learning at the heart of career guidance.

All four scenarios raise the quality of expertise in the system, with the third scenario providing for expertise also in the stakeholder decision-making system.

## **In conclusion**

With this short report on the workshop, we wanted to present the resulting materials, i.e. the notes of the workshop discussions, in the form of four scenarios. Furthermore, we wanted to draw attention to the extensive Cedefop material, which can be useful for the actors involved in the modernisation of VET in Slovenia in further discussions. At the same time, our aim was to present the method used as one of the possible methods of conducting such discussions.

The four scenarios contain a wealth of ideas on potential directions for the development of the VET, as well as some more concrete ideas on possible solutions in specific areas. The main purpose of this paper is to stimulate further debate.

In terms of the method used, we believe that it is reasonable to apply it in the continuation of the project. The workshop could be repeated in the way of collecting ideas and developing new scenarios, in order to allow a wider range of professionals to participate in thinking about the future of the VET, thereby increasing the capture of ideas and their diversity. The workshop can be complemented by a discussion on the three most common European scenarios from the Cedefop material, trying to think about the possible development of the VET in the context of these scenarios. An additional possibility to further apply the method is to discuss existing scenarios from the perspective of the three perspectives and/or from the perspective of a two-dimensional model. The method could also be tested in discussions in the narrower fields of VET.

## Sources

Future of VET | CEDEFOP (n.d.) <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/future-vet>

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## Annexes

### Annex 1 – Scenario 1

#### Scenario Description

#### Inclusive Excellence

#### Working Group 1

Moderators: Jörg Markowitsch, Anja Dolžan

Members of the working group: Klara Skubic Ermenc (UN LJ, FF), Simon Ogrizek (OZS), Anastasia Pouliou (Cedefop), Darko Mali, Metka Šlander (CPI)

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <p>Summary<br/>Scenario 1</p> | <p>‘Inclusive excellence’ combines excellence and professionalism in vocational education with inclusion. In 2040, VET has become the most important upper secondary pathway and is highly regarded in Slovenian society. Independent Talent &amp; Career Centers have been established across the country to identify talents and provide appropriate career orientations. The centres have become a cornerstone for balancing labour market demand and supply through education. VET is highly diversified and serves learners at all ages in larger regional VET centers. Distinctive features of Slovenian VET are a strong element of work-based learning (WBL) in all forms of VET ensuring smooth transitions to the labour market and a balanced funding from a wide range of sources (public, EU and industry).</p> <p>Crucial for this development was a new social dialogue which has evolved in a climate of extreme skills shortages (due to a declining youth cohort and a decreasing labour force potential) and was triggered by a cost-benefit study, which ultimately resulted in a change of funding mechanism for education by the end of the 2020ies. The study underlined the need for transparently designed funding for education, leading to new agreement of co-financing from public means, EU and industry funding. Subsequently, the Slovenian Government, industries and trade unions took great efforts to realize a ‘high-road’ labour model where investment in VET and innovation led to better qualified, more flexible, autonomous workers demanding higher wages and enjoying higher employment security while producing higher quality products and services. However, the peculiarity of the Slovenian model of ‘Inclusive Excellence’ is that no talents are wasted and people with special needs or disabilities have been successfully integrated into the production and innovation processes by creating and crafting suitable jobs within profit-oriented companies.</p> <p>That way VET in 2040 actively responds to the needs of the labour market, economy and the society. Chambers, individual companies and trade unions are actively engaged in vocational training, with adequate human and financial resources: they co-create programmes and co-create the conditions for their quality implementation.</p> |
|-------------------------------|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| a)<br>Understanding of VET                | VET is understood as a highly diversified form of education and training with a strong element of work-based learning provided at all levels, and serving learners at all ages and with different backgrounds realizing the idea of lifelong learning. A trademark of the Slovenian approach is the successful balancing of excellence, professionalism, and inclusions.   |
| b)<br>Role of VET in the education system | The principle of inclusive education has become an integrative element of a broader concept of quality assurance and therefore VET plays an important socio-integrative role. VET has become also further professionalized in terms of quality of qualifications and teachers, their education and cooperation with the environment and business. The lack of workers allowed trade unions to fight for higher pay leading to better services/conditions resulting in mores professionalism and a higher reputation of VET. The transfer of knowledge between the spheres of education and work is an important dimension of education. In practice, it is expressed by the exchange of staff between industry/businesses and schools (VET programme providers). It is for the learners to choose whether to study in school or in the company. Open qualifications are managed by the social partners. The link between different chambers and entrepreneurs is highlighted, which contributes to the contribution of VET and time-appropriate green and fair products. It all contributes to the acquisition of a quality brand.   |
| c)<br>Target groups                       | VET address diverse target groups across all levels and serves learners at all age groups, including the disadvantaged groups. VET accounts for the highest share of learners compared to general education.   |
| d)<br>Types of learning paths             | Most VET takes place in large school centres, which are specialized in content and provide educational programmes at ISCED 3-5 levels, as well as various forms and types of non-formal education. They combine technical/professional gymnasiums where schooling culminates in a general baccalaureate and it is possible to enter higher education and vocational/professional schools where students can pass a final exam or a vocational bachelor's degree (consider the possibility of combining vocational and professional programmes). By being open to the education of young people and participating in education, enterprises contribute to the advancement of schoolchildren at a professional level. In 2040, a platform was set up to match the demand and supply of internships and apprenticeships between learners and businesses. A successful pilot project to further increase the autonomy of providers in the field of education leads to a closer link between the social partners and educational institutions. Opportunities for involving social partners are explored also at institutional (not only national) level, such as the involvement of social partners in school councils. |
| e)  | Key focus and the starting point is the individual career development of young people based on their talents. Talent & Career centres are intended for wider population and represent a public interest. Support and funds   |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Learning approaches         | are coming from different sources (public & private). Furthermore, they bring together various counsellors covering all aspects of education (general, VET, adults). Cooperation between different stakeholders, in particular the labour market (entrepreneurs) and chambers is effective. Strategic guidance on educational pathways is provided in cooperation with the social partners. In practice, this is reflected by offering young people completing compulsory education the opportunity to familiarize themselves with and test their professions based on experience and the test of their own talents. Various competitions and prizes contribute to the reputation of vocational education for talents at all levels. Slovenian students regularly score among the best in the European and World Skills Plus competitions for young people with labor disabilities (a competition which similar to Special Olympics for the field of VET). |
| f)<br>Governance, financing | <p>VET is up-to-date adapting to the labour market and current labour and skills needs. The content of educational programmes are developed in cooperation with the social partners. In schools, emphasis is placed on the acquisition of general knowledge and transversal competencies, while the acquisition of professional (skills) knowledge is to a greater extent acquired in the form of work-based learning.</p> <p>The education system supports the economy in strengthening the development of fair and green products, developing a quality label for fair education (not only fair trade, but also “fair VET”) — fair in terms of sustainable development and inclusion.</p> <p>Funding in the field of VET is transparent; based on co-financing from public, EU and industry funding.</p>   |
| g)<br>Role of Europe        | <p>EU money has helped to build up the Lifelong Learning Centers. Additionally, budget of the Employment Service is redirected to proactive measures. Slovenia invested all dedicated funds in Talent &amp; Career Centers. The EU keeps on playing a key role in supporting VET student exchanges through Erasmus and subsequent programmes. Given its focus on both excellent and inclusions Slovenia became a forerunner in the ALMA programme, addressing also NEET. Lack of human resources in Slovenia and increased effectiveness of the education field in neighbor’s countries lead to increase international cooperation. Various VET centers are operated in cooperation with neighboring countries, covering the needs of individual regions, also co-funded by the EU.</p>  |
| h)<br>Potential risks       | <p>The ‘high-road’ labour model is not working to the same extent in all sectors and is constantly challenging the education systems and labour market regulation. While it has been achieved in manufacturing, farming, tourisms, and many public sectors (healthcare etc.), a few sectors (e.g. retail) have proven difficult to implement the model, further increasing the risk of a segmentation of the labour market.</p> <p>Insufficient political will for training high-quality professional workers.</p>   |

## Description of the scenario 1 from the 3 perspectives

|  |  |
|--|--|
| View from the epistemological/ pedagogical perspectives on VET | <p>A diverse population is involved in VET and therefore VET plays an important socio-integrative role. It implements it through the strengthening of the inclusive principle, which becomes an element of a broader concept of quality assurance. VET is further professionalised in terms of quality of qualifications and teachers, their education and cooperation with the environment and business. The transfer of knowledge between the spheres of education and work is an important dimension of education. In practice, it is expressed by the exchange of staff between industry/businesses and schools (VET programme providers). It is for the learners to choose whether to study in school or in the company. Open qualifications are managed by the social partners.</p> <p>We focus on the career development of young people based on their talents. In the background, the idea is that young people get to know their talents already during primary and later education or after graduation. Talent centres are not age-limited, but intended for the wider population. They represent a public interest and are therefore supported and funded at different levels. They bring together various counsellors covering all aspects of education (general, VET, adults).</p> |
| View from the education system perspective on VET              | <p>VET accounts for the highest share of learners compared to general education. Education takes place in large school centres, which are specialised in content and provide educational programmes mainly at ISCED 3-5 levels, as well as various forms and types of non-formal education. They combine technical/professional gymnasiums where schooling culminates in a general baccalaureate, and it is possible to enter higher education; and vocational/professional schools where students can pass a final exam or a vocational bachelor's degree (consider the possibility of combining vocational and professional programmes). By being open to the education of young people and participating in education, enterprises contribute to the advancement of schoolchildren at a professional level. There is effective cooperation between different stakeholders, in particular the labour market (entrepreneurs) and chambers. Strategic guidance on educational pathways is provided in cooperation with the social partners.</p>  |
| View from the socioeconomic/ labour market perspective on VET  | <p>Vocational education and training addresses lifelong education. The involvement of different stakeholders in the content of VET qualifications is a prerequisite for matching labour market needs accordingly. The social partners are involved in the key roles of creating an educational space in (e.g. school councils). The target group is of different ages and acquires different types of qualifications. VET funding is provided from diverse and balanced sources (public funds, EU, and industrial and economic resources). Education actively responds to the needs of the labour market and development novelties. Chambers and companies are actively engaged in vocational training, with adequate human and financial resources: they co-create programmes and co-create the conditions for their quality implementation. The transition to the labour</p>   |





1.

