

Information and Guidance

for Lifelong Learning and Career Development in Slovenia

Current Situation and Perspectives



Andragoški center Republike Slovenije
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA ŠOLSTVO IN ŠPORT



Evropski
Socialni
Skład

Information about Slovenia

<i>Government type</i>	parliamentary democracy
<i>Capital</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Currency</i>	Euro (from 1. 1. 2007 onwards)
<i>Border countries</i>	Italy, Austria, Hungary, Croatia
<i>Area</i>	20.273 km ²
<i>Population</i>	2.001.114 as in 2006
<i>Official language</i>	Slovenian , in the areas with Italian minority Italian and in areas with Hungarian minority Hungarian
<i>Religion</i>	Roman-Catholic (82 %)
<i>Employment</i>	55,4 % as in 2005 (source: SURS, 2006, Labour Force Survey)
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	10,2 % as in 2005 (source: ZRSZ, 2006)
<i>GDP</i>	13.677 EUR
<i>EU member</i>	since May 2004

Number of Educational Institutions in Slovenia

<i>Pre-schools</i>	777 (source: SURS, 2006)
<i>Primary schools (including primary schools with programmes for children with special needs)</i>	862 (source: SURS, 2006)
<i>Secondary schools</i>	247 (source: MŠŠ, 2006)
<i>Educational institutes</i>	18 (source: MŠŠ, 2006)
<i>Student residence halls</i>	41 (source: SURS, 2006)
<i>Higher vocational colleges</i>	48 (source: SURS, 2006)
<i>Higher educational institutions</i>	54 (source: SURS, 2006)
<i>Folk high schools</i>	39 (source: MŠŠ, 2006)
<i>Private organisations for adult education</i>	99 (source: Adult education provision review 2005/06)

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CONTENT

Presentation

Structure of educational system

Educational system in Slovenia

Guidance in Slovenia

Introduction to the presentation of activities

Tanja Bezić

Counselling in pre-schools, schools and student residence halls

Zlata Šlibar

Career guidance within the Employment Agency of Slovenia and Vocational Information and Counselling Centres

Career guidance within other organizations

Mojca Polak

Information and counselling for youth on the parallel path

Ljubo Raičević

General information and counselling for youth

Vanja Vučetić Dimitrovski

Tutoring and career guidance for students

Andreja Dobrovoljc, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

Guidance centres for adult education

Mojca Polak

Counselling within the system of acquisition of National Vocational Qualifications (NPK)

Guidance for adult education and learning in other organizations

Mojca Polak

National and international projects for information and counselling in lifelong learning and career development in Slovenia between 1995 - 2005

Saša Niklanović

The European dimension in the career guidance policy

Mojca Polak, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

Information and guidance in lifelong learning and career development in Slovenian strategic documents

Mojca Polak, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

Most important suggestions for future development and networking of guidance activities in Slovenia

National and international Internet links

INTRODUCTION

In Slovenia, new activities have been developed for the past ten years to support children, youth or adults in their decisions for the occupation, education, learning, employment, personal development or career development in its broader sense.

In the last decade, in all European countries as well as in Slovenia, the concept of lifelong learning represents the core for development in societies, anticipating increasing competitiveness and growth on the basis of knowledge. Within the concept of lifelong learning, two dimensions are emphasised: the time dimension (lifelong learning), meaning learning from birth to death, and the multidimensional dimension (lifewide learning), that is learning for work, personal development and active citizenship (Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, European Commission, 2000). The concept of lifelong learning has been upgraded by the concept of lifelong guidance, emphasising the meaning of quality and comprehensive information and guidance for all, aiming to assist the individuals in choosing their education, training and profession and in managing their careers, regardless of age or life situation. (Resolution on Strengthening Policies, ...of Guidance, European Commission, 2004) The European resolution on guidance emphasises the importance of developing counselling activities for support of the processes of lifelong learning and career development in different institutions (schools, universities, public employment agencies, adult education organizations, companies, non-governmental organizations, etc.), in equal terms for all European citizens, regardless of their age, sex, religion, race or employment status. Special attention is given to the provision of public, free services with different content and forms, intended specifically for the most exposed groups of population.

Guidance activities have been offered by the Employment Agency of Slovenia and by schools for several decades now. A couple of years ago new guidance activities emerged, like counselling in adult education, for young dropouts and general information and counselling for youth. Specific forms of services have been developed, e.g. counselling for acquiring national vocational qualifications and new knowledge and experiences emerged from national and international projects, etc. Rapid development of new methods and contents prompted the decision, adopted at the national level in 2004, to make use of the European Social Fund grants for analysis of the existing

situation in some areas being financially supported by two ministries, the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, and to develop a vision of future development and above all to increase interweaving and connecting between the information and guidance activities.

This booklet has been prepared in order to familiarize, all those who are in charge for policy-making and those who work in the area, with the current activities offer in Slovenia. We are aware that in this first attempt of comprehensive presentation of informing and guidance activities, supporting individual's lifelong learning and career development, we may have left out some of the activities or organizations. Therefore, this booklet should be anticipated as the first step towards the presentation of these activities, with the intention to make their goals and contents increasingly recognisable. It is particularly intended for all the experts who work in counselling networks, and who can contribute by knowing the others, to higher quality level, comprehensiveness and above all, to increased access to information and guidance for all the citizens of Slovenia.

At the beginning, before the introduction of every particular activity, we have shortly presented basic characteristics of Slovenian educational system, further on followed by the review of basic strategic European and Slovenian path for further development in the new developmental period from 2007 to 2013. Several Slovenian and international internet links have been added at the end.

As accompaniment to the handbook we are adding a thought: with information and guidance we open the gateway to equal opportunities for all.

STRUCTURE OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN SLOVENIA

Pre-school education

In pre-school education, the children from age one until the age of entering primary school are included. It is provided in independent kindergarten and pre-school units in primary schools. Pre-school education is provided by public and private childcare centres; they either provide the public programme with special attention to certain activities (music, healthy diet, English language), programmes that are designed according to specific pedagogical principles (e.g. Waldorf childcare centres) or catholic childcare centres programmes.

Primary education

Primary education is obligatory and is offered by primary schools, primary schools with adapted programme, music schools and institutions for education of children with special needs. Primary education for adults is organized in primary schools for adults and in folk high schools. International school is organised for foreigners.

The duration of primary education is 9 years and it is divided into three three-year periods. Children enter the first year of primary school at the age of 6.

Primary school is cost-free for children and youth, except the school requisites, workbooks or the contribution for the use of school books. They mostly pay for meals themselves, but the cost of transportation is covered by the municipalities.

Secondary education

Secondary education comprises education after the completed primary education, and is divided into general education and vocational and technical education.

General secondary education

General secondary education is provided in general grammar school programmes or in professionally oriented grammar school programmes (e.g. art, sports, etc.). Education in grammar school programmes is completed by specific external examination, called

matura (A level). General matura allows the students to enter all tertiary educational programmes.

Grammar school students who wish to enter the labour market, can acquire a qualification in the selected profession by attending one-year vocational course.

Vocational education

At the vocational educational level there are available lower vocational, vocational and secondary vocational programmes. For planning, programming and provision of vocational education responsibility is being shared between social partners (employers, unions) and the state which allows an increased influence of the labour market on the development and the extent of education within a specific profession.

Students, who have either completed the primary school or primary education with adapted programme for students with special needs, as well as all those who have been attending the primary school for nine years, but have not successfully completed it, can enter lower vocational educational programmes. These short secondary two years programmes, or two and a half years for those, who have not completed the primary school end up with the final examination. The final examination certificate allows them to enter employment or the first year of a three-year vocational school.

Students, who have successfully completed primary school can enter three-year vocational educational programmes. Education can be carried out by the vocational school, independently or jointly with the employer within a dual system. These three years programmes end up with a final examination as well. The final examination certificate allows the students to enter employment or continue education.

