

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK  
FOR PROMOTION OF  
LIFELONG LEARNING IN  
THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
2017-2021



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR PROMOTION OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA 2017-2021

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## 1. FOREWORD

Lifelong learning is an indispensable topic and backbone of many development strategies and studies on different levels. Perpetual inclusion/participation of adults in education, as well as the strengthening of their competitiveness and self-esteem is fraught with many “inherited” and current problems. Having that in mind, a team of experts gathered and engaged on the project *Promotion of Lifelong Learning* carried out by the *Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETA)* have decided to embark on a rather unusual venture. To gather and analyse in one single place the origins and crucial participants and processes associated with promotion/communication of education with specific target groups, such as for example unemployed or persons without adequate education, we have prepared the text i.e. the book in front of you. We are particularly happy the *European Commission* also recognized the value of planned and executed work. With the support and co-financing from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, the *European Commission* largely financed the activities from the *European Social Fund (ESF)*.

Without pretensions to consider this book a sort of panacea for lifelong education problems or to “lecture” anyone, we tried to thoroughly and systematically analyse all topics which in the proposed text provide a comprehensive overview of all important questions associated with the promotion of lifelong learning. This strategic framework offers answers to the questions – *why and how?* – to understand the situation and act within the political, economic, social and technological context of the modern society.

Besides that, we also offered a complex analysis of the state of lifelong learning in the Republic of Croatia, which is, along with the values and vision of lifelong learning, essential for finding answers to different manifestations of the question *Why?* (including *Why not?*). Never as today – in the age of overall interconnection of social networks and influences, availability of valuable and helpful information, fast technological development and globalization – it has been more important to provide a good and meaningful argumentation for (not) undertaking important and beneficial activities, especially in education. Especially having in mind the importance of education for development of the society as a whole. Particularly in Croatia.

We offered the basic strategic orientations for lifelong learning promotional activities in the Republic of Croatia, as well as lifelong learning promotional activities for each key target group – a sort of action/communication plan. In doing so, we particularly mentioned children, students in the formal education system, existing and potential students in adult education, employers, vulnerable social groups, decision-makers in education policy and providers of services in lifelong education.

Such a structured text can be used as a systematic and complete reading, or as an *ad hoc* source of focused contents important for understanding of a certain segment of lifelong education. At that, the table of contents is also a separate offer of such contents!

The text is based on years of professional and life experience of its authors – on the theory of oriented practitioners and practice of oriented theorists who, by working on the text for months, were faced with a lot of things which both thrilled and disappointed them, in Croatia and abroad. Enthusiasm and disinterest, misunderstanding and expertise, burying heads in sand and anticipation of future steps – are only some of the present ambivalences the authors encountered. However, the readers have also encountered, are encountering and will encounter them.

Precisely for those reasons, lifelong learning and its promotion are parts of a never-finished story about the human nature and the changes upon which our (predictable) future depends.

For the *Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education*, the mentioned story has lasted for many years ([www.asoo.hr](http://www.asoo.hr)). Numerous projects, professional publications, symposia, conferences, and particularly the *Lifelong Learning Week*, have directly and indirectly contributed to the sensitization of the public, motivation of stakeholders as well as general promotion and improvement of learning in Croatia ([www.cjelozivotno-ucenje.hr](http://www.cjelozivotno-ucenje.hr)).

We hope this book will be useful if it is used as a framework template/source for improvement of communicational aspects of lifelong education. However, those are just the wishes/intentions of the authors and editors! It is for the readers to decide why and how to use the book. We invite everyone who is in any way associated with lifelong education to use the book, contact us at email address [tcu@asoo.hr](mailto:tcu@asoo.hr) with their suggestions and remarks which will be carefully considered and appropriately used.