DRIVERS:  
- increasing low-arts

DRIVERS:  
- increasingly disoriented / depressed youth

DRIVERS:  
- increasing Drop-Outs from School + HE

EU co-finances NL-centres under TARGET CENTRES

⇒ LEGAL BASIS  
Shared financing by Employer + Employees

PLATFORM FOR TRIAL DAYS

ANY AGE

Staff shortages allow Trade Unions to pressure for higher Wages

Highly Self-organising  
Other Services + Products

⇒ more performance

⇒ higher return value wages

⇒ Increase in VET Enrolment

Increasing Demand for FAIR + GREEN PRODUCTS

QUALITY LABEL  
↓  
FAIR EDUCATION (Access to Learning Opportunities + Change)

EUROPEAN VET EXCELLENCE AWARD  
WINNER 2023

⇒ Low on Sustainable App. in School Curricula

EUET-ORDER VET-EXC  
SIIAT Career on individual with EU-support  
SIIAT  
SIIAT  
SIIHR

I VET & CVET  
(with new Structural Guidelines supported by Transformation Process)

WORKING TITLE  
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE  
(Paradigmatic Skills!)

Lowest Skills with  
Wider Access to  
VET STUDENTS  
leading to AT Skills Practice

TRANSFORMING EXCELLENCE  
ACROSS THE CO-EDUCATION IS NECESSARY

COST-BENEFIT STUDY  
of CPI  
measures Individuality

TRANSFORMATION PROJECT  
SIO AND CO-EDUCATION PROJECT (University)

POLICY DECISION  
+ BASED ON DATA

18

## Annex 2 – Scenario 2

### Scenario Description

#### Rainbow

#### Working Group 2

Moderated by Gabi Ogulin Počrvina

Members of the working group: Barbara Kresal (MoE), Boris Dular (Expert Council for VET), Matej Forjan (ŠC NM), Slava Pevec Grm, Boris Klančnik, Majda Stopar, Helena Žnidarič (CPI)

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| <p>Summary<br/>Scenario 2</p>          | <p>The rainbow illustrates the diversity of learning approaches, learning pathways, the variety of target groups within VET. The formation of the rainbow requires changes and specific conditions, which is also crucial for the modernisation of the education system. Technological, economic development and demographic change will lead to a changed learning paradigm.</p> <p>In 2040 the education system in Slovenia will be based on pluralistic learning, where VET will be the backbone of lifelong learning. The system will be comprehensive, flexible, of high-quality, inclusive (inclusive), individual-centred, modularly designed. It will enable design of individual learning and career paths throughout lifetime. The focus will be on the development of general, transversal and professional competences. It will ensure horizontal and vertical permeability and recognition of previously acquired knowledge and competences. The participation of employers and other social partners and the good cooperation of various ministers (for education, work and social policies, economic development, digitalisation, innovation, environment and sustainable development) will be of great importance in this regard. VET will be characterised by excellence and inclusiveness and gender balance. Co-responsibility and good coordination of all stakeholders in the development and implementation and evaluation of VET will be important. Teachers and mentors will be motivated, highly qualified and equipped with the latest professional skills, pedagogical approaches and teaching methods. The profession of teacher and mentor in VET will be respected and well rewarded and will attract excellent and talented graduates and top practice professionals. The formulation of new policies in VET will be based on data on labour market trends and society at large.</p> |
| <p>a)<br/>Understanding of<br/>VET</p> | <p>The labour market is changing due to rapid digitalisation, globalisation, climate and demographic change. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated these processes even more.</p> <p>The education system in Slovenia will be based on pluralistic learning in 2040, where VET will be the backbone of lifelong learning. The system will be comprehensive, flexible, transient, high-quality, inclusive, individual-centred, modularly designed. It will integrate the system of initial and continuing education and training, retraining and additional qualifications. The focus will be on developing general, transversal and</p>   |

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|   | <p>professional competences in flexible and innovative learning environments. The co-responsibility of all stakeholders in the development and implementation and evaluation of VET and coherence with other policies (economy, innovation, labour and social policies and the environment) will be important.</p>  |
| <p>b)<br/>Role of VET in the education system</p> | <p>VET will provide all three key roles: promoting the acquisition of a profession and the necessary skills to enter the labour market, preparing for further education and training, personal development and social inclusion of the individual. The system will ensure horizontal and vertical permeability and recognition of previously acquired knowledge and competences. It will respond and co-create with the labour market needs and society at large. Employers' participation will be very crucial and a platform for forecasting the competences needed in the labour market will be of help. Education and training providers will be autonomous professionals with the necessary pedagogical and professional competences. VET will be characterised by excellence and inclusiveness and gender balance.</p>  |
| <p>c)<br/>Target groups</p>                       | <p>The VET target group will expand significantly, participants of all VET ages and statuses will develop superior knowledge, competences and excellence and be inclusive for all groups (including vulnerable: migrants, unemployed, persons with special needs/disabled persons, etc.).</p>   |
| <p>d)<br/>Types of learning paths</p>             | <p>There will be a greater individualisation and modularisation of learning paths, with counselling support for students and apprentices of utmost importance. The focus will be a greater support for the development of students' talents, as well as support and integration of students from vulnerable groups (persons with special needs, early school leavers, Roma, migrant, etc.). External evaluation as well as a formative approach to final checks will be strengthened. The focus will be on a comprehensive assessment of competences and knowledge through new and innovative methods and formats.</p> <p>Learning outcomes will be more important than the method and place of learning, and validation processes will also be crucial. The system of recognition of non-formal and informal knowledge will give the individual the opportunity to assert their knowledge and skills acquired in the work process and in life. Systematically and transparently recognised skills will facilitate the entry of individuals into the education system or the labour market. A comprehensive quality assessment and development system will also include ensuring the professional competence of practitioners of skills verification and validation processes: consultants and evaluators.</p> <p>Different learning pathways will be characteristic: learning in school, at work, independent and informal learning through a variety of online, virtual educational resources. In addition to initial and further formal vocational training, there will also be a wide range of trainings at all levels.</p> |



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|                             | <p>Technological, economic development and demographic change will lead to a new learning paradigm. It used to be that you either study or work. Twenty years from now, the mindset will be if you don't learn, you won't be able to work. As a result, there will be an increasing emphasis in schools on learning to learn, i.e. on preparing or motivating students for lifelong learning and openness to change in society.</p> <p>Career counselling for primary school, upper secondary schools and tertiary students will also be strengthened and systemically designed.</p>   |
| e)<br>Learning approaches   | <p>The implementation of VET will be supported by innovative learning environments and new learning formats and methods. The realisation will require a school environment (modified architecture), which will allow flexibility of the educational process and provide smart interactive rooms provided in cooperation with the social partners.</p> <p>Modern learning opportunities will be increased in modernised education programmes, emphasis will be on projects, problems and situational learning, and the role of teachers will be appropriately adjusted..</p> <p>Due to these changes, professional pedagogy will be strengthened, the study programmes at the Faculty of Education will be updated, resulting in a pedagogically qualified and autonomous teacher. Modern, meaningful and targeted guidance will be provided to VET participants. Teachers will promote the development of transversal and generic competences as well as personal development among VET participants. Following the example of some countries (e.g. Germany), we will attract practitioners equipped with pedagogical and andragogical competences to teach professional content with subject-specific competences.</p> <p>Transparent implementation at all levels, transferability of competences and reduction of barriers to transitions and progress will be key features of pluralistic VET.</p> |
| f)<br>Governance, financing | <p>Comprehensive VET strategies and policies will require the involvement of social partners (workers, employers, state) in taking responsibility for VET governance and funding. Clearly defined roles and tasks of each partner will be reflected in their responsible implementation. A cross-sectoral approach will be established, the ministries, social partners, providers will cooperate to identify the needs of the local environment and the national economy. The role of professional institutions (CPIs and others) and political support for the education system will be strengthened.</p> <p>An effective remuneration system for teachers will attract new skilled staff. The competitiveness of adults in the labour market will be ensured by co-financing retraining, upskilling at secondary and higher education levels.</p> <p>In order to ensure and develop quality, effective internal quality systems with a high awareness of the quality culture will be implemented at VET providers organisations, and the role of the quality system will also be strongly strengthened at system level with clearly defined indicators and their monitoring.</p>  |