After completing three-year vocational school, education can be continued in two-year vocational and technical educational programmes. By successfully completing vocational matura, the students acquire secondary technical education.

After the completed three-year vocational school and three years of working experience, the individual may pass an examination for master craftsman, foreman or small business manager and thus acquire secondary school education equivalent to the secondary

technical education. If they additionally pass examinations in general subjects of the vocational matura examination, they may continue their studies in higher vocational education.

Secondary technical education

Secondary technical and other professional programmes, four years programmes, end up with vocational matura, allowing entering employment or continuing education at a higher vocational college or any other higher educational institution. Most university studies can also be entered with a passed vocational matura and an additional exam from a subject of the general matura, however for some of them a only passed general matura is required. For this purpose a one-year matura course has been organized, aiming to prepare students - who had completed secondary vocational or technical school or the third year of grammar school, have later on dropped out of school and stayed out for at least a year - for the general matura examination.

Higher vocational education

Higher vocational education complements tertiary education. Education and work are closely related, because a significant part of education is performed in companies. Are allowed to register all those who have successfully completed the matura, vocational matura or the final examination, or who have passed the general part of the vocational matura and a master craftsman, foreman or small business manager exam. Higher vocational education includes two years programmes and ends up with the diploma exam. The diploma grants employment merely in some professional areas. The graduates of higher professional colleges may continue their studies in the second year of higher educational programme, if they meet the entrance requirements and if a higher education institution provides programme of the kind.

Higher education

Higher education encompasses higher educational programmes, university undergraduate programmes and postgraduate master and doctoral programmes.

Professional higher education study programmes are three years programmes and provide students with professional knowledge that is more applicable and employment

oriented. Practical training in the working environment is mandatory in these study programmes.

University study programmes are intended for academic work and scientific research. These programmes may include practical training in the working environment or cooperation in research. They are four, five or six year programmes, depending of every specific study programme.

Master's degree programmes make it possible for students to deepen their knowledge in wider professional areas and train their ability for looking for new sources of knowledge in the professional and scientific areas, and for using scientific research methods in the broader spectre of issues. An obligatory part of these programmes are project assignments in the working environment or basic, applied or developmental research tasks.

Doctoral study programmes enable students to achieve more comprehensive and deeper knowledge of the theoretical and methodological concepts and competence for independent knowledge development and solving of the most complex issues by testing, improving or looking for new solutions. An obligatory part of these programmes are also basic or applied research assignments.

Higher educational programmes are being modified and adapted according to the Bologna reform, which will be completed by the academic year 2009/10. The new structure is as follows:

- The first, undergraduate level will keep the binary system, i.e. two types of study programmes: university and higher professional educational programmes;
- At the second, postgraduate level there will be one type of study programmes, master's study programmes;
- The third postgraduate level is the doctoral study.

On various levels, the duration of study and possibilities of transfer into higher levels will be changed.

Special needs education

Special needs education is organized in form of special departments of childcare centres for children with severe mental and physical disorder. Primary education is performed in primary schools with adapted programmes for children with slight mental deficiency and in departments for children with moderate and severe mental deficiency. They are educated according to a special programme, and are usually employed in daily working centres.

In secondary schools and training institutions, education follows adapted lower and secondary vocational educational programmes. Training institutions provide education from pre-school to secondary school level and daily care, as well as all the necessary medical services. Children with learning difficulties are educated in regular schools and have organized various forms of individual and group assistance. Chronically ill children visit hospital schools during their stay at the hospital.

Children, pupils and students with special needs also enrol in regular educational departments. These are mostly the children with sensory disabilities and behaviour disabilities.

Music and dance education

Music schools may be attended by pre-school children, primary school pupils, secondary school students, students and adults. Music and dance education are most commonly carried out at the same time as the compulsory primary education. The programmes of basic music and dance education are offered by public and private music schools, registered at the Ministry of Education and Sport. After completing the primary school and simultaneous musical education, the students may continue in the same way in secondary school, or enter an art grammar school.

Adult education

Adult education encompasses education, additional training, training of persons, who are re-entering education or learning after finishing initial education and wish to acquire, update, widen or deepen their knowledge.

Adult education can be divided into formal and non-formal education and informal learning. With formal education it is possible to acquire nationally recognized qualifications, vocational qualifications or other nationally recognized document, while non-formal education or learning is intended for acquiring, refreshing, widening, updating and deepening of knowledge, and does not provide a nationally recognized certificate. Informal learning means learning from social and physical environment. The prevailing method is learning through experience. It is spontaneous, usually not specifically planned and appears as a parallel, supplementary part of different activities and is a part as well of everyday life as of lifelong learning and education.

Adult education providers are folk high schools and other organizations for adult education (private, associations, etc.). Schools and higher education institutions for youth may also provide formal and non-formal adult education, adapting organization and programmes to the needs of the adults, e.g. primary school for adults, vocational and matura course, part-time higher professional college study, higher education part-time study, etc. Non-formal adult education is provided by other organizations as well, however, they provide it as side activity, main activity being something else like: educational centres in companies, organizations in the area of culture, politics, leisure time and others.

Various providers are developing alternative non-formal educational programmes, intended for special target groups, e.g. project learning for young adults (PLYA), Third Age University, Literacy programmes, etc. Non-formal educational programmes differ in duration, entrance requirements, flexibility of the curriculum, etc. After the completed education certificates or special licences are delivered.

Certificate system

In the year 2000 the certification system was legalised within the competence of the Ministry for Labour, Family and Social affairs. The system gives the opportunity to adults to acquire vocational qualifications through a specific procedure of assessment and accreditation of knowledge and skills and experiences, acquired outside the formal education. The candidates can be granted a publicly recognized certificate after their competences for performing specific profession or a set of tasks in a particular profession, have been assessed by specific commission. National vocational qualifications, acquired in the certification system, are intended for employment and do not provide any higher educational level.

GUIDANCE IN SLOVENIA

INTRODUCTION TO THE PRESENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

In the development of the information and guidance activities so far, two ministries in particular played an important role so in defining the policy as in ensuring opportunities for development and implementation: the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. In the future development a greater influence of other ministries like Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of the Economy, Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy, etc. is expected.

Several public institutions are especially important for professional development and support of implementation of specific activities in Slovenia: Employment Agency of Slovenia, National Educational Institute, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, National Institute for Vocational Education and Training, CMEPIUS – Centre for Mobility and European Education and Training Programmes and other state institutions, like all the three universities – in Ljubljana, Maribor and Koper, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Chamber of Craft of Slovenia, etc.

Numerous expert practitioners in childcare centres, schools, faculties, employment agencies, adult education institutions, non-governmental organizations (e.g. youth centres), etc. are directly responsible for carrying out the information and guidance activities. More than 1,000 experts, counsellors are employed within these activities; most of them with a university degree in a branch of social sciences with additionally completed specific training.

Further on we are shortly presenting the following activities:

- Counselling work in kindergartens, schools and student residence halls,
- Career guidance within the frame of the Employment Agency of Slovenia and other organisations,
- Information and counselling for youth on parallel path,
- General information and counselling for youth,
- Tutoring and career guidance for students,
- Guidance in adult education.

Counselling in childcare centres, schools and student residence halls

Tanja Bezić

On the national level, counselling in childcare centres, schools and residence halls is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Sport. The legal basis for these activities is stipulated in Article 67 of the Organisation and Financing of Education Act (Off. Gaz. of the RS; 12/96). The professional grounds are specified in Programme guidelines for the work of school counselling service (Expert Board for General Education of the Republic of Slovenia, 1999).

Advisers acquire their education in an undergraduate programme of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana or of the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana or Maribor.

