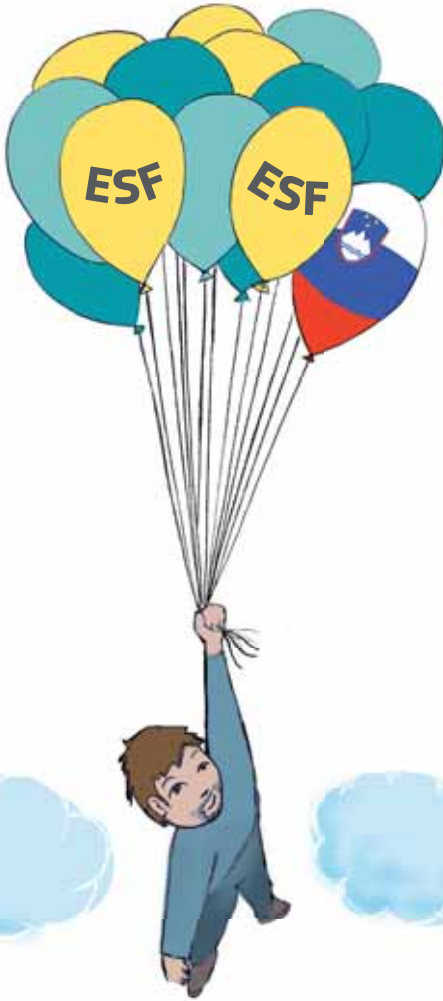




European
Commission



SLOVENIA

AND THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

Slovenia is using ESF funding to address two main challenges. First, it aims to give its workers, its older workers and its young people the skills to benefit from future economic growth. Second, the objective is to ensure that disadvantaged groups – including the Roma – are not left behind, by taking measures to enhance social cohesion.

*Social
Europe*

SLOVENIA

INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND JOBS: THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SLOVENIA

The Slovenian employment rate is forecast to recover slowly unless reforms are made to encourage more job creation. For this reason, Slovenia is boosting its efforts to improve the conditions in labour markets in favour of more and better jobs for its citizens. A further reason for helping more of its citizens to find jobs is the country's shrinking working-age population, which is forecast to fall from two-thirds to only half of the total population by 2060 if action is not taken. Therefore it is important to help older workers stay in their jobs longer while bringing more people into the workforce overall. This is also true for the young, many of whom are in temporary employment and need training opportunities to give them the valuable skills that sustainable jobs demand.

“By 2020, 40 % of young Slovenians will have higher education qualifications”

Although Slovenia has a relatively high proportion of graduates, unemployment in this group is rising and there are too few well-qualified researchers working in industry. This is a challenge as Slovenia is seeking to modernise its economy and achieve export-led growth, two goals that require a highly skilled workforce. To remedy this requires improvements to the education system to provide all young people with clear pathways into tertiary education that lead on to jobs and careers afterwards. So action is also needed to build better links between universities and the business world to ensure its young people are better equipped with the skills that match those sectors offering good job prospects. Slovenia is also supporting entrepreneurship and the creation of new companies – including by upgrading competences in the public administration such that it supports employment and enterprise.

ESF spending in Slovenia

For 2007-2013, Slovenia is receiving EUR 755 million in ESF funding. With national co-funding, this brings the total ESF spending on jobs to over EUR 889 million. ESF programme spending priorities are focused on education and training for job-seekers, promoting entrepreneurship, encouraging lifelong learning and reinforcing social inclusion, and improving the performance of public services.



SLOVENIA'S ESF PRIORITIES

Promoting better jobs

At the mid-point of the ESF programme in Slovenia, some 120 000 people had participated in a variety of projects and around 17 000 had found work. Successful projects to encourage entrepreneurship have been launched, such as the 'One-Stop-Shop' system which simplified the registration procedures for new companies and won the United Nations Public Service Award in 2009. Indeed, the project – which resulted in an increase of 20% in new start-ups – was so successful that it was taken over as a best practice example by the Slovak Republic. The 'Work Factory – Textiles' project is an example of a project to help young people, which promotes the recycling and redesign of second-hand clothes – creating jobs in retail outlets in Ljubljana and elsewhere.

*“Fostering
entrepreneurship and
applying knowledge”*

A fairer chance for all

Many projects are helping bring people from more disadvantaged groups into the labour market. For example, the Slovenian e-government portal launched the 'Talker' feature to allow blind and partially sighted people to listen to content. For Slovenia's Roma population, the position of 'Roma Assistant' has been created to form a bridge for social inclusion by helping overcome language barriers and integrate Roma children into the school system as early as possible. As part of this effort, the Ministry for Education, Science, Culture and Sport took teachers, childcare experts and Roma assistants to Roma settlements in Murska Sobota to engage in discussions and workshops on best-practice methods for social integration. In another project for disadvantaged groups – immigrant workers – the 'Info-Points' project for migrant workers offers information on life, work and training opportunities to help better integrate foreign workers and their families.

THE ESF IN SLOVENIA: SOME EXAMPLES

Fewer early school leavers

Young people who leave school early put themselves in an especially vulnerable position, with few future employment prospects and little chance of integrating fully into society. Statistics show they are also at higher risk of suicide, mental illness, addiction and committing crime. This is why Slovenia is helping young school leavers acquire experience and knowledge that will enable them to continue in education and advance their careers. The 'PLYA' programme is answering both social and individual needs by helping students to acquire functional knowledge, gain positive learning experiences, clearly define their career goals, and develop their ability to think critically and solve problems. And the project shows results: in 2010, some 40% of participants went back to school and 24% found jobs.

Second-hand clothes for first-class jobs

The 'Work Factory – Textiles' project in Ljubljana proved so successful that it quickly attracted competition. The project helps a range of vulnerable groups, including low-qualified young people seeking their first job and older people who want to get back into work. It does this through promoting the reuse and redesign of second-hand clothes. After collection, second-hand clothes are sorted and then prepared for resale, either directly or after reworking. They are then put up for sale in the project's Dressing Room shop in Ljubljana or through other outlets. Other organisations have already sprung up to collect and reuse clothing, so the project is planning to develop its own 'Dressing Room' brand in the future.



Do you want to...?

- ...learn more about the ESF in Slovenia?
- ...understand better how the ESF works?
- ...see video clips on projects from across the EU?

Then visit the ESF website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/slovenia>