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| g)<br>Role of Europe  | The EU's role will be enhanced in terms of transparency and portability of skills and qualifications. It will also play an important role in co-financing VET and enhanced cooperation between countries on projects and common objectives.         |
| h)<br>Potential risks | Potential risks may lay in the response of pedagogical staff to these changes, in the provision of staff or attractiveness of the teaching profession, in the appropriate political will to realise the above and in possible growing inequalities. |

### Description of the scenario 2 from the 3 perspectives

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| View from the epistemological/ pedagogical perspectives on VET | <p>The VET target group will expand significantly, with participants of all ages and statuses. Greater individualisation and modularisation of learning paths, with counselling support for students and apprentices is of utmost importance. The focus will be greater support for the development of students' talents, as well as support and integration of students from vulnerable groups (persons with special needs, early school leavers, Roma, migrant, etc.). External evaluation as well as a formative approach to final checks will be strengthened. The focus will be on a comprehensive assessment of competences and knowledge. Learning outcomes will be more important than the method and place of learning, and validation processes will also be crucial. Various learning pathways will be characteristic: learning in school, at work, independent and informal learning through a variety of online, virtual educational resources. In addition to initial and further formal vocational training, there will also be a wide range of trainings at all levels. The learning paradigm will be changed: if you don't learn, you won't be able to work. For this reason, it will be important to learn in schools to prepare and motivate students for lifelong learning and openness to change in society. Career counselling for primary, secondary and tertiary students will also be strengthened.</p> <p>The implementation of VET will be supported by innovative learning environments and new learning formats and methods. The possibilities of modern forms of learning will be increased, the focus will be on project, problem and situational learning, and the role of teachers will be changed. Professional pedagogy will be strengthened. Teachers and mentors will be motivated, highly qualified and equipped with the latest professional skills, pedagogical approaches and teaching methods. The profession of teacher and mentor in VET will be respected and well rewarded and will attract excellent and talented graduates and top practice professionals.</p> |
| View from the education system perspective on VET              | The education system in Slovenia will be based on pluralistic learning in 2040, where VET will be the backbone of lifelong learning. The system will be comprehensive, flexible, transient, high-quality, inclusive, individual-centred and modularly designed. The focus will be on the   |

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|   | <p>development of general, transversal and professional competences. The co-responsibility of all stakeholders in the development and implementation and evaluation of VET and coherence with other policies (economy, innovation, labour and social policies, environment) will be important. VET will provide all three key roles: promoting the acquisition of a profession, preparing for further education, personal development and social inclusion of the individual. The system will ensure horizontal and vertical permeability. It will respond to and co-create with the needs of the labour market and society at large. Employers' participation will be very important and a platform for forecasting the skills needed in the labour market will help. VET will be characterised by excellence and inclusiveness and gender balance. Transparent implementation at all levels, transferability of competences and reduction of barriers to transitions and progress will be key features of pluralistic VET. In order to ensure and develop quality, effective internal quality systems with a high awareness of the quality culture will be put in place at VET providers, and the role of the quality system will also be strongly strengthened at system level with clearly defined indicators and their monitoring.</p> |
| View from the socioeconomic/ labour market perspective on VET | <p>Comprehensive VET strategies and policies will require the involvement of social partners (workers, employers, state) in taking responsibility for VET governance and funding. Clearly defined roles and tasks of each partner will be reflected in their responsible implementation. A cross-sectoral approach will be established, there different ministries, social partners, providers will cooperate to identify the needs of the local environment and the national economy. The role of professional institutions (CPIs and others) and political support for the education system will be strengthened. An effective remuneration system for teachers will attract new skilled staff. The competitiveness of adults in the labour market will be ensured by co-financing retraining, upskilling at secondary and higher education levels.</p>   |