Development and counselling work for counselling services in childcare centres, schools and student residence halls is performed by the National Educational Institute of the Republic of Slovenia. The counselling providers are childcare centres, primary schools, grammar schools, secondary vocational and technical schools, student residence halls and other institutions. Counselling practitioners may be psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, social workers and defectologists, with a university degree, accomplished prior apprenticeship programme and acquired specific external professional examination. In the 2006/07 academic year, over 800 advisers have been employed: approx. 60 in independent childcare centres, 600 in primary schools, 140 in secondary schools, 10 in student residence halls and in 30 other institutions.

The primary goal of the childcare centre or school counselling service is child's optimal development, regardless of sex, social and cultural origin, religion, nationality and physical and mental constitution. The main aim of the kindergarten or school counselling service is to **help and cooperate** with the prime purpose which is to allow children and teachers to succeed in realization of the basic programme, and within this frame all the other general and specific educational goals, system originated.

The kindergarten or school counselling service performs interdisciplinary designed professional work in order to support and cooperate with all the participants in the childcare centre or school – children, students, apprentices, educators, teachers, management, parents and also competent external institutions, if necessary. With specific expert knowledge, **with counselling relation** and professional autonomy, it participates in comprehensive solving of pedagogical, psychological and social issues in childcare centre or school education.

It provides three primary activities:

- Support;
- Development and preventive measures;
- Planning and evaluation.

In providing these services, the counselling service supports and participates in:

- Teaching and learning (or playing and teaching in childcare centre);
- School culture, education, creating the right atmosphere and establish order and discipline (or culture, education, creating the atmosphere and establishing order in childcare centre);
- Physical, personal (cognitive and emotional) and social development;
- Education and career guidance (or accepting children in the childcare centre and their transfer to school);
- Severe socio-economic circumstances.

More information is available at: <http://www.zrss.si/>

Career guidance within the Employment Agency of Slovenia and Vocational Information and Counselling Centres

Zlata Šlibar

In the working area of the directorate [labour market and employment](#) within the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs the Employment Agency of Slovenia (EGS) is the implementing organization. The EGS is an independent legal entity with public institute status, acting in the whole area of the Republic of Slovenia. Among other tasks, the EGS also provides career guidance, comprising different activities and intending to support the individual in making and realizing educational and career decisions.

Specific attention is given to career guidance for youth and unemployed, in order to increase employability so of younger as of adults. More and more the attention focuses on counselling for lifelong learning, which encompasses different ways of acquiring knowledge (retraining, National Vocational Qualifications – NVQ) and experience, also in deficit vocations, thus contributing to improvement of the situation within the frame of structural unemployment.

Career guidance comprises different activities, aiming to support the individual in the making and realizing of educational and career decisions. Career guidance, provided by the EGS, allows users to:

- Access information on employment, education and training, e.g. by providing detailed specifications of professions and with help of the programme “Drugače o poklicih” (Seeing the professions differently), allowing them to learn about jobs and talking to the employed in specific professions;
- Find out their interests, competences, advantages and link them with the labour market and education opportunities; e.g. with the help of the interactive programme “Kam in kako” (Where and how) and the workbook “Poklicni kažipot” (Career pathway), intended for pupils in the process of choosing their profession and further education (published by the EGS in cooperation with the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training);
- Meet the strategies for overcoming obstacles, particularly important for those, who have been seeking employment for some time; thus raising their self-confidence,

their motivation for planning and implementing the activities, leading towards the employment, and stimulating them to achieve it;

- Acquiring skills for transition into the labour market (job seeking skills) or into education (learning strategies);
- To recognize the need for support in career planning in team meetings, together with primary school counsellors, and to provide a part of this support.

Career counsellors work in all local offices of the EGS across Slovenia and in Vocational Information and Counselling Centres (VIGC). The first pilot centre was established as a result of the PHARE project, and was opened on 1. 12. 1998 as a part of an EGS, acting as national and international coordinator in addition to the regional role. To facilitate cooperation with the European Commission, the EGS management established, the National Vocational Information and Counselling Centre (NVIGC) in spring 1999, as special organizational unit of the EGS Central office. The principal role of the NVIGC is to facilitate the flow of important information among various partners and users in the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres, and to offer unified standard and expert support to organizational units of these centres all over Slovenia. NVIGC is a member of the European EUROGUIDANCE network (<http://www.euroguidance.net/index.htm>), operating within the frame of the European Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm) - Directorate for Education and Culture. It provides information on training, education and opportunities for career guidance in other 32 European members of the network, communicating information about the same kind of opportunities in Slovenia. It also takes care of the Slovenian pages of the PLOTEUS website (<http://europa.eu.int/ploteus/portal/home.jsp>).

By the end of October 2006, the network of the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres has expanded to all local offices of the EGS. Lately, several centres have begun to participate in the project Centres for Lifelong Learning. Some centres work with other partners, mostly libraries. More information is available at: www.ess.gov.si/NCIPS.

All informational material, referring to education, training and employment is gathered in the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres. This means the information on job specifications, education and training opportunities, scholarships and other possibilities of financial support, needs for workers, employer directories and so on. The centres also offer tools for self-assessment and computer programme for career planning. They aim

to offer information to customers who are independent and competent enough for getting information and career planning by themselves (self service system).

The career counsellors from the Employment Agency of Slovenia are either permanently or periodically present in the centres in addition to the information staff; they offer counselling to those, for whom the self-service methods are not sufficient, who need some additional support in career planning, or an extra commentary on the test results, etc.

By law, the target groups of the centres are: unemployed, employed, schoolchildren, parents, drop-outs, employees whose employment is at risk and others, who need this kind of information. Along with individual information and counselling, the centres also offer group services to youth and adults: presentations of different professions, workshops on the labour market and job seeking.

More information is available at:

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs: <http://www.mddsz.gov.si>

Employment Service of Slovenia: <http://ess.gov.si>

Career guidance within other organizations

In the last couple years the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and Chamber of Craft of Slovenia have begun to participate more actively in development of the career guidance. Both chambers mostly promote new activities for presentation of professions in their areas of work and the development of new approaches in career guidance for children and youth.

More information on activities is available at the websites of both chambers: <http://www.gzs.si>; <http://www.ozs.si/>.

The National Institute for Vocational Education and Training also participates in promotion of professions, cooperating with all the secondary vocational and technical schools: <http://www.cpi.si>.

Career guidance is also offered by an increasing number of private organizations in Slovenia. They are easy to find by entering the phrase "karierno svetovanje" into any of the internet search engines.

Information and counselling for young in the parallel path

Mojca Polak

The Ministry of Education and Sport is in charge for the implementation and financing of the Information and Counselling for Youth on the Parallel Path (ISM). The National Institute for Vocational Education and Training is a coordinator while the regional implementation of the activity was entrusted to six organizations, selected through the public tender of the Ministry of Education and Sport in 2004. They are as follows: the Information and Vocational Counselling Centres in Ljubljana, Maribor, Koper, Velenje and Kranj (all organizational units of the EGS) and a private organization Smeri from Ravne na Koroškem. Each of the listed organizations has a full time expert in information and counselling for youth.

Information and counselling for youth in the parallel path is the most recent guidance network in Slovenia. It was established because a great number of young people, after dropping out of school, never entered any other forms of education or the labour market for that matter, and were thus on the edge of being socially excluded. An additional motive were the recommendations of the European Commission; the Commission encourages the development of new, innovative forms of counselling, particularly for groups, rejecting formal, institutional provision of counselling and are for a counselling profession a constant challenge and inspiration.

The work of the network between the years 2004 – 2006 is embedded into the Unified Programme Document 2004–2006, activity "Developing and expanding the network of ICT supported by local/regional counselling centres and vocational counselling centres". It is financially covered by the funds from the European Social Fund.

The main purpose of the network is to support the youth in overcoming obstacles on the path of re-entering education or labour market. After having monitored the activities of the centres for year and a half, the results show that 826 young people were seeking information while 130 entered counselling.