In Zagreb and Split, June 2017

Editors

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE STATE OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN CROATIA

### 2.1. Introduction

Understanding of lifelong learning is defined by previous education concepts during life, research efforts of experts in the 90s and public policy documents which are made in line with those definitions. This process can be followed from creation of the concept of recurrent education<sup>1</sup> and development of the idea of lifelong education, to the Delors' Report from 1996 which analyses four basic pillars of lifelong learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. The Delors Report<sup>2</sup> uses the term *learning throughout life*, which doesn't comprise just the chronological dimension of life but also all areas of the human life as well.<sup>3</sup>

Definition of the modern concept of lifelong learning is not unambiguous. Hans G. Schuetze and Catherine Casey<sup>4</sup> listed four models associated with lifelong learning:

- the emancipatory model - model which promotes the equality of possibilities and life chances of all citizens (education for all); cultural model which promotes the importance of self-realisation through learning (lifelong learning for self-fulfilment)
- the open society model which promotes the inclusion of various groups and all citizens (lifelong learning for everyone who wishes to participate)
- the human capital model which promotes lifelong learning for professional development, for the needs of workforce development (lifelong learning for employability).

Aspin and Chapman<sup>5</sup> connect those different elements into a triad which characterises the nature of lifelong learning:

- *learning for economic progress and social development*
- *learning for personal development and self-fulfilment*
- *learning for social inclusion, understanding and acting in democratic processes.*

In that sense, lifelong learning can be understood as a process which includes all phases of human life as well as all forms of learning. Precisely that extension and inclusion of all forms of learning is the difference in regards to the concept of lifelong education. In other words, new knowledge and skills are not acquired only by organized education and training, but also by various forms of spontaneous, accidental learning, learning from mistakes etc. So, the key term becomes learning which can be in the form of formal or non-formal education (as structured learning), or informal learning (which isn't organized or structured). Educational policies try to make the outcomes of informal learning transparent, visible and relevant for the individual, the labour market and the community.

1 "Recurrent education is a process which manifests in the exchange of learning and work periods during life. Recurrent education also purports a strategy for realisation of lifelong education. In that case, recurrent education also comprises non-formal education and its meaning approaches the concept of continuous education and adult education" (Pastuović, 2008:255).

2 Delors et al. (1996). *Learning: The Treasure Within*, pg. 22, Paris: UNESCO.

3 Žiljak, T. (2015). *Adult Education and Learning*. EPALE. <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/hr/resource-centre/content/obrazovanje-i-ucenje-odraslih>

4 Schuetze, H. G. and Casey, C. (2006). Models and Meanings of Lifelong Learning: Progress and barriers on the road to a learning society. *Compare* 36(2), 282-283.

5 Aspin, D. N., Chapman, J. D. (ur.) (2007). *Values Education and Lifelong Learning*, pg. 34, Dordrecht: Springer.

Classification into formal and non-formal education and informal learning is clearly indicated in European and Croatian documents. It is mentioned in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*,<sup>6</sup> as well as Action Plan *It is never too late to learn*<sup>7</sup>. In Croatia, all forms are comprised in the *Adult Education Act*<sup>8</sup> and defined in the *Vocational Education Act*.<sup>9</sup> In the *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology*, lifelong learning is one of the foundations of the education system:

*“The concept of lifelong learning which encourages the individual from any age group to learn and which enables constant access to education and recognition of different forms of learning is thereby imposed as the foundation of education ... Such a comprehensive concept comprises learning in all life stages and all execution forms, i.e. it includes the programmes of formal education (early and preschool education, primary school education, secondary school education and higher education, as well as adult education and training), non-formal education, but also unintentional, un-organized and spontaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in non-formal and informal ways.”*<sup>10</sup>

Along with the concept of lifelong learning, adult education (as the longest period of lifelong learning) and continuous education or, more narrowly defined, continuous vocational education and training appear in public policy documents.<sup>11</sup> It is a very common form of adult education in Croatia, it refers to education and training conducted after the initial regular formal education and it comprises the same target group as adult education (adults after finishing regular education). That connection is clearly expressed in the definition of adult education in the Croatian Bureau of Statistics: *“Adult education provides education to adults who did not acquire adequate education at the age for regular education and persons who need a supplement of their qualifications”*.<sup>12</sup>

The *VET System Development Programme (2016 - 2020)* of September 2016 talks about initial and continuous vocational education.<sup>13</sup> It is visible from that Programme that in that field, lifelong education and continuous vocational education are understood as synonyms: *“Centres of competence are places of vocational education and training excellence which will carry out regular programmes of vocational education, vocational training and lifelong education, as well as other forms of formal and non-formal education (learning based on work, competitions and presentations of knowledge and skills...).* The good-quality secondary and continuous vocational education which will be carried out in centres...”<sup>14</sup>. Continuous vocational education acquires the central place in adult learning precisely because it provides new vocational skills for the labour market.