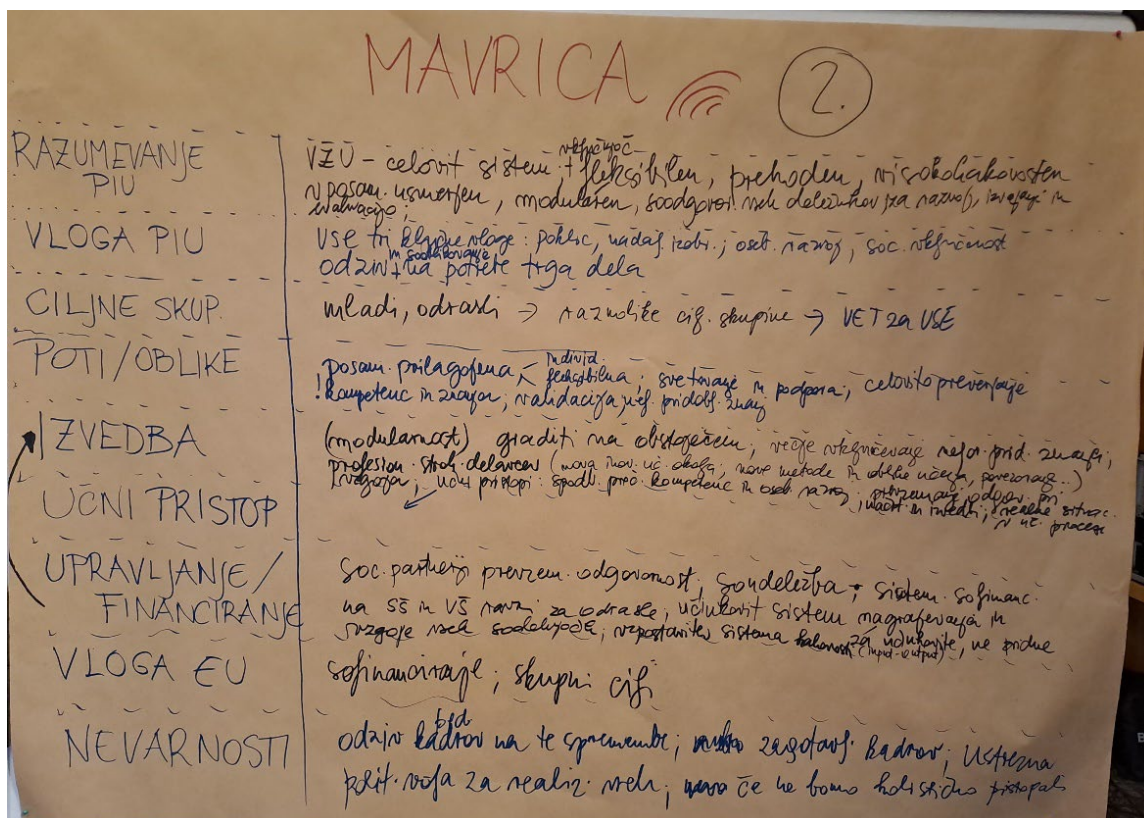


Image 7: Overview of the Rainbow - Vision scenario

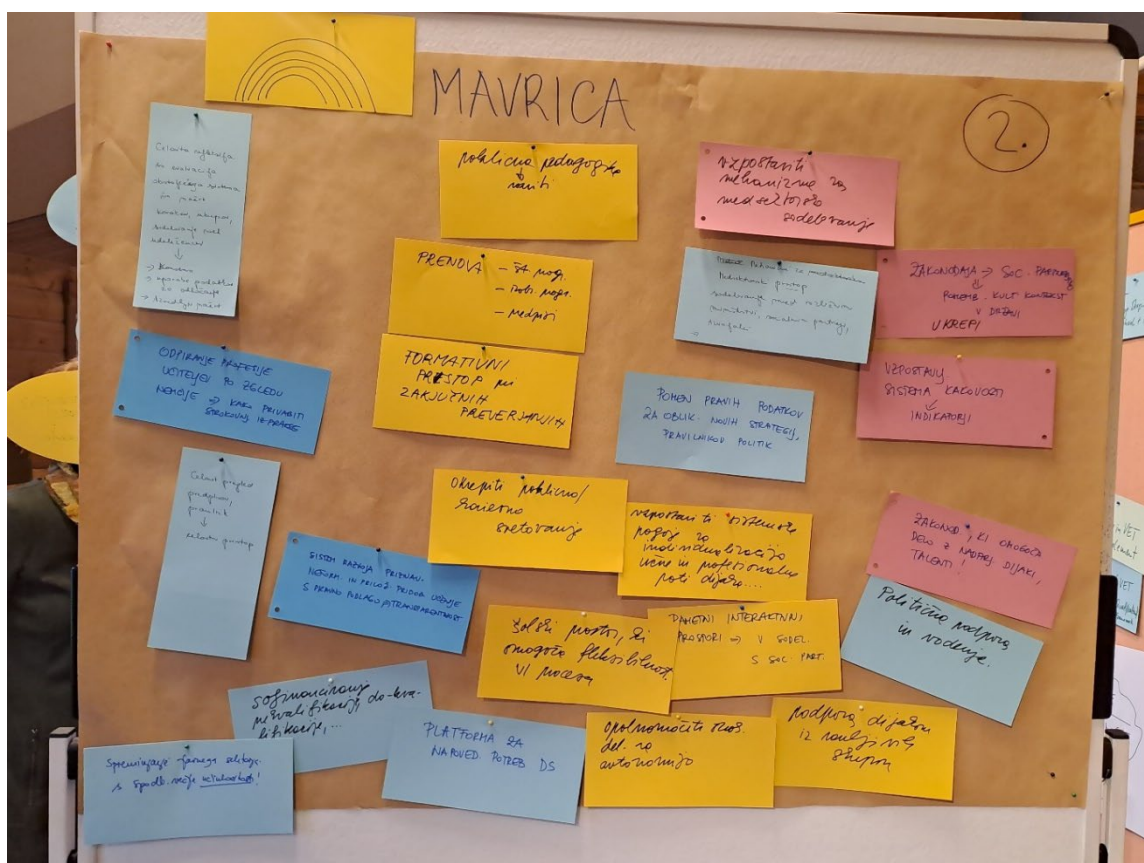


Image 8: Overview of the Rainbow - The Story

### Annex 3 – Scenario 3

#### Scenario Description

#### Developing Potentials

#### Working Group 3

Moderated by Simona Knavs (CPI)

Members of the working group: Jelka Čop, Barbara Krapež Kunčič and Matej Urbančič (CPI), Egon Pipan (ŠC Nova Gorica), Uroš Ocepek (STŠ Trbovlje).

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| Summary<br>Scenario 3                 | <p>The development of the 2040 scenario was guided by the idea of an individual and tutor/mentor approach, leading young people to their first profession through flexible forms of education programmes aligned with a uniquely designed qualifications system. The latter promotes young people's empowerment while allowing adults to return regularly to the system of recognition of competences and qualifications. Although learning by doing is the central learning activity, safeguards are included to maintain the level of general education and disciplinary knowledge. Qualifications cover the content or competences of the whole education system from EQF 3 to 8. The competence of practitioners has been the first and central objective and the core activity of the development from 2023 onwards. This is why the changes in legislation, governance and funding have been well professionally supported and at the same time transparent. The quality assurance process is an immanent part of the whole system.</p>  |
| a)<br>Understanding of<br>VET         | <p>VET consists of two equally important, parallel and meaningfully intertwined systems: the education system and the qualifications system, which are seen as central pillars of society's development. They enable vertical transitions (levels of education) and the acquisition of the vocational qualifications needed to enter the labour market, primarily for young people, and to continue to grow professionally, primarily for adults.</p> <p>Young people can join what has traditionally been called vocational and technical education (a way of getting into a profession) from the age of 14. They can be involved through traditional education programmes (after completing their primary education requirements), shorter training courses or through a process of recognition of competence.</p> <p>On the one hand, the systems are intertwined with the care sector (vulnerable groups) and, on the other, with the labour market, which is represented by all organisations that recruit, mediate employment or are professional and employers' associations.</p> |
| b)<br>Role of VET in<br>the education | <p>In terms of delivery, the two systems focus on the process of personal and career development of the individual, with the aim that each individual develops his/her potential in publicly valid programmes and/or demonstrates the competences developed in publicly valid qualification</p>  |

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| system                                     | <p>processes. In terms of content, methods and forms of learning and teaching, there is a close interplay between personal and community development on the one hand, and the process of developing the competences required by the labour market.</p> <p>The delivery of education and training programmes and the qualification process are intertwined. Educational programmes from NQF level 3 onwards lead to a level of education and a set of vocational qualifications (traditionally speaking, an occupation). NQF levels 5 and 6 are for the general population; for the population in care, NQF levels 3 and 4 are also available. NQF levels 7-8 are also included in the VET. Training programmes and the competence recognition system (the recognition process by which an individual obtains a qualification) are available for young people and adults. For individuals who have not yet attained the conditions (necessary qualifications) to enrol in further programmes or who need support for a change in their career development, a publicly valid career development programme is designed, which lasts between one and three years.</p> |
| c)<br>Qualifications and learning outcomes | <p>Individuals acquire general, broad vocational and specific vocational qualifications, and thus a level of education and a profession (the ability to start work in a vocational field).</p> <p>The level of education is primarily defined by a set of general qualifications, the occupation by a set of broad occupational qualifications, and the competence to work in certain types of jobs or in a specific job by specific occupational qualifications.</p> <p>All qualifications are included in the NQF and are internationally comparable, individuals' qualifications are recorded in a central register, and the recognition of attainment of education, occupation and training is thus automated.</p>  |
| d)<br>Target groups                        | <p>Residents aged 14 and over. The programmes are methodically and didactically adapted to the age of the participants. The individual who completes his/her primary school obligation other completes a primary school programme or enrolls, together with at least three mentors from different areas of expertise, draws up a personal and career development plan. Mentoring support ensures that, within a maximum of four years of secondary education, the young person either acquires the necessary vocational qualifications to enter the workforce or is ready to enrol in studies.</p> <p>There are four different statuses: pupil, student, apprentice and employee. Students are all underage residents. Students are all adult residents who, because of their involvement in one system or another, are unable to support themselves. Apprentices are all those enrolled in programmes who are also employed. Employees are individuals who are also in education, training or in the process of being recognised. Unemployed people are included in a care system that involves them in a process of personal and career development.</p>        |

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| e)<br>Learning and teaching | <p>The programmes are pedagogically/andagogically balanced, with a variety of teaching forms and methods, and are dominated by cooperative, project-based and problem-based learning (thus integrating vocational and general content), formative monitoring and blended learning. The proportion of learning by doing is maximised.</p> <p>The programmes culminate in fully external qualifying examinations. Enrolment in a programme is the start of a process of recognition of competences, which continues with the support of a tutor to develop an individual's learning plan as part of his/her personal and career plan. The tutor, in collaboration with the teachers of the specific subjects, guides the individual through the competences achieved by means of a competences assessment, either towards recognition procedures or towards involvement in learning activities (either within the educational programme or through inclusion in a training programme).</p> <p>Some qualifications have multi-part assessments. A qualification that is achieved is permanent, with a few exceptions where qualifications need to be renewed.</p>   |
| f)<br>Learning pathways     | <p>Individuals aged 14 and over (including those still in primary school) have the possibility to participate in training programmes and recognition procedures. After primary school, most pupils are either enrolled in a training or career development programme and can continue their education vertical or enter the labour market. The latter means that students first become apprentices and then employees. Effective incentives are in place for employees and employers to engage employees regularly in training programmes or recognition processes.</p> <p>Upon enrolment in the programme, individuals are assigned a tutor (who is also a teacher) and thus integrated into the department. In the case of educational programmes or longer training programmes, individual progression is guaranteed, with the possibility of transferring to other departments if necessary. Training programmes (NQF 5-8) include a minimum of 30 % content for general qualifications, a minimum of 10 % content for career development and a minimum of 10 % content for vocational qualifications. The content for vocational qualifications is delivered as an integration of practical and theoretical content. The exceptions are programmes of study which are so-called academic programmes in NQF 7 and 8. All programmes in NQF 10 are academic programmes. Academic degree programmes are designed to develop disciplines and are not part of the VET.</p> |
| g)<br>Providers             | <p>Education and training programmes are provided by accredited public and private schools. Professional staff may be employed full-time or part-time at national or regional level, or by an individual education and training provider. The network of schools in each region allows access to all types of training programmes, focusing the acquisition of specific vocational qualifications (on which the offer of training programmes depends) on the needs of the labour market in the region.</p> <p>Curriculum providers design departmental implementation curricula</p>  |

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|  | <p>based on the requirements of both systems (HEIs and qualifications) and in line with individual education plans. Several departments may have very similar implementation curricula.</p> <p>Education programmes that include 10-30% of vocational qualifications (usually broader) are designed for further education, while those with 40-60% of vocational qualifications are designed for transition to apprenticeships and employment.</p> <p>External competence assessment providers and general qualification providers are public institutions separate from education and training providers. In the case of vocational qualifications, this role is performed by non-profit professional institutions, which may also be private.</p>  |
| h) Initial training, work commitment and career development of teachers and trainers | <p>Faculties train teachers and other professionals at NQF levels 7 and 8. By completing studies at NQF level 7, they can become apprentices who act as assistants to teachers and other professionals in institutions and are also enrolled in a study programme at NQF level 8.</p> <p>Faculties also train all other professionals in the education and training system and in the qualifications system. Professionals must have clearly defined professional qualifications, according to their narrow field of work.</p> <p>In addition to teachers, professionals include all other employees of schools, public authorities, and public and private professional, development or research organisations operating within both systems. Professionals are also representatives of stakeholders in decision-making bodies.</p> <p>In addition to the core professional tasks of the post, all professionals carry out research and development tasks, including the acquisition of new specific professional qualifications.</p> <p>Professional mentors in the school or employer must have acquired the minimum set of professional qualifications needed for teaching and teaching, or be working in collaboration with another professional.</p> |
| i) Governance, financing   | <p>At ministerial level, responsibilities are assigned (1) for the development, acquisition and recognition of qualifications, (2) for publicly valid education and training programmes, and (3) for professional development, research and quality assurance of the functioning of both systems.</p> <p>At the level of the professional councils, we have the General Qualifications Council and the Professional Qualifications Council, which are professionalised and lead the quality assurance of both systems. SURS manages the collection of data from the central registers (entered into the register(s) by the activity providers), displays trends and allows for "click-through" analysis of individual data. The Court of Auditors monitors the work of ministries and expert councils.</p> <p>Both systems are publicly funded to implement legislative obligations. The Parity Fund finances development activities (50% private, 50% public) and is managed by professionalised expert members, acting as representatives of all stakeholders in both systems. The decisions of the</p>  |