The counselling method, used in the ISM network, is comprehensive information and counselling – so called total counselling; in Slovenia, this is a new term, in other

environments it has been in use since the 90's of the last century. It is individual information and counselling, differing from the established and developed forms of counselling in basing its approach on individual's overall life situation and his or her personal life goals. It focuses on improving the quality of life of the young person, as stated in the concept of child's and civil rights. From the organizational viewpoint, the development of counselling services with holistic orientation can be seen as a form of creating connections between the existing counselling services for youth and other additional activities, or as a path to development of new forms of support for the individual. Counselling according to the ISM method is provided by qualified counsellors with a university degree, who had also completed 120 hours of additional training.

The primary target group for the Information and Counselling for Youth in the Parallel Path programme, consists of young people, aged between 15 and 27, who have no student status,

- Those who after dropping out of primary or secondary school do not decide to enter any other forms of education or the labour market;
- Those who have been in the labour market for some time i.e. registered with the Employment Agency of Slovenia but have later on dropped out too, cancelled their registration or were officially deleted from the register for not performing their duties as a registered job seeker.

The secondary target group are the youngsters who still have a student status formally, but do not attend the school any more.

More information is available at: <http://ism.cpi.si>

General information and counselling for youth

Ljubo Raičević

General information and counselling comprises all the topics youth are interested in, encompassing a range of activities: information offering, counselling, advising, guiding, supporting, assisting in personal issues, training, networking and referring to specific services. These activities may be performed by Youth Information Centres or other forms of services for information of youth and may also be accessible in electronic or other media.

The system is user oriented, meaning that the information centres are a starting point, where young people can ask questions according to their needs. Since this kind of centres deal with a wide range of issues, they are organized in a way that they can directly tackle them while other, specialized information centres (e.g. zdravje, Evropa, specialized information services, etc.) cannot.

The informational centre can provide contacts of other centres who can upgrade the basic information with counselling, as for example: career guidance, youth discount card, concert tickets, low-cost accommodation, youth activity centres and support in organization of youth projects. Information-counselling centres should first of all answer the questions and respond to the needs of the users, regardless of any external interest. Information-counselling centres are organized in a way they can train the users to increase the possibility of choice and respect their autonomy.

The characteristics of information and counselling centres are based on the European Youth Document or on national standards and the documents where they are available.

These characteristics are:

- Youth information centres and services are available to all young people with no exceptions;
- Youth centres and services aim to ensure equal access to information to all young people, regardless of their situation, heritage, sex, religion or social category; Special

attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups and young people with special needs;

- Youth centres and services should be easily accessible, the candidates should be able to enter with no prior appointment. They should be attractive and their atmosphere agreeable. Working hours should conform to the needs of youth.
- The available information should match the requirements of youth and their needs for information we identify among them. The information should include all the topics that might be of interest to the youth with a possibility to add new topics whenever necessary;
- Every user is expected to be treated with respect - as an individual, all the answers should be conformed to his/her personal needs. Support should be given in a way to enhance the user's autonomy and develop his/her ability to analyse, process and use the information;
- The information services for youth are free of charge;
- .While transmitting the information, the users' privacy should be respected, same as their right not to reveal their identity if they do not want to;
- The professional information can be given merely by qualified staff.
- The provided information should be as thorough as possible, current (up-to-date), accurate, practical and user-friendly;
- All the necessary steps should be taken to ensure the objectivity of information, they should be acquired from various, verified sources;
- The provided information should be independent from religious, political, ideological or commercial influence;
- With their services the youth information centres should try to reach as many young people as possible, so that their help can be efficient and suitable for different groups and needs. The centres should be innovative and creative in choosing strategies, methods and tools;
- Young people should get the opportunity to appropriately cooperate in different phases of youth information on the local, regional, national and international level. Among others, this means to recognize the needs of the youth, to prepare and disseminate information, to manage and evaluate information services and projects and to cooperate in peer group work;

- Youth information centres should cooperate with other youth services and structures, particularly inside their geographical space, and should link with mediators and other bodies that work with the youth;
- Youth information centres and services should assist the youth in getting information that is available through modern information and communication technologies and in development of their abilities to use this information;
- Neither of the financing sources for the youth information should with its actions hinder the work of the youth information centre or the provision of services or hinder the implementation of any principles of this document.

More information is available at:

Youth Information and Counselling Centre of Slovenia: <http://www.miss.org/>.

Tutoring and career guidance for students

Vanja Vučetić Dimitrovski

Compared to other European countries, the analyses of higher education development show that in Slovenia we lag behind in ensuring opportunities of counselling for students in universities or individual faculties.¹ Certain forms of counselling have been developed in the past years, within some student organizations or within individual faculties, but the area has not been dealt with yet, at least not in a systematic or comprehensive way. In different reports on the work at the faculties - in the last few years mostly in the reports on the quality of work - it has often been stressed this is one of the drawbacks and students do require a comprehensive support while studying. Recently, relatively much has been done to improve medical care, psycho-social support and economic status of the students. A specific support of their study process has still not been properly taken of. Two aspects are important in this:

- Tutoring and
- Career guidance.

In 2006, the University in Ljubljana made a comprehensive analysis of the situation in tutoring and career guidance in all the member faculties (22 members have answered the questionnaire). The analysis should contribute to the introduction of tutoring system and career centres at the member faculties. This is also one of the goals of the Strategy of the University in Ljubljana, which was adopted by the Senate of the university on 19. 6. 2006. The University will attempt to stimulate the implementation of the study programmes in accordance with the Bologna reform with different forms of counselling for the students. These support services for students during their studies score very highly in external evaluations. Unsatisfactory efficiency of the study (low ratio between the registered students and graduates), worsening ratio between the number of students and teachers and neglect of extracurricular activities of students show the benefits of the potential introduction of the **tutoring system** at the member faculties. In the sub-strategy 8.7, the Senate of the University in Ljubljana has anticipated the implementation

¹ Also the study on the analysis of the situation in the area of policy and career guidance system that was performed in 2002 under the guidance of the Employment Agency of Slovenia as a part of the ETF study on the situation of this area in European countries warns about this.

of the tutoring model, aiming to develop a coherent approach, through which the University members could more easily include newcomers into the studies and university life and support them in solving studying and living issues during their education.

In its strategy, the University in Ljubljana emphasizes the enhancing of the applicability and transfer of knowledge; in this, **career centres** can be a contact point between the students and the expertise. The counsellors within the centres know in detail with the contents of study programmes and the competences that are to be acquired by the student during his/her studies - they regularly monitor the employability of the graduates and keep in touch with them. In order to link members with the companies and other employers as much as possible, the career centres should systematically offer information on staff needs and employment opportunities. At the same time, the counsellors of the career centres should offer opportunities to students to attend courses and workshops for acquiring employability skills and thus facilitating the transfer to employment.

The feasibility study at the member faculties of the University in Ljubljana has shown that about a third of the members already have introduced the system of tutoring (however with different approaches), while career counselling is only available at the Faculty of Economics. In future, the tutoring same as career counselling should be implemented at all member faculties in a systematically planned way. It is expected that other member faculties like the University in Maribor and University in Koper will follow, as some member faculties of both universities have already implemented forms of tutoring and career counselling.

More information is available from:

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Guidance centres for adult education

Andreja Dobrovoljc, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

At the national level, the responsibility of Guidance Centres for Adult Education lies within the Ministry of Education and Sport. The centres are financed by the funds of the ministry and from the European Social Fund. The legal basis and the norms for the development of guidance in adult education has been defined by the Adult Education Act (1996) and by the Order on Standards and Norms in Adult Education (2000), while the professional basis has been defined by the Resolution on the National Programme of Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia to 2010 (2004).