Apart from the continuous vocational education, other forms and areas of learning are also included. Non-vocational skills which help the effectiveness on the labour market are particularly important. The development of reading literacy and encouragement of reading are thus understood as a segment of implementation of the lifelong learning concept in the proposal of the *National Strategy for Encouragement of Reading* from 2015 which still hasn't reached the adoption phase. Dominant discourse of lifelong learning is used in other strategies as well, albeit on a smaller scale. For example, volunteering as a form of lifelong learning is mentioned in the *National Strategy of Creating a Stimulating Environment for the Development of Civil Society from 2012 to 2016*.<sup>15</sup> So, there's an interest for various competences and various areas of social life, but since the *Lisbon Process* (2010), the dominant role of lifelong learning in Europe is mirrored in the strengthening of competences for the

6 European Commission (2000). *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*. Commission Staff Working Paper SEC (2000) 1832. Brussels: European Commission

7 European Commission (2006). *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn*, Communication from the Commission, COM (2006) 614 final. Brussels: European Commission.

8 Adult Education Act (2007). *Official Gazette* 17/07, 107/07, 24/10.

9 Vocational Education Act (2013). *Official Gazette* 30/09, 24/10, 22/13.

10 Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (2014): *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology*. Zagreb: MSES. <http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=713>

11 More details about the terms adult education, adult learning, lifelong learning and continuous vocational education in Žiljak, Tihomir: *Adult Education and Learning* (<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/hr/resource-centre/content/obrazovanje-i-ucenje-odraslih>)

12 Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2015). *Statistical Yearbook 2015*, [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/ljetopis/2015/sljh2015.pdf](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/ljetopis/2015/sljh2015.pdf) (pg. 516).

13 Government of the Republic of Croatia (2016). *VET System Development Programme*. <https://public.mzos.hr/fgs.axd?id=25751> (pg. 11).

14 *Ibid.*, pg. 14.

15 Government of the Republic of Croatia (2012). *National Strategy of Creating a Stimulating Environment for the Development of Civil Society from 2012 to 2016*. <https://vlada.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Sjednice/Arhiva/39.%20-8.a.pdf>

labour market. When collecting the data on lifelong learning, Eurostat (statistical office of the European Union) mostly monitors participation of adults in lifelong education (ages 25 to 64) with particular emphasis on job requirements. On the other hand, Nóvoa (2013) defined it as a transformation of the lifelong learning concept into a concept of acquiring *the right skills* for the labour market (Nóvoa, 2013: 114).

Based on all mentioned overviews, we can conclude that in the European Union and Croatia (which adopted the EU's key definitions), lifelong learning is most often recognized as the concept which refers to adults who require appropriate skills which can be recognized on the labour market. All other forms of learning gain importance if they serve those main objectives. However, regular education must create a solid foundation for lifelong learning, while non-vocational education should create learning outcomes which are important for the development of social life or help the development of innovativeness and entrepreneurial ventures. In accordance with the above, if the concept of STEM-education develops in the direction of STEAM-education which includes art, creativity and interdisciplinarity<sup>16</sup>, art education will achieve relevance in the context of encouragement of creativity and multidisciplinary.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.2. Participants in lifelong learning

In the analysis of participants we can analyse their number, structure, motives for participation or obstacles which impede participation in education. Data scarcity is a limiting factor in everything. Namely, participation of persons in lifelong education processes is regularly monitored in the *Labour Force Survey*, but the last available data from *Adult Education Survey*<sup>18</sup> are available for 2007. Croatia does not participate in the assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC - Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies)<sup>19</sup>. Apart from that, scientific research which would deal with these issues systematically is extremely rare in the academic community. For those reasons, we will first analyse the total number of involved students and compare it with the EU's average. We will then analyse the structure and characteristics of students and those who do not participate or have abandoned education.