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|                       | Parity Fund are taken by consensus of all members. Education and training providers (also raise funds on the market (both profit and non-profit)) operate on a non-profit basis.  |
| j)<br>Role of Europe  | It continues to support the development, research and transferability of qualifications. Mobility is further supported both in terms of target groups and the diversity of host organisations (employers). All applicants for funding have the possibility of individual support in project preparation and the obligation to report on project achievements and results. National and regional levels regularly communicate the results of all projects and integrate solutions into the system through the system's quality assurance system. |
| k)<br>Potential risks | There is insufficient political and professional will for legislative change. The system lacks transparency for stakeholders and actors. The development plan is not sufficiently detailed and well thought out, changes too much too quickly without ensuring the right conditions, resulting in transition periods that cause problems for participants, operators and stakeholders.  |

#### Description of scenario 3 from 3 perspectives

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| View from the epistemological/ pedagogical perspectives on VET | Competence is a core virtue, supported by a well-thought-out qualifications system. It focuses on balanced personal (individual and community) and career development, complemented by the educational plan of the individual enrolled in the programme. Personal and career development planning mentors play a central role, complemented by tutors in the programmes and teachers and career mentors in schools and workplaces (teachers and career mentors carry out external assessment). Assessment is entirely external, with some qualifications having multi-part assessment. The qualification achieved is permanent, with a few exceptions where qualifications need to be renewed. The curricula of the educational programmes are broadly based and at the same time allow a high degree of choice.  |
| View from the education system perspective on VET              | Schools are the providers of publicly valid education and training programmes, while qualifications bodies are the providers of recognition. Providers are public or private and accredited. Programmes are designed on the basis of sets of qualifications. A qualification is a smaller unit that defines competence in a specific content area. Qualifications are systemically defined. A system of initial and continuing education and training for all professionals has been developed. Decision-making bodies are professionalised. Professionals may be employed full-time or part-time at national or regional level or by a single provider. The level of qualification is acquired either through an education or training programme or through a recognition process. A central register records all qualifications acquired (general, broad vocational and specific vocational). |





"Funded by the European Union - NextGenerationEU"



## Annex 4 – Scenario 4

### Scenario Description

#### Exceeding the limits

#### Working Group 4

Moderator: Barbara Velkov (CPI)

Members of the working group: Danijela Makovec Radovan (UN LJ, FF), Mitja Korunovski (OZS), Nives Počkar (ŠC LJ), Tina Klarič, Metod Česarek, Velesa Mrak (CPI)

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| Summary<br>Scenario 4          | VET is a lifelong process for both young people and adults, which prepares individuals for their professional or career path and active citizenship. By involving individuals in the real working environment, VET enables them to gain professional skills and quickly adapt to changes in the job market. Additionally, by acquiring general knowledge and competencies, VET empowers them for personal development and active participation in the wider social environment.  |
| a)<br>Understanding<br>the VET | <p><b>VET FOR ALL = A LIFELONG PROCESS</b></p> <p>VET is a lifelong process with a dual function: it serves to provide vocational education (regardless of age) for those who do not have it yet (initial VET), as well as continuing VET, which means education designed to improve previously acquired vocational education. By the year 2040, 80% of the population is already included in the initial PIU (mostly in Slovene SSI and SPI programs, fewer in NPI), as well as most of the working population (mostly in continuing VET programs).</p> <p>Due to rapidly changing economic conditions, especially the fast-growing job market and technology, individuals who participate in PIU gain enough vocational breadth to quickly move between different occupations and become more employable. VET provides individuals with enough foundations to develop and expand their careers throughout their lives. It enables recognition of both formal and informal knowledge and skills, and offers opportunities for lifelong training to acquire or upgrade vocational education.</p> <p>Social partners in VET actively participate and have a high level of responsibility and commitment to VET development. They take great care to have quality and innovative employees who develop their professional fields, have a strong professional identity and socialization, and thereby contribute greatly to the promotion of the sector and profession. The reputation and respect for individual professions in wider society are therefore highly valued.</p> <p>A platform has been developed to predict future job trends, based on which prospective students and adults are well informed about which professions are in demand in the future and what the job market needs today, through strengthened career/professional orientation in primary schools and beyond. The VET offer is based on an analysis of the needs of the labor market</p> |

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| b)<br>Role of VET<br>in the<br>education<br>system             | <p><b>STRENGTHENING INDIVIDUAL'S GENERAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND COMPETENCES</b></p> <p>The role of PIU is twofold. On one hand, it provides individuals with broad professional training, especially young people, and on the other hand, it promotes personal development and empowers individuals for active citizenship. Therefore, VET also simultaneously develops general knowledge, especially in young people - a narrow vocational/career orientation is no longer enough.</p>   |
| c)<br>Target groups  | <p><b>YOUNG AND ADULTS</b></p> <p>The target groups are different - young people and adults regardless of age, experience, level of education. VET is VET for all, with differences in pedagogical didactic approaches in youth and adult education. Both target groups are educated and trained with the aim of acquiring or upgrading their vocational education, reskilling, and thus improving their employment opportunities and developing their professional development.</p>  |
| d)<br>Types of<br>learning paths<br>and learning<br>approaches | <p><b>INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL PEDAGOGY</b></p> <p>VET is based on the good pedagogical andragogical training of teachers and mentors. Vocational pedagogy is highly developed and represents a strong element that is evident in the intertwining of work-based learning and classroom instruction in schools or other institutionalized forms within VET. In this way, the individual acquires functional knowledge, which is a spectrum that is very different from, for example, general knowledge. It is about making good use of the potential offered by both work-based learning with well-trained pedagogical andragogical mentors and, on the other hand, classroom instruction in schools and elsewhere, where teachers who are called to their profession teach both students and adults. The role of the teacher is broader and more layered; they are a mentor, guide, coordinator, advisor... The professional staff (teachers etc..) is of high quality because they are provided with continuous professional development. Through the processes of continuous staff circulation between companies and strengthening with new pedagogical and andragogical knowledge, a recognized way of career development for employees has been established.</p> <p>General and professional knowledge is connected in schools (interdisciplinarity). Educational programs in cooperation with learning places follow the development of technology and digitization. There is a strong awareness of the sustainable development of companies, as well as the mindset of each individual - everyone contributes to this.</p> <p>Learning approaches are individualized - VET is based on principles of individualization, which includes diverse approaches (including project-based and problem-based learning). An "open space" has been established, meaning that learners come together and collaborate in this space - no longer just within projects.</p> <p>Formal, non-formal, and informal learning are encouraged and recognised.</p> |

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| e)<br>Governance,<br>financing | <p><b>ENHANCED ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS</b></p> <p>Various systems of management and leadership have been established. Responsibility and care for the operation of the entire VET system are determined. Social partners, ministries, and individual departments collaborate and are committed to it.</p> <p>There is sufficient funding for the development of VET, and financing is arranged so that all social partners contribute, which consequently also affects the reputation of VET, which is high due to the coordinated social partnership.</p> |
| f)<br>Role of Europe           | <p><b>THE EU STAYS OUT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND POLICIES</b></p> <p>The EU's role will not go beyond what it is today - countries will have the autonomy to develop their national education systems according to their own capacities. It helps countries with funding - it has set up investment funds for individual learners.</p>   |
| g)<br>Possible risks           | <p><b>NOT TO BE THE VICTIM OF OUR OWN SUCCESS</b></p>  |