Professional development, monitoring and assistance of operating of the network of 14 guidance centres are under the responsibility of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. At the regional level, the public adult education organizations (folk high-schools), being responsible for delivering of guidance services, have been selected as the site of the guidance centre by the public tender of the Ministry of Education and Sport.

First Guidance Centres for Adult Education were established in 2001, followed by the next ones in years 2002 and 2005, when the development of the network of 14 guidance centres was completed. The next phase of development will be the establishment of so called dislocations. The guidance centre will operate outside its location, where the need will arise and where the local environment will show interest. In 2006 more than 20 dislocations have been operating, most of them established within the Centres for Lifelong Learning.

The work of guidance centres has two basic goals:

- All the adults should be granted the access to a free of charge, quality, professional and comprehensive information and guidance as a support of their education and learning;
- It should link as many providers of education and counselling for adults as possible, in the local area into a network, and thus guarantee a quality, comprehensive and coordinated work of all the subjects for information and

counselling in adult education (in the form of local guidance networks for adult education, operating in every guidance centre).

The Guidance Centres for Adult Education should provide information and counselling before enrolling in education, during the education and learning, at the time of completion of the education as well as after it. The counsellors support the adults in identifying their needs for education, in looking for relevant opportunities for education and learning, in developing of the learning skills for managing the learning processes and teach them how to learn. They encourage and motivate the adults to learn, support them in overcoming issues, connected to education and learning, represent them in other institutions while looking for additional information and forms of assistance, assist them in designing learning and its organization, evaluation of what has been achieved, etc. The work of counsellors in counselling centres is complex and organized in various ways: it can be delivered personally, over the telephone, in writing (regular mail or e-mail) and also through the information material. It may be organized individually or in group, at the guidance centre or outside of it.

Over 30 experts participated in the guidance centres in 2006, with various extent of work assignments. All of them have university degrees in different areas (education, adult education, social pedagogy, psychology, social services, sociology, and human resource management) and have been specifically trained for work in guidance centres. This training has been provided by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education as well as by other organizations.

Information and counselling in Guidance Centres for Adult Education is intended for and equally accessible to all adults in the local area where it operates, with special attention given to all disadvantaged groups of adults in the local area, those who normally have difficult access to education, are undereducated and less active in education. The annual data show that 10 percent of all clients in the guidance centres are young people (mostly secondary school students and university students).

More information is available at: <http://isio.acs.si>

Counselling within the system of acquiring of national vocational qualifications (NVQ)

Mojca Polak

At the national level, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs is responsible for the certification system while the professional development is mostly in the hands of the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. In the performance of some professional tasks of development and monitoring of the certification system the National Examination Centre and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education participate as well. The direct providers of the certification system are experts, who are qualified specifically for these tasks: the national vocational qualifications counsellors and assessors in the process of assessment and accreditation of every particular vocational qualification.

The legal basis of the certification system has been defined by the National Vocational Qualifications Act (last amendment in 2006) and by the Rules on the Way and Proceedings of Assessment and Accreditation of the National Vocational Qualifications.

The Lisbon Strategy anticipates a significant increase in education and qualification levels of the European population. One of the mechanisms for achieving this goal is the introduction of process of assessment and accreditation of previously acquired knowledge. This means that the participants can acquire a nationally recognised certificate on their knowledge and skills, acquired in different ways and in different environments, provided they meet the pre-set standards. In Slovenia, the process for assessment and accreditation of formerly acquired knowledge has been implemented mostly within the system of assessment and accreditation of national vocational qualifications. The system of assessment and accreditation of these qualifications requires from the organization that providing the process of assessment and accreditation of national vocational qualifications the assurance of counselling for the participants in the process. The counselling activity for the national vocational qualifications works normally as an additional activity of experts of different profiles who had been trained for this work at the Centre for vocational education of Slovenia or the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. It is a rather complex activity - the provider is supposed to know, besides the area of work for which the candidate wants to acquire the national vocational qualification, all about the counselling skills. The activity includes

the following activities: informing the candidate on the process of assessment and accreditation of national vocational qualifications, guidance in selecting the area and level of difficulty for the accreditation of national vocational qualifications, support in collecting evidence for previously acquired knowledge and skills, assessment of the relevance of the evidence, informing the candidate about the knowledge and skills which could be recognized and about the gaps to be filled, and where the missing knowledge and skills could be acquired, assisting the candidate in building up the portfolio and giving support in overcoming of obstacles that the candidate may face on his/her path to acquire the national vocational qualification.

The counsellors for national vocational qualifications are usually employed in organizations that assess a certain vocational qualification or in guidance centres for adult education. By 2006, 292 counsellors for national vocational qualifications were trained.

More information is available at:

- Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs: <http://www.mdds.gov.si>
- National Institute for Vocational Education and Training: <http://www.cpi.si>
- National reference point for NVQ: <http://www.nrpslo.org>
- National Examination Centre: <http://www.ric.si>
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education: <http://www.acs.si>

Guidance for adult education and learning in other organizations

Information and guidance for supporting adults in their education and learning is today provided in virtually all educational organizations for adults; they are mostly linked to the programmes and activities that are provided to adults by the individual organization. Counselling is becoming increasingly common also in the forms of education that are offered as e-learning or organized as individual learning, supported by the information-communication technology (ICT).

Here, as well, the forms of information and counselling, provided as support to the learning adult in work organizations, as a part of the human resource development, need to be put in light. The data show that this activity is more comprehensively and

systematically developed in large organizations, and less in smaller ones, therefore their employees often seek information and counselling outside the work organization, in Guidance Centres for Adult Education, in Centres for Vocational Counselling and Information, in private organizations providing career guidance, etc.

More information is available at:

- <http://www.acs.si/pregled/> (Overview of the providers of adult education programmes)
- On different websites, by entering "karierno svetovanje" into the search engine.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS FOR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE IN LIFELONG LEARNING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN SLOVENIA BETWEEN THE YEARS 1995 - 2005

Mojca Polak

Simultaneously with various activities in the national environment, many organizations and individuals have been cooperating with colleagues from the European Union in looking for and developing of new, improved solutions for facing the challenges, appearing in information and counselling activities for lifelong learning and career development, along the realization of the lifelong learning concept and ambitiously set up Lisbon goals. The cooperation was either a part of the Phare programme or a part of Community programmes Leonardo da Vinci (LdV), Socrates and Grundtvig. Several new methods of work, training programmes, information-communication technologies tools and manuals - very welcome in Slovenia - have been developed. Some results have also initiated and set certain professional areas in counselling and thus contributed a great deal to their further development.

Here, we will only shortly present some of the successful achievements through the European projects. Therefore we have listed merely the basic data, principal achievements and addresses that provide further information on selected projects.

The projects were sorted in the following way:

1. Projects, intended to increase inclusion into education and work among socially underprivileged persons;
2. Projects that focus particularly on finding employment goals and counselling in the so called transition periods;
3. Projects that focus on guidance in adult education;
4. Projects, intended for development of innovative content, services and practices that are based on information-communication technology;
5. Projects, intended for monitoring and analysis of policies and systems in guidance.

1. Projects, intended to increase inclusion into education and work among socially underprivileged persons.

Total Counselling (LdV project)

Project coordinator: Hitt Husid, Iceland. Project partner in Slovenia: National Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

Project achievements: Handbook Total Counselling, comparing of models of counselling for youth on parallel path in United Kingdom, Italy, Iceland and Slovenia. The handbook is the basis for the implementation of the network Information and Counselling for Youth in the Parallel Path in Slovenia.

Information: National Institute for Vocational Education and Training, <http://cpi.ism.si>

Introduction of career guidance for refugees, sanctuary seekers and migrants (LdV project)

Project coordinator: University of Glasgow, United Kingdom. Project partner in Slovenia: Institute for Ethnic Studies.