According to the data of the European Commission from 2016 (European Commission, 2016), the level of participation in vocational education and training on the secondary school level in Croatia is among the highest in the EU: 71,3 %. However, the employment rate for persons who recently finished secondary school (46,1 % in 2014) is significantly below the EU average, which is 73 % (European Commission, 2016:7).

One of the main objections to the Croatian education system which refers to nonconformity of students' competences arises from that. Namely, the competences the students acquire in school do not match the needs of the labour market. In terms of lifelong learning, the fact that those competences are not upgraded is an even bigger problem. When they find employment, adults in Croatia seldom continue to upgrade their skills. According to Eurostat data from 2016, only 3,2 % of adults in Croatia participated in education and training in 2016.<sup>20</sup> That data refers to persons between the ages of 25 and 64 who stated that they participated in regular education or training activities at least four weeks before the survey.<sup>21</sup> This survey is carried out within the *Labour Force Survey*. The data for Croatia are much lower than the European average and objectives of European and national strategies.

<sup>16</sup>See: <http://www.ecsite.eu/activities-and-services/news-and-publications/digital-spokes/issue-28#section=section-indepth&href=/feature/depth/stem-steam-education-necessary-change-or-theory-whatever>

<sup>17</sup>European Commission (2015). *Science Education for Responsible Citizenship*. Report to the European Commission of the Expert Group on Science Education. [http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub\\_science\\_education/KI-NA-26-893-EN-N.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_science_education/KI-NA-26-893-EN-N.pdf)

<sup>18</sup>Survey carried out by Eurostat, statistical office of the European Union, department F3: *Labour market and lifelong learning*, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/trng\\_aes\\_12m0\\_esms.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/trng_aes_12m0_esms.htm). Croatian Bureau of Statistics collects the data in Croatia. Data for the survey carried out in 2016 had not yet been published or made available at the time of writing this text.

<sup>19</sup>Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). <http://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac>

<sup>20</sup>Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

<sup>21</sup>Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2016). *Results of the Labour Force Survey Croatia 2015 – Europe 2015, Statistical reports*. [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2016/SI-1575.pdf](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2016/SI-1575.pdf) (pg. 13).

**Table 1:** Percentage of persons aged 25 to 64 who stated that they participated in education between 2006 and 2016

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Croatia	3,1	2,9	2,6	3	3	3,1	3,3	3,1	2,8	3,1	3,2
EU	9,6	9,4	9,5	9,5	9,3	9,1	9,2	10,7	10,8	10,7	10,8

Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/main-tables>

This percentage is relatively low and shows no significant changes (in the past 10 years it has varied between 2,6 and 3,2 %). This data is considered the main indicator of lifelong learning and is one of the key indicators of improvement of education systems in the period up to 2010 and in the new Europe 2020 strategy.

Considering the significance of preschool education in the context of lifelong learning (*“The increase of participation of children from disadvantaged groups is a big challenge for education in Europe because the potential of good-quality early preschool education for the mitigation of unfavourable position and setting of good foundations for further learning is becoming increasingly apparent.”*<sup>22</sup> Also, the low level of participation in preschool education represents a problem (72,4 % in Croatia in relation to 94,3 % in the EU in 2015).

Croatia implements its strategies within those European frameworks. From that arises the recent conclusion of the European Commission: *“In comparison with other countries in the EU, the rate of participation in preschool and adult education is at a very low level.”*<sup>23</sup>

### 2.3. Characteristics of participants in lifelong learning in Croatia

In the analysis of participants of lifelong learning, it is important to warn of the differences regarding gender, residence and level of education. For adult education, it is generally characteristic that women, persons of lower education, persons of lower socioeconomic status, immigrants and the unemployed participate in it less.<sup>24</sup>

Adult education oftentimes reproduces inequality - *“the Matthew effect”* – adopted from Merton by education professionals (Puljiz 2009, Boeren 2009, Blossfeld and all, 2014:8): *“For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath”* (Mt, 13, 12). For that reason, a great portion of promotion in the strategic framework will be directed toward specific target groups with low level of participation.