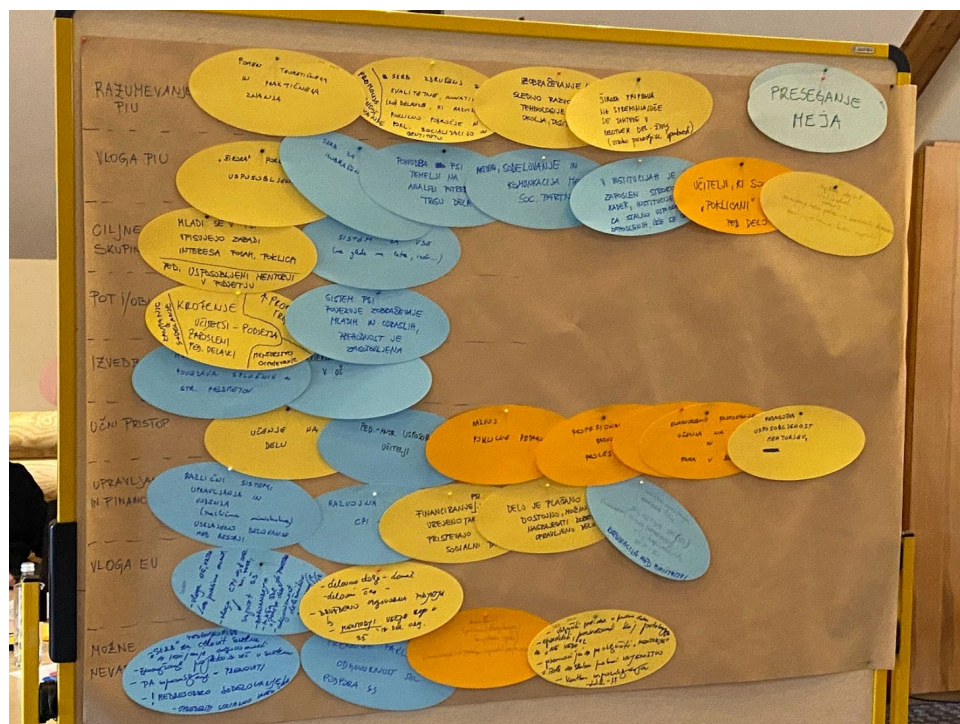


Image 11: Overview of the Exceeding the Limits scenario - 1



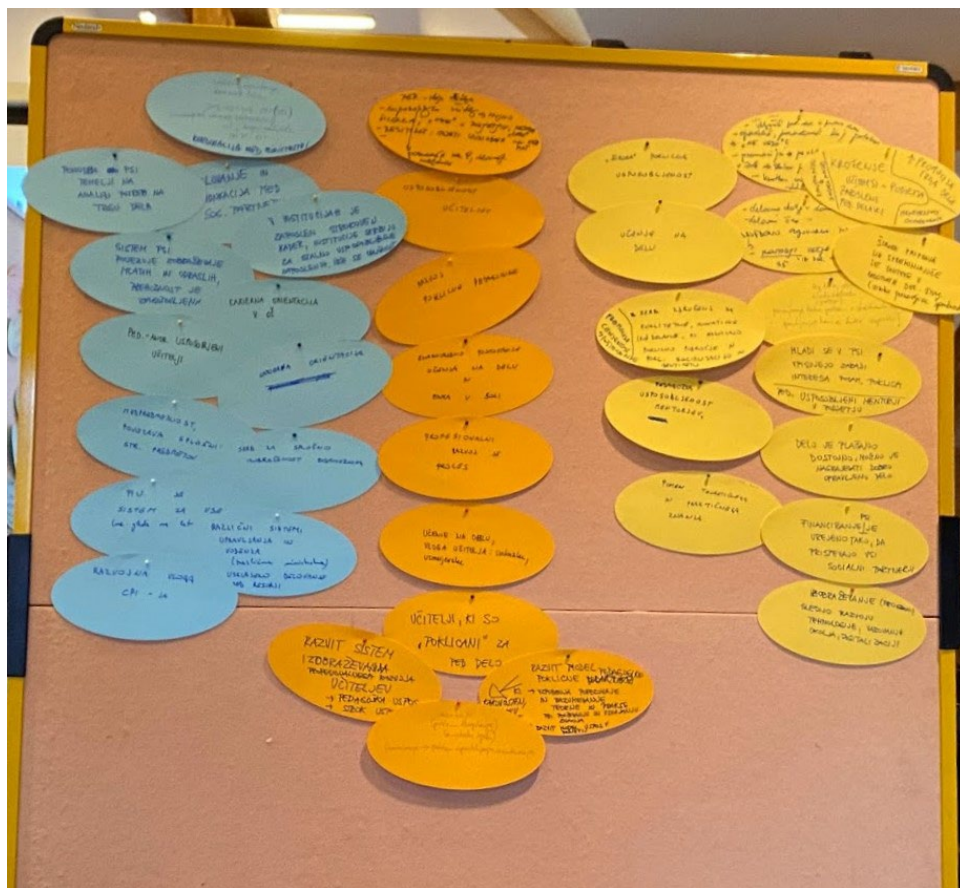


Image 12: Overview of the Exceeding the Limits scenario – 2

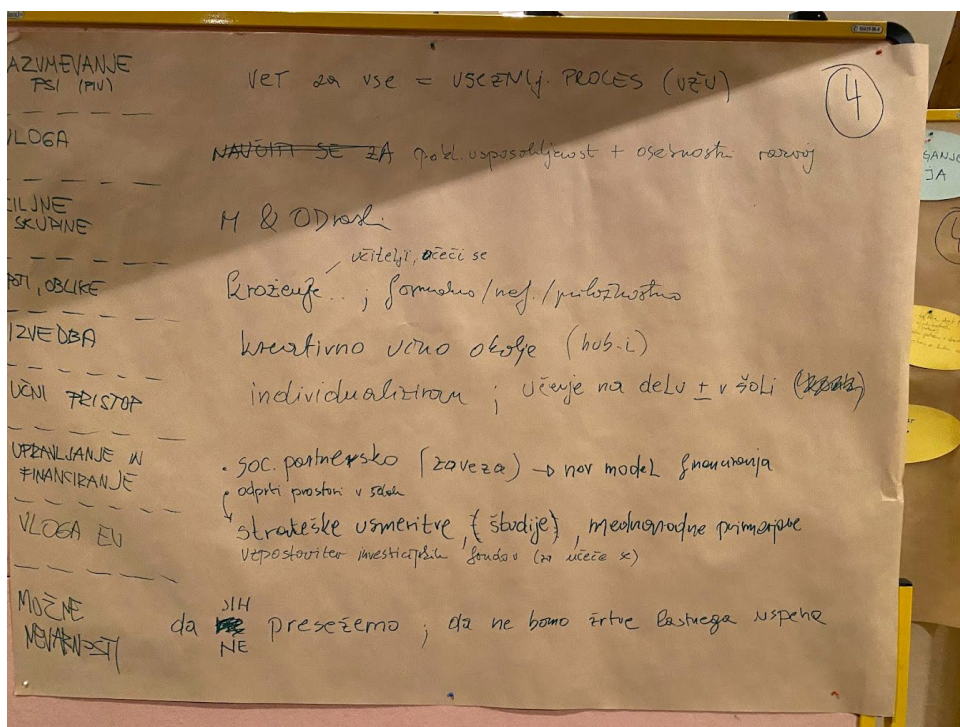


Image 13: Overview of the Exceeding the Limits scenario - The Story



## Annex 5 - Comparison table of the four scenarios

### Four scenarios for the development of vocational and professional education

CPI Working Group Workshop, 14 February 2023

|  | Scenario 1:<br>Inclusive Excellence   | Scenario 2:<br>Rainbow   | Scenario 3:<br>Developing potentials  | Scenario 4:<br>Exceeding the limits  |
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| Fitting the scenario into a two-dimensional model (Cedefop, 2020, Figure 33, p. 207) |   |  |   |  |
| Explanation of position  | The focus is on transversal competences and on-the-job training.<br>The vocational education system is separate from general education. | General education and vocational content are balanced<br>A pluralistic approach. | The focus is on individualised pathways for developing professional competences in the workplace. The system provides for external evaluation of competences. | Focus on transversal competences.<br>Intertwining learning at school and at work.<br>A separate system with strong influence of the social partners. |

| <b>Key features of each scenario</b>          |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
|   | Scenario 1:<br>Inclusive Excellence   | Scenario 2:<br>Rainbow   | Scenario 3:<br>Developing potentials  | Scenario 4:<br>Exceeding the limits  |
| a)<br>Understanding VET                       | A strong work-based learning component in an inclusive lifelong learning and vocational training system.  | Vocational education is not a separate subsystem.<br>Vocational training and/or vocational qualifications are part of a comprehensive (lifelong) education system. | The parallel and meaningfully intertwined systems of education and training on the one hand, and the acquisition of qualifications on the other, are seen as central pillars of social development. They interact with the welfare system on the one hand and the labour market on the other. | Vocational education is an important (sub)system of the (lifelong) education system. It is the backbone of lifelong education, involving the whole population. Vocational qualifications are developed in all sectors, in industry, commerce, institutions and public administration.                  |
| b)<br>The role of VET in the education system | VET has a strong social-integrative role (inclusion/integration), working well with the social partners.<br>Employers effectively communicate needs and cooperate in the implementation of the VET. Career and Talent Centres provide lifelong career guidance. | Anyone can obtain a specific professional qualification at any time. General education and vocational subjects are taught in parallel, with high transitivity.     | The purpose of VET is to support individuals (mentored career development, inclusion) and communities (regional centres, development programmes) in developing their potential in line with the balanced needs of society and the labour market.  | Vocational education is the dominant (sub)system of education.<br>The majority of young people (over 70%) join after both primary and secondary school. Vocational education is thus no longer limited to the secondary school population, but is also a possible parallel choice to higher education. |