Achievements: A website for all who work with refugees, sanctuary seekers and migrants, offering information on education and employment. E-training course for people who work with refugees, sanctuary seekers or migrants.

Information: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/rg>

An integrated method of counselling, education and employment (ICTEM) (LdV project)

Project coordinator: Kadis, Kadrovsko izobraževalni inženiring d. o. o., Slovenia.

Project achievements: developed methodology Integrated method of counselling, education and employment, and training, according to the developed methodology. This methodology has become one of practical methods for training young unemployed persons with low level of education within the programmes of active employment policy.

Information: <http://www.kadis.si/sub/images/ictem.pdf>

2. Projects that focus particularly on finding employment goals and counselling in the so called transition periods

Pika na I (Phare project, later ESS)

Project coordinator: Velenje School Centre, Slovenija.

Project achievements: special information points, offering information on opportunities for further education and job vacancies with various employers have been established in 6 vocational and technical schools.

Information: <http://www.scv.si>

Promoting vocational training with vocational education in primary schools (Phare project, later ESS)

Project coordinator: Izida, Ljubljana.

Achievements: developed methods for vocational education of primary school students, first tested in 2 schools, later in 30.

Information: <http://www.izida.si>

Here we list also some other projects of the private institution Izida where innovative methods for vocational decision making for various target groups, have been developed.

Research and development project In-depth preparing of children and youth for the choice of their profession (project of Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs)

Achievements: a model of career guidance for all age groups of children and youth. The model is published in the handbook "The choice of the right profession" (Izbira pravega poklica). One of the methods, known as method "careers from another point of view", (drugače o poklicih) has later on been successfully tested in cooperation with the Employment Agency of Slovenia, and is now part of the national programme of career information at the EGS.

Information: <http://www.izida.si>

The projects "Social integration of children and youth" and "Discovering personal potential and career planning"

Achievements: a method of creative workshops for the underprivileged youth target group.

Information: <http://www.izida.si>

3. Projects that focus on guidance in adult education

Counselling in adult education/AGETT – training of counsellors (LdV project).

Project coordinator: Faculty of Education from Tallinn, Estonia. Project partner in Slovenia: National Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

Project achievements: a 40-hour programme of guidance in adult education. Individual modules are used in training of counsellors for adult education, provided by the SIAE, and in training of counsellors for assessment and accreditation of national vocational qualifications.

Information: <http://www.cpi.si>

4. Projects, intended for development of innovative content, services and practices that are based on information-communication technology

ICT career compass (LdV project)

Project coordinator: FIT Limited, Ireland. Project partner in Slovenia: Kadis Kadrovske izobraževalni inženiring d. o. o.

Achievements: a handbook for tutors in the area of information-communication technology, a guide on career paths in the area of career-communication technology, a guide on certificates in the area of computer science and information technology, paths towards national certificates, handbook "Keeping employment" (Obdržimo zaposlitev).

Information: <http://www.kadis.si>

VirtuOrientation (LdV project)

Project coordinator: Velenje School Centre, Slovenia.

Achievements: First Slovenian website that offers in one place comprehensive information on the supply of information and employment, also with links to web pages. Information is intended to assist in discovering users' interests and abilities. Besides the website, a brochure has been published, presenting the contents of the website and a handbook, defining the ways of using computers in information and counselling, for

planning and managing career. Website is being updated with support of the European Social Fund's financing.

Information: <http://www.virtuorientation.net>

European Guidance & Counselling Research Forum, Supporting innovative counselling and guidance: Creating a dialogue between research and practice (LdV project)

Project coordinator: University of Warwick, United Kingdom. Project partner in Slovenia: Kadis Kadrovska izobraževalni inženiring d. o. o.

The project will be completed in September 2007.

Expected achievements: a website, intended for communication and development of new knowledge; it is a source of information and examples of good practice, as well as a source of information acquired in research projects, which may support counselling work.

Information: <http://www.guidance-europe.org>

5. Projects, intended for monitoring and analysis of policies and systems in counselling

Comparative and evaluation analysis of counselling services, intended for the unemployed and vulnerable groups of the employed in five European countries (LdV project)

Project coordinator: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Qualifications (CEREQ), France.

Project partner in Slovenia: University in Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Centre for Study of Organizations and Human Resources.

The project will be completed in September 2007.

Expected achievements: A comparative typology of counselling services, intended for the unemployed and for the vulnerable categories of employed workers. It will promote the development of the methodology for evaluation of counselling services.

Information: http://www.fh-darmstadt.de/guidance-in-europe/short_description.htm

EUROPEAN DIMENSION IN THE CAREER GUIDANCE POLICY

Saša Niklanović

The European policies have been paying a lot of attention to the so called career guidance² for the last years. The new definition of career guidance, introduced by the European Commission in 2004, quoted in this paper, is rather broad for it includes information and counselling activities in lifelong and lifewide learning. Our experts believe however, it still does not include all activities provided by school counselling services for example (dealing with asocial behaviour, addiction, and similar) or other organizations, like youth information centres. Career guidance thus applies mostly to the activities of information and counselling in different institutions and departments, related to the selection and implementation of educational and career goals. Here we have to keep in mind that in other member countries as well, the lines, separating specific activities, have not yet been clearly set.

Year 2000 brought a beginning of an important era in the development of career guidance in the European Union. In this period the idea of career guidance being an activity which can enormously contribute to the development of labour force and consequently to its competitiveness in global economy, became widely accepted. In this period, career guidance was given an important place in European policy documents, far more important than ever before in the history of the EU. More specific measures have followed through which the European Commission has attempted to enhance better cooperation among member states in these area, as well as better efficiency of the activities provided by different services being part of career guidance.

Resolution on Lifelong Career Guidance

The first issue that came up during the first attempts of cooperation in Europe, was a great difference between the systems and career guidance services, and above all the fact that there was no common terminology which is the first condition for any cooperation. This was the main reason for the Council of Europe in 2004, during the Irish presidency, to adopt the Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the area of Guidance throughout life in Europe.³ An important shift, brought on by the

resolution, is a common definition of the term "career guidance", which has been homogenised with other international organizations (OECD, World Bank). Career guidance is a term that comprises occupational, educational and employment guidance (information, counselling and other forms of guidance) and has placed all these activities within the context of lifelong learning. Below is quoted the definition from the resolution and also the footnote, which lists some of activities, being part of the career guidance:

"In the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities⁴ that enable citizens of all ages and at any point of their lives to identify their competences, potentials and interests for making educational, training and occupational decisions and for managing their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these potentials and competences can be learned and/or used."

The term career guidance has not been used in many countries before; therefore it is important first to come to unified understanding of it, since different interpretations could hinder the future development. The new term has also brought the issue of a suitable translation. The terms in use so far, (poklicna orientacija, poklicno svetovanje, izobraževalno svetovanje, etc.) do not present a suitable translation, because the definition expressly states that the term career guidance includes all of the above. We therefore needed a new term and within the National forum for career guidance (that will be presented later on) a decision has been made, to use the translation "karierna orientacija" as the "agreed term", however a special attention will be assigned to the terminology on the forum.

Besides the resolution, the European Commission has carried out more measures in the defined period, through which it has enhanced the development in this area. Between

³ Some Slovenian experts also call it in short the Resolution on Counselling in European Union.

⁴ "Examples of this kind of activities include information and advice giving, counselling, competence assessment, mentoring, advocacy, teaching decision-making and career management skills. In order to avoid ambiguity, since a variety of terms are being used in Member States to describe services in these activities, including educational, vocational or career guidance, guidance and counselling, occupational guidance/counselling services, etc., the term 'guidance' is used throughout this text to identify any or all of these forms of provision and Member States should interpret the term as referring to the appropriate provision in their own countries."