The motives for lifelong learning, according to Boshier and Collins<sup>25</sup> as well as Pastuović<sup>26</sup>, comprise: 1. social contact (people become friends, acceptance is generated), 2. social stimulation (avoidance of the monotony in everyday life), 3. professional advancement, 4. improvement of civic efficacy, 5. expectations of others (of employers, social worker, friends etc.), 6. cognitive interest (learning is simply pleasurable).

Desjardins, Rubenson and Milana<sup>27</sup> emphasise the central role of employers in encouragement and creation of

22 European Commission (2016). *Overview of Education and Training for 2016. Education in Croatia*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-hr\\_hr.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-hr_hr.pdf) (pg. 12).

23 Ibid., pg. 2.

24 Desjardins, R.; Rubenson, K. and Milana, M. (2006). *Unequal Chances to Participate in Adult Learning: International Perspectives*. Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. (pg. 110).

25 Boshier, R. and Collins, J. B. (1985). The Houle Typology After Twenty-Two Years: A Large Scale Empirical Test. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 33 (5): 113-130.

26 Pastuović, N. (1999). *Educology*. Zagreb: Znamen (pg. 293).

27 Desjardins, R.; Rubenson, K. and Milana, M. (2006). *Unequal Chances to Participate in Adult Learning: International Perspectives*. Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (pg. 111).

possibilities for additional education of their employees. Employers can motivate the employee with an appropriate job which requires new knowledge. That is mostly possible in big companies with greater possibilities for efficient education, better utilization of employees' new knowledge and a more flexible relation toward work assignments. Individuals are also most frequently motivated by improvement of their employability. But, they can also be motivated by requests they face in everyday life (computer literacy, foreign languages...).

The state is, most of all, motivated by social reasons, i.e. encouragement of vulnerable and marginalized groups to participate in education and increase the chances for changing their status.

What are the results of such stimulations and motives in Croatia? As per the criterion of employment status, participants in adult education in Croatia mostly come from the group of inactive persons. Within that group, participation in adult learning is the highest (4,7 % men and 5 % women), higher than within the group of employed or unemployed persons.<sup>28</sup> Inactive persons are (according to the ILO's definition also used by Eurostat) economically inactive persons which are not part of the labour force. Hence, those are the persons which are not employed nor have an unemployed status, which can include pupils, students, prisoners, housewives, pensioners.<sup>29</sup> In the groups of employed and inactive persons, women participate in adult education more than men. Women state less frequently that they do not wish to participate in adult education. That information somewhat differs from previously indicated general trends. However, there are differences regarding the type of education programmes comprised by the research. If industrial workers are dominant in the examined group, there is a greater chance there will be more male students, while in some other cases (e.g. third age education), the female students will dominate.

In adult education and training, persons with better (managerial) positions are the most represented. The highest participation percentage is in the group of persons who are successful in their profession and have a better professional status. In that group, 62,1 % of them participated in some form of lifelong learning in the previous year, while in the group of manual workers that percentage is only 19,6 % (AES, 2007).<sup>30</sup>

Participation in education is less represented in the group of less educated workers (only 0,3 % of students in the group with unfinished primary school), while there are more of those who are more educated (3 % in the group with secondary school education and 6,6 % in the group with higher education).<sup>31</sup> That confirms the "Matthew effect" in Croatia as well.

In terms of age, young adults aged 25 to 34 (10,2 %) participated in lifelong learning the most. Participation then falls drastically so in the 35-44 age group it is 2 %, in the 45-54 age group it is 0,7 %, and in the 55-64 age group it is only 0,3 %.<sup>32</sup> In non-formal forms of training organized by employers, 23,8 % of employees participate; with the EU average of 34,1 %, Croatia falls into the group of six countries with the worst results. There is also difference in education in urban and rural areas. 5,4 % of persons in cities and only 1,9 % of persons in rural areas participate in education; surveyed as per standard approach (25-64, in the past four weeks).<sup>33</sup>

If we analyse other forms of learning within the concept of lifelong learning, we encounter the question of using books or the internet for learning. Only 48 % of persons in Croatia had read at least one book in the past year (survey of persons above the age of 14 in 2013). Significant regional differences are noticeable (62,3 % in Zagreb and 27,8 % in Lika, Banovina and Kordun).<sup>34</sup> Libraries have a large number of adult members, but they make only a fifth of the total population of adults for that age group.