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| c)<br>Target groups           | Learners of all ages, including vulnerable groups.  | Different target groups, including vulnerable groups, of all ages.   | Residents from 14 years of age (from 15 can be employed), inclusive for all.<br>Status: pupil, student, apprentice (employed) and employee (involved in training or recognition of competence. Unemployed people are included in the Career and Personal Development Assistance Scheme.   | The whole population. Preferably young people and young adults.  |
| d)<br>Types of learning paths | Educational programmes at NQF level 3-6 and non-formal training, traineeships and apprenticeships<br>General and vocational baccalaureate, final exam | General education and vocational subjects are intertwined, or chosen by the individual.<br>Modularisation of educational provision, individualisation of educational pathways.<br>Accessible and tailored (according to the target group and the learning mode, accessibility principle) online learning materials.<br>Businesses also create training opportunities for young people.<br>Develop a system for | With mentoring/tutoring support, the individual develops an individual career development plan, which may include enrolment in an education programme, training programmes and/or involvement in the recognition of competences for qualifications, and a career development programme of up to 3 years.<br>Except in exceptional cases, residents achieve at least NQF level 5 in vocational education.<br>There is a purely and | Training programmes are developed across all sectors. Occupations (vocational qualifications) are understood broadly, with a strong transversal competences component. Intercompany training centres represent strong sectoral training centres.<br>Companies have developed a mentoring offer for vocational trainees.<br>Formal, non-formal and informal learning is encouraged and recognised at all levels of difficulty and for |

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|                        |   | recognising prior learning.   | exclusively external evaluation of competences for qualifications (general, broad-vocational, specific-vocational) also during the training programme.  | all age groups.   |
| e) Providers           | Implementation in schools grouped in specialised vocational centres, where the programmes are implemented in cooperation with the social partners (members of the school councils). | A wide range of different providers, public and private, technology (business-to-business) centres, chambers, companies.<br>Innovative learning environments, providing smart interactive spaces. | Public and private accredited, non-profit schools form a network of schools in each region, enabling the attainment of vocational qualifications up to NQF level 6, with the attainment of specific vocational qualifications focused on the needs of the labour market in the region.<br>External evaluation is carried out by public institutions for general qualifications, separate from schools, and by non-profit professional institutions for vocational qualifications. | Within VET, both work-based learning and learning in school or other institutionalised settings are intertwined. General and vocational skills are integrated in schools (cross-curricular); educational programmes keep pace with technological developments in cooperation with apprenticeships with employers. The role of the teacher is broader - he/she is also a guide, a counsellor... vocational pedagogy as a discipline is highly developed and of great importance. |
| f) Learning approaches | Promoting excellence, focusing on work-based learning with employers and in schools on the acquisition of generic and transversal   | A wide variety of tailored learning styles. Emphasis on project-based, problem-based and situational learning to develop general, transversal   | The teaching approaches are pedagogically and pedagogically appropriate (format, target group), with a predominance of cooperative,   | Learning approaches are person-centred - VET is based on the principles of individualisation, incorporating a variety of  |



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|                             | competences through collaborative, project-based and problem-based learning.  | and vocational competences. Vocational pedagogy will be strengthened.  | project-based and problem-based learning (integrating vocational and general content, maximising the proportion of work-based learning), formative monitoring and blended learning. Traditional school-based assessment is no longer necessary.   | learning approaches (project-based, problem-based learning, etc.). There is an "open space" across all educational institutions, where everyone learns from everyone. |
| g)<br>Governance, financing | Modern, adapting to the labour market and current labour needs.<br><br>Funding, transparent and based on co-financing, public, EU and business funding. | Governance and funding from government, business and the EU.<br><br>The content of vocational qualifications is managed by the social partners through employers' associations or other forms of networking.<br><br>Co-financing of retraining, re-qualification and further training for adults at secondary and post-secondary level.<br><br>Effective internal quality systems, quality system also strengthened at system level. | Governance is divided into the areas of qualifications, programmes and quality assurance.<br><br>Professionals at all levels of decision-making and in all subsystems are professionalised.<br><br>Publicly funded programmes and qualifications system to implement legislation, VET development funded by a parity fund (50% public, 50% private) | MICs are run by employers and their associations.<br><br>The country has autonomy in developing education and training programmes.                                    |
| h)<br>Role of               | The EU is building Career Centres, co-funding student   | Focus on EU tools for transparency and portability.  | Support for skills development, research and  | With EU co-financing, the country is setting up   |

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| Europe                            | exchanges and supporting cooperation with foreign institutions for regional action.   | Co-financing of VET, increased cooperation between countries on projects and common objectives.  | transferability. National and regional levels regularly communicate the results of projects and are committed to integrating the solutions developed into their own system.   | investment funds for individual learners. |
| i)<br>Potential risks             | As different sectors develop at different speeds, there is a risk of being left behind. Insufficient political will to train quality professionals. | Making it harder to integrate vulnerable groups, strengthening the role of advice and support.<br>Low quality of providers, insufficient number of teachers (also due to low reputation).<br>Potential growing inequalities. | Lack of transparency and clarity in the system, resulting in a lack of uptake by participants and operators. Insufficient political will to invest in the quality of practitioners.   |   |
| j)<br>Additional explanatory note |   |  | The qualifications achieved are entered in a central register, and the recognition of educational and professional qualifications is automated.<br><br>Focus on lifelong career development for residents and professionals in the system. After completing NQF 7, professionals enter an |   |

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|  |  |  | apprenticeship in combination with NQF 8 studies, which is a prerequisite for the professional examination. |  |
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*Adapted from CEDEFOP (2020). Vocational education and training in Europe, 1995-2035: scenarios for European vocational education and training in the 21st century. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop reference series; No 114 (pp. 222-225, Table 9).*

## Annex 6 – Some challenges of VET in Slovenia

### Some challenges of VET in Slovenia

*Prepared for the workshop by Klara Skubic Ermenc (UN LJ, Faculty of Arts) and Darko Mali (CPI)*

The starting point is the question about the role played by vocational and professional education (VET) in the education system and more broadly in society.

#### Given the existing regulation and legislation, the VET plays a threefold role in Slovenia

The first step is to prepare young people for the profession: this is reflected in the idea that programmes are in line with occupations (therefore, they are based on occupational standards, and social partnership is established – inspired by the German speaking countries)

In the second place is preparation for further education: therefore, there are no dead ends in the system — each educational path leads to the tertiary level; we have a vocational *matura*, which also allows admission to university, together with vocational-technical programs

In the third place is the **social integration role**: vocational education contributes to the continuation of education for almost a whole generation after compulsory schooling, thus reducing the risk of social marginalisation; the student's status is also a social status, which allows for greater social security (including family — social transfers, after the 15th year, it allows for small work)

**Key challenge = losing the first function and strengthening the other two.**

#### What is this and what potential development can be derived from it?

Approximately 90 % of young people completing *technical* education (4 years) **continue their education**; approximately 65-70 % of young people completing *vocational* education (3 years) continue their education (about 50 % of them also complete a vocational *matura*). As a result, vocational education loses its potential in building up the professional identity of young people, which is also linked to the social status of professions at the secondary vocational education level.

There is no way back, forcing young people to leave education after secondary education and fast employment will not bear fruit, **it is necessary to focus on adult vocational education.**

The design of the VET in 1990s envisaged a **unified vocational education system for young people and adults**, which we did not fully succeed, the trend even goes in the opposite direction:

- in recent years, vocational education has almost exclusively included young people after primary school, the proportion of adults and those who have lost their student status is less than 10 % (RIC, Final Examinations Report) and in 2000-2005 their share was 25 % - 30 %.
- The Employment Service has developed several alternative active labour market policy measures (e.g. on-the-job training, job examination and non-formal training programmes). Unemployed persons are enrolled in vocational and professional education only for the purpose of completing the remaining obligations or the final year. Requalifications (re-skilling) are rare. There are more adults in technical education (up to 50 %) which is (probably) becoming a form of requalification.

- For several years, an alternative NVQ system has also been developed, which in individual cases assumes the role of initial vocational education (e.g. NVQ Worker in nursing homes). At this moment, we do not have any vocational education, designed by employers and provided by employers together with schools, which would in fact mean for new workers a period in which they acquire appropriate qualifications through their work and studies and complete such a period of introduction with a qualification examination. We do not have a vocational education system aimed at the entire population, young people, young adults and adults.
- In some European countries, adults are successfully enrolling in apprenticeship, in Slovenia due to many challenges this idea was not realized;
- We do not plan to integrate refugees and migrants into VET.

The question is also whether the loss of the first function of VET does not result in **ineffective duplications in the system**: the technical school is similar in function to a professional high school (*gimnazija*); there are small differences between school and apprenticeship form — the question of the “architecture” of the vocational education system itself and the relationship between the different types of schools and programmes is raised.

Strengthening the function of preparing for further education also implies a **different concept of assessment and completion of education** – it would be considered whether to introduce more elements of **externality** into vocational *matura* exams, or to introduce (at least in part) national standards of knowledge, thereby strengthening the quality of vocational knowledge and key competences.

With regard to the third (social-integration) function: the challenge is how to strengthen **support for learning and education for young people** (strengthening the inclusive nature of the school, strengthening individualisation, strengthening counselling services, etc.); the challenge is lower vocational education, aimed at students with low educational attainment (with incomplete primary schools), students with special needs; young people from vulnerable groups are enrolled in it – is it appropriate to have islands of segregation in the system?