⁵The authors of the concept are: Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, M.A., Tanja Bezić M.A, Janez Čač, Andreja Dobrovoljc, Katja Dovžak M.A, Saša Niklanović, Mojca Polak, Ljubo Raičević, Zlata Šlibar.

2002 and 2004 it has carried out several studies on the policies and systems of career guidance in cooperation with other international institutions. One of these studies also deals with Slovenia. The results have shown that in many countries there is a gap between the expressed goals and the actual state. One of the identified deficiencies is also the fact that many member states do not have a clear policy set up in this area and that different sectors do not connect enough.

In December 2002 the European Commission created the Lifelong Guidance Expert Group which has prepared a number of propositions for inclusion of career guidance into all important documents of the European policy in the area of education (e.g. Education Goals 2010, Copenhagen declaration) and employment. The group has also defined the common European reference tools for career guidance. This tool has been defined by common principles of the activity performance, the common framework of quality assurance and the characteristics that are to become common to all services (systems) of career guidance in member states in the future. It has been published in two handbooks: "Improving lifelong guidance policies and systems" (published by CEDEFOP) and Career Guidance – Handbook for Policy Makers (published by the European Commission and OECD). Both handbooks have also been published in Slovenian language.

The next step is to start the implementation of new principles of common policy in career guidance at the level of member states. The first step of the kind has been the public tender for the establishment of National Guidance Policy Forums, financed by the programme for joint actions (Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates and Youth). Within the frame of two projects of the kind started in October 2004 and ended in September 2006, 11 members of the EU have established the national forums, aiming to ensure support to policy-makers in the area of career guidance. At the initiative of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia has joined one of these projects. In the beginning of 2006 the Slovenian National Guidance Policy Forum was established. It was coordinated by the Employment Agency of Slovenia. The objective of the forum is to invite all the institutions on national level that participate in financing, organizing, managing, coordinating and providing of activities of information and counselling and are incorporated into career guidance, to cooperate. The basic purpose of the forum is to provide suggestions for comprehensive solving of the issues of development and policy of career guidance in Slovenia.

The proof that future continued development of the European policy in the area of career guidance stands a chance is a recent event in the short history of the development of joint policy of career guidance from 2001 on. In November 2006 the European Commission announced that it would create the European Guidance Network, intended to start operating at the beginning of 2007. The network would continue with the activities that have been initiated by the Expert Group on Lifelong Guidance. The difference is that in the new network the role of national policy makers will be increased, compared to the 2001 – 2006 period, when the activities were carried out mostly with EC's initiative and the achievements were above all the already mentioned work of the expert group (handbooks, quality assurance frameworks, other reference tools, etc.). It seems that in 2007 the second phase of development of common European policy in the area of career guidance will continue, a special attention will be paid to the implementation of the common policy into the systems of member states. The carriers of the activity will be mostly member states that joined the network at the very beginning. The network will then later expand and eventually include all member states of the European Union.

Information and guidance in lifelong learning and career development in Slovenian strategic documents

Mojca Polak, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

We present a summary of the most important goals in Slovenian strategic documents that:

- Directly support and emphasize the importance of the development of counselling activities in lifelong learning and career development;
- Emphasize the development goals of economic and social development, the realization of which is the condition for efficient organization and provision of transversal support activities, among which are information and counselling in lifelong learning and career development.

In the overview it is important to start with the goals, tasks and activities that form presented the core for the development period 2001 – 2006, and then continue with priorities that will guide and affect the implementation of the activity in the period to come. The most important Slovenian strategic document for the development period 2001-2006 was **National development programme 2001 - 2006** (Ministry of the Economy, 2001), the initial basis for all the other operational documents which have enabled Slovenia, as a full member of the EU, to start the funding source from the European Social Fund in 2004 (in 2006 the draft for the National development programme 2007 – 2013 is ready).

In this document, counselling is presented in the second paragraph of the chapter "Development goals and development priority tasks", in the sub-chapter "Knowledge, human resource development and employment". Among others, there is a statement that »for efficient implementation of the lifelong learning concept, it is necessary to update the educational infrastructure (educational and training programmes, learning approaches, methods and environment) and to ensure that every individual can acquire basic knowledge along guidance and counselling support that is adapted to individual needs«. It is stressed that in order to improve accessibility and encourage inclusion in lifelong learning activities it is also important to ensure information on possibilities for education and training of the youth and adults (on national and local level) that is user friendly and of high quality.

As a professional strategic basis for using the funding sources from European structural funds, the **Unified Programming Document of the Republic of Slovenia 2004–2006** has been created. This document presents the operative basis for essential development processes in the activities of information and counselling in lifelong learning that have been in progress for the last two years. The second of three priority tasks in the SPD 2004 – 2006, "Knowledge, human resources development and employment" aims: to invest in knowledge, development of human resources and employment to create quality jobs, overcoming unemployment, encouraging social inclusion of persons with special needs, lifelong learning and development of skills and adaptability of human resources and further training of workers in the perspective sectors and those, undergoing restructuring. The counselling activity supports the development of all listed goals. The direct goals of development of this activity are listed under the third measure for realization of goals listed above (lifelong learning activity), they include: ensuring quality information, counselling and access to educational and training opportunities for everybody by spreading local/regional counselling centres and contact offices for lifelong learning, which should be realized by the development and expansion of the network of local/regional centres for lifelong learning supported by the information-communication technology. This ensures support for everyone participating in learning activities, vocational guidance for adults and youth, above all for women and persons with unfinished education, facilitating and enhancing the access to new forms of learning to non-formal learning in particular.

The period for activities set up in the SPD 2004–2006 is slowly approaching its final phase. In 2006 new basis for the acquisition of European funding in the period 2007 – 2013 were set up, originating from new strategic documents, adopted in 2005 and 2006: Strategy of development of Slovenia (2005), Framework of economic and social reforms for increasing prosperity in Slovenia (2005), National programme of reforms for achieving the goals of Lisbon strategy (2005), Resolution on national development projects 2007 – 2023 (2006) and from some documents that form professional frame for the development of individual counselling activities, adopted in the last years, as well as from successful achievements and recommendations from national and international projects, carried out in the last ten years.

In all these documents, the chapters that deal with "knowledge and human resources development" specifically stress the importance of ensuring quality counselling services, open to everybody. The society should develop in the direction of enhancing the opportunity for every human being to live a long, healthy and quality life. One of the starting points is increasing of education level and creativity and improving access to sources for a decent life – knowledge and information in particular, both needed for development and realization of personal potential.

On the basis of these strategic guidelines and specifically defined project, entitled "Development and expansion of network of local/regional guidance centres and vocational counselling centres, supported by information/communication technology" that was carried out between 2004 and 2006 and was financed by the European Social Fund, the "Concept of future development and networking of counselling activities in Slovenia (2006)⁵ was created. The concept is based on specific needs for information and counselling of the participants in educational processes and at the labour market and draws the path for a carefully planned, transparent and coherent development of both, as the individual counselling networks and as the whole activity in the next years. The most important suggestions are shortly presented in the next paper.

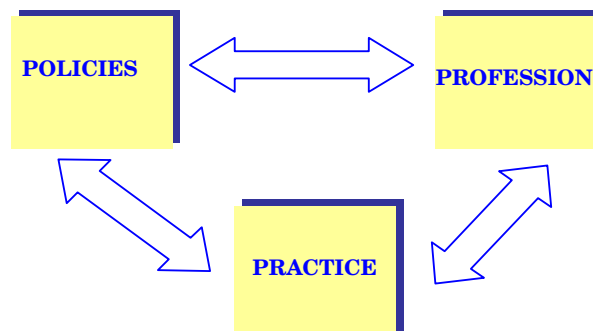
Most important schemes for future development and networking of the guidance activities in Slovenia

Mojca Polak, Tanja Vilič Klenovšek

The analysis of the development of guidance activities so far, has shown that the cooperation between different information and guidance activities was only partially efficient as the representatives from individual organizations often assess the issue from their own perspective and do not look for common solutions, suitable for all the participants and first of all for the individual for whom these activities are intended. The results show that the tradition and awareness of the necessity to cooperate has not been present yet, though it has to be said that for the last five years various organisations have been increasingly starting to connect and cooperate. This increasingly improved cooperation should be enriched with new links – this as well being apart of the learning process for all the included in these activities.

Some problems and common issues ask for comprehensive solving – which is only possible if everyone, concerned with these issues, is willing to cooperate. We must stress that for the continuing development of these areas, the cooperation of three areas is imperative (see figure):

- Policies – the ministries and national holders for professional development of the specific areas.
- Professions - who control the development.
- Practices - where information and counselling in different areas are directly implemented.



The suggestions for eliminating the identified drawbacks and deficiencies that might affect future development, cooperation and networking of the information and guidance activities and its networks, should encompass all the levels, the national and the regional or local level. Below some specific suggestions are listed.

1 POLICY

1.1 National level

- Cooperation and coordination between the policies that regulate this area and the national holders of these activities are necessary; the coordination between the two ministries is particularly important. the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Sport.
- National coordinating body should be established for enhancing, coordinating and creating of opportunities for development of information and guidance activities.
- Policy makers should support the development and research in this area in order to assist the further development of professions and practices with their findings. This will also enable the planning of the comprehensive development of this area.
- The policy must include guidance activities into their strategic documents and into their legislative and regulatory acts.
- Long-term state supported financing mechanisms for the basic amount of guidance activities provision need to be ensured, and at the same time also the mechanisms need to be set up that will stimulate the regions and local areas to invest in these activities.

1.2 Regional level

- Coordination of information and guidance activities in the processes of lifelong learning and career development needs to be taken care of on the regional level as well. These activities should be included in the coordination of regional human resources development activities, as they represent an important part of the implementation of regional goals for human resources development.;

- The regions or local areas should also provide regional or local funds for the development and implementation of information and guidance activities in the processes of lifelong learning and career development.

2 PROFESSIONS

2.1 National level

- The professions should be continually active in the preparation of suggestions for the policies and should be willing to cooperate in the established coordination (the national and regional), in joint national and international projects, in development of support for information-communication technology, etc.
- Although most of the "networks " in Slovenia are quite widely spread, the feasibility studies show that the access to services needs to be improved: by reducing the norms for school counselling (suggested one counsellor and 35 expert workers per 500 secondary school students); by ensuring adequate number of qualified staff in the information and vocational counselling activities, Youth Information and Counselling Centre of Slovenia, Information centre network and Information and counselling for young in the parallel path (ISM) in the regions where this activity is not yet provided (thus increasing access to drop-outs and youth; by providing possibilities for implementation of guidance activities (centres) in adult education, outside their seat; with flexible organization of activity provision in all the networks and linking between the networks; by developing tools, supported by the information-communication technology and better organization and coordination of databases; by directing attention of all networks towards more vulnerable groups of population.
- Joint monitoring and development of common and specific standards of quality need to be ensured: development of public minimal standards of quality; In setting up the methodology and evaluation, various participants, professional public, ministries and practitioners should participate, expert monitoring of professional public should be ensured, etc..

- A comprehensive national system for training of expert workers in guidance activities should be set up (development of new and specific competences for operation in individual fields) and developed.
- We also suggest several possible forms of cooperation among different guidance networks in the development in the area of information-communication technologies, databases and various instruments in guidance networks (joint website, unification and joint designing of databases, common to several guidance networks, e.g. websites »Virtuorientation«, PLOTEUS, etc.).

2.2 Regional level

- Monitoring of the efficiency of provided activity from the users point of view, needs to be developed.
- Cooperation and networking should be improved in order to make activities more efficient, of higher quality and more rational: regular exchange of experiences, joint promotion, joint professional meetings, inclusion in common projects. Only the activities of information and guidance may link, but also the links with other activities are possible, e.g. public tender for lifelong learning centres in 2005 (Ministry of Education and Sport and European Social Fund).

3. PRACTICES

3.1 Regional level

The presented suggestions at the levels of policies and professions at the national and regional level should also reflect the quality and efficiency of practical work (direct providers) on the regional, local and institutional level. The practice is directly supported by the holders of development of information and guidance activities in the processes of lifelong learning and career development, so on the national and as on the regional level (it is vital that the practice is continually supported by the professions and the policies on the national and regional level).

From the standpoint of practice development on the regional level, the importance of the following we are particularly stressing:

- Development of common methods for working with clients,
- Exchange of experiences acquired in working with the same target groups,
- Cooperation in promotion activities,
- Providing of the data about the needs of the users to the profession and the policy-makers,
- Mutual informing,
- Continuing professional training,
- Implementation of new, innovative projects and informing the profession on their effects,
- Implementation and carrying out of self-evaluation as part of the evaluation and quality development for counselling work at the regional and national level, etc.

The realization of listed tasks depends on:

- Realistic willingness and ability for cooperation – on the national and regional level, on the level of policies, professions, practices,
- Development of new knowledge, exchange of experiences, mutual trust in partnerships,
- Inclusion into European networks and compliance with European development guidelines, thus ensuring European mobility as well,
- Providing suitable own strategic and professional bases,
- Ensuring adequate financing and other options for development and implementation of information and guidance activities.

We would like to conclude with a thought: the development and networking of guidance activities are the key, leading to increased inclusion and successfulness of all citizens of Slovenia in the processes of lifelong learning and career development, from the kindergarten to the adult age, and an important contribution towards the creation of economic, social and cultural capital that is to be based on investment into the development of every citizen in Slovenia.

National Links

www.mss.gov.si	Ministry of Education and Sport
www.mvzt.gov.si	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
www.mddsz.gov.si	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
www.acs.si	Slovenian Institute for Adult Education
www.cpi.si	National Institute for Vocational Education and Training
www.cmepius.si	CMEPIUS – Centre for Mobility and European Programmes of Education and Training
www.ric.si	National Examination Centre
www.zrss.si	National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia
www.ess.gov.si	Employment Agency of Slovenia
www.ess.gov.si/NCIPS	Vocational Information and Counselling Centre
www.gzs.si	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
www.ozs.si	Chamber of Craft of Slovenia
www.uradzamladino.gov.si	Office of Youth of RS
www.misss.org	MISSS – Youth Information and Counselling Center of Slovenia
www.movit.si	MOVIT – Institute for Promotion of Youth Mobility
www.nrpslo.org	National occupational qualification reference point
www.mszs.si/eurydice	Eurydice Slovenia
europa.eu.int/ploteus/portal/home.jsp	PLOTEUS – Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space
www.virtuorientation.net	VIRTUORIENTATION – tool for assistance in making decisions on career, occupation
www.portalznanja.com	Portal of knowledge

International Links

www.eurydice.org	EURYDICE - The Information Network on Education in Europe
www.estia.educ.goteborg.se	Estia, a bridge to the European mobility, vocational training and education in Europe
portal.unesco.org/education	Unesco portal on rights in education
europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html	Education and training 2010
europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/ll/life/index_en.html	Making a European Area Of Lifelong Learning A Reality – EU website on lifelong learning
europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf	Draft Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance throughout life in Europe
www.europa.eu.int/eures/index.jsp	European Job Mobility Portal
www.eurodesk.org/new	EURODESK – European network of information services for the youth
http://europa.eu/youth	Europa.eu/youth - European Youth Portal
www.oecd.org/document	OECD web page – documents
www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Projects_Networks/Guidance	Cedefop – website for counselling
www.euroguidance.org.uk	Euroguidance
www.guidenet.org	Guidenet – European Network of expertise in the field of Guidance
www.iaevg.org	International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance – IAEVG
www.iccdpp.org	International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy – ICCDPP

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