The problem is that our education in primary school is already highly **socio-reproductive** and therefore often not those who are really interested in vocational and technical education, but those who cannot get a place in general high school (the **career orientation in primary school** is also inappropriate: learners with lower grades and regardless of interest/talent are targeted at vocational and technical education; students have very few opportunities to learn about their careers and their talents)

## The Social Partnership

When the path for the development of VET was outlined in post-independence Slovenia, one of the key goals and paths to quality vocational education was to develop a social partnership with stakeholders in the labour market, i.e. employers and employees, their national, sectoral and local associations. Social partnership has not really come to life, much remains on paper, we have a number of challenges in practice.

What's the problem? Our thesis is that there are three fundamental problems:

- Representatives of the social partners in different bodies (e.g. expert council, etc.) often do not come from the industry or trade unions because they do not have enough staff, but these spheres delegate people from schools/education: the question is whether the representative office should be **professionalised**;
- The social partners are **very weak in terms of staffing** and the number of people working (and having knowledge) in the field of education is very low. It appears that it would be necessary either to strengthen chambers and trade unions in terms of staffing or to strengthen the CPI as a professional and development organisation and to strengthen its socio-partnership design.

- Funding: **social partnership is not reflected in the financing**: most of the money comes from the state budget (most from the education budget) and from European funds, with very little from the work sphere itself. The system is unsustainable in the long term, which is most pronounced in the case of apprenticeships (a way should be found to ensure that vocational education, especially apprenticeships, is also co-financed by private funds, given the fact that membership in chambers is not compulsory; special funds, etc.?)

Whereas social partnership is weak, vocational education is dominated by a school perspective and mentality (vocational education is schooled, too much school-based), and the interests of schools are also at the forefront, so there is still too little connection between schools/ education and the needs of the local environment (inappropriately used open curricula mechanism) and the needs of the national economy and citizens: the overall development of the network of schools, the distribution of programmes across the country, the development of qualifications and programmes is insufficiently tied to the strategic development goals of the country, i.e. insufficiently tied to data on the one hand and the vision of social and economic development on the other...

### Quality assurance of the system

Open and learning-outcomes based programmes and very little externality (on completion of education) give schools and teachers a great deal of autonomy, which is professionally justified, but their work is not verified at national level;

Quality systems are more or less on paper, in practice it is more a matter of “paperology” as an instrument of quality assessment and assurance at both school and national level (the authorities do not monitor/evaluate the quality of schools (there is no pedagogical inspection, no tracking of national quality indicators or no consequences). The consequence: - this manifested itself during the epidemic - very large differences in the quality of operation between schools and within schools are very large - the **concept of autonomy may be misused** (the state shifts its responsibility to schools; is it possible that the headmaster pass it to teachers? Perhaps there are too many differences between schools and teachers?)

### Teacher and trainers

**The shortage of teachers** is becoming an increasing challenge that can undermine other objectives (also linked to the issue of the performance of small schools; low profile of the teaching profession, especially vocational schools, teachers’ educators contribute negatively to this)

The question of the quality of their **pedagogical skills** (how to better involve universities and how to strengthen professional didactics in collaboration with research)

The question of the quality training of **in-company trainers**; the role and qualifications of mentors and other employees in the training of students and apprentices are not elaborated (why the master’s title is not a prerequisite for in-company trainers?)

## **Annex 7 – Workshop Participants Handouts**

### **a) Introductory material**

*In recent years, Cedefop has carried out a broad [analysis of trends in the development of VET in European countries](#). This has led to [possible scenarios for the future development of vocational education](#)<sup>1</sup>. [Dr Jörg Markowitsch](#), who has contributed with his expertise to both the studies and the scenarios on the development of VET in Europe, will present them to us.*

### **Changing vocational and professional education**

Vocational education in Slovenia and the rest of Europe is not just about preparing 16-20 year-olds for careers in the trades, industry and services. Increasingly, we are also talking about learning pathways for adults, with a focus on raising competences at all levels, from basic to the most advanced. The need for changes in vocational and professional education is already being expressed in various sectors of society, both in terms of the content and the forms and organisation of education. The questions that can be asked when thinking about these changes may vary, for example:

- Content of education: how to further develop education programmes that not only address basic vocational education, but also include more advanced and experiential competences, while taking into account the potential for involving an increasing number of adults?
- Institutional: How to organise the VET sector to meet new users and new needs? Is the current institutional structure adequate and appropriate to meet current and future challenges?
- Stakeholder engagement: how can we further strengthen the integration of work-based skills in vocational education? Are existing forms of cooperation between ministries, social partners and public institutions sufficient to ensure quality and relevance in the (future) changed and expanded field of VET?

### **Future development scenarios**

In the framework of the projects [Changing the nature and role of VET](#) and [The Future of VET](#), Cedefop has examined how vocational education and training systems in European countries have evolved and changed over the last 30 years. Based on extensive material produced since 2015, a set of future scenarios has been developed, explaining alternative and possible future changes and the opportunities and challenges they bring.

Participants will be invited to reflect on the vocational education system in Slovenia and the challenges it faces, with the help of basic development scenarios. We will try to look at the role of existing institutions and established procedures with refreshed eyes and from different perspectives than we usually do. In this way, we hope that the workshop will stimulate a constructive debate on the future of vocational education in Slovenia.

## **The challenges of vocational education**

Cedefop research shows that European vocational education is developing in relation to two key dimensions. Firstly, we can identify countries that are developing a vocational education system that is distinct and separate from other areas, and secondly, countries that see great potential in the diversity of provision and institutions that cover vocational education. The question is whether we believe that vocational education should be developed in a high-quality, separate system, or whether responsibility for the lifelong acquisition of vocational competences should be integrated in a coordinated way into the different parts of the education and training system. Furthermore, we can see countries that place more emphasis on theoretical and academic content and others that emphasise the value of training through work. The integration of general education and key/transversal competences and, on the other hand, vocational competences is considered by many to be key to the future positioning of vocational education.

Participants will briefly learn about the conclusions of the Cedefop study and ask whether these trends are also relevant in the Slovenian context and how this can help us to reflect on future development steps and their implications.

## **b) Workshop programme**

8:30 - 9:00: Coffee/tea, croissant

### **09:00 - 09:50: Welcome and introduction to the workshop**

Janez Damljan: Welcome, presentation of participants and programme

Anastasia Poulidou (CEDEFOP): Vocational education and training in Europe - main features and challenges

Klara Skubic Ermenc (University of Ljubljana): Challenges of vocational and professional education in Slovenia

### **09:50 - 10:20: Future scenarios**

Dr Jörg Markowitsch (3s, Vienna): Cedefop scenarios on the future of VET. What do they tell us and how can we use them in our discussions?

10:20 - 10:30: Break

10:30 - 12:30: **First working group session** - Vision 2040 and beyond

12:30 - 13:30: Lunch break

13:30 - 15:15: **Second working group session** - How to make the vision a reality?

15:15 - 15:30: Break

15:30 - 16:45: **Slovenian scenarios for the future** - Which directions can we choose?



The groups present their main findings and conclusions. Following this, participants are invited to reflect on the main questions of the workshop.

What decisions need to be taken to strengthen and further develop vocational education up to 2035 and beyond?

Will we develop vocational education separately in different segments, or is it time to for a coordinated national strategy for vocational skills development?

16:45 - 17:00 Janez Damjan: **Plans for the future**

### c) Resources for participants

#### Cedefop-ov model pogleda na poklicno izobraževanje in usposabljanje (PIU) s 3 perspektiv Kako bi na podlagi teh značilnosti opisali vašo vizijo PIU v letu 2040?



|                       | 'Cottage Gardens'<br>Country gardens | 'VET for all'<br>Vocational education for all                                | 'Firefighter VET'<br>Firefighters in action          | Your scenario |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| Understanding the PIU | Lifelong 'career-oriented learning'  | Comprehensive education and training, including as a condition of employment |  |               |
| The role of the PIU   |                                      | The VET is the first choice for young people                                 | VET is strongly linked to active employment policies |               |

|                        |   |  |   |  |
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| Target groups          | Different target groups, covering different levels and different age groups |  | Actions target mainly at-risk adult groups and school leavers       |  |
| Routes/forms           | Both established routes and the newly emerging "between the gardens"        | The Leaving Certificate becomes the standard   |   |  |
| Retrieved from         |   | Schools work intensively with businesses and involve different target groups of all ages   | Mostly short training courses delivered by labour market educators  |  |
| Learning approach      | Project-based and problem-based learning with intensive mentoring           | Work-based learning in extended occupational fields is predominant, with variable quality and intensity                                |   |  |
| Governance and funding | Strong state intervention   | Strong cooperation between employers and workers   |   |  |
| The EU's role          |   | The EU has reallocated the mobility budget from higher education to VET to give every EU citizen the opportunity to train for a career | The EU focuses on short-term labour market policies                 |  |
| Possible hazards       | Fragmentation and possible increase in social inequalities                  |  | The risk of polarisation through stigmatisation of VET participants |  |