28 Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

29 Eurostat (2016 b). Glossary: Inactive, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Inactive>

30 Eurostat (2007.) Obstacles to participation in education and training. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/main-tables>

31 Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 GfK (2016). *Survey of the book market in Croatia*. Zagreb: GfK.

**Table 2:** Library members per sex, age and active users in 2013

	Total	Men	Women	Members' age				Active users
				14 and less	15 - 21	22 - 64	65 and more	
<b>Total</b>	1.366.366	593.769	772.597	467.513	347.242	508.127	43.484	1.283.922

Source: CBS, 2015

The situation is somewhat better with computers. According to the data from 2015, computers are mostly used for following the news and sending messages. The use of *online* encyclopaedias (65 %) and searching for information on education (55 %) are also very popular. For example, in 2016, 14 % of persons bought education materials online. In the use of internet there are also differences in terms of age. In 2016 almost all young persons used the internet, in comparison with only half (51 %) of persons aged 55 to 64. On the other hand, employed persons used the internet more than unemployed persons (88 compared to 74 %).<sup>35</sup>

As the key objective is to enable and encourage learning throughout lifetime, it is necessary to identify the persons who abandon that process, i.e. the early school leavers. They are interesting because special attention needs to be paid to them in order for them to return to the education and training process. Another important information should be about the persons who participate in adult learning.

### **Early school leaving and inclusiveness**

With the lowest rate of early school leaving in the EU (2,7 % in 2014, with the EU average being 11,1 %), Croatia has achieved the objective from the *Europe 2020* strategy (rate lower than 4 %).

Poor achievement at school, lack of motivation and interest in school, disciplinary problems and bad family situation are mentioned as the most common reasons for leaving school in Croatia. Low level of parental education is added to that list (Ferić, Milas and Rihtar, 2010; Matković, 2010)

However, the European Commission warns that that information should be interpreted carefully because the problems which refer to inclusiveness and quality of primary and secondary education continue to influence the educational results and subsequently results on the labour market.<sup>36</sup> The first factor of early leaving of formal education is former poor educational achievements, low personal educational aspirations and resistance to school; other personal traits are the second factor (delinquency, addictions) and sociodemographic characteristics of the family and closer community the third factor<sup>37</sup>.

In accordance with the research of Ivana Ferić, Goran Milas and Stanko Rihtar,<sup>38</sup> the most common reasons for leaving school in Croatia are: poor educational achievements, lack of motivation and interest for school, disciplinary problems and poor family material situation. Teo Matković also mentions the connection between low levels of parental education and household income with the increased risk of early school leaving.<sup>39</sup>

In the analysis of early school leaving in Croatia, the Romani and persons with disabilities are in particular focus.

35 Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2016). *Results of the Labour Force Survey Croatia 2015 – Europe 2015, Statistical reports*. [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2016/SI-1575.pdf](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2016/SI-1575.pdf)

36 European Commission (2016). *Overview of education and training for 2016. Education in Croatia*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. (pg. 3). [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-hr\\_hr.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016-hr_hr.pdf)

37 Lemon, J. C., Watson, J. C. (2012). Early Identification of Potential High School Dropouts: An Investigation of the Relationship Among At-Risk Status, Wellness, Perceived Stress, and Mattering. *The Journal of At-Risk Issues* 16(2): 17-25.

38 Ferić, I., Milas, G. and Rihtar, S. (2010). Reasons and determinants of early education leaving. *Social research: Journal for General Social Issues*, 19(4-5): 108-109.

39 Matković, T. (2010). Parental education, material status and early education leaving in Croatia: trends in the last decade. *Social research: Journal for General Social Issues*, 19(4-5): 643-667.

According to the results of the research of the everyday life of Romani people in Croatia,<sup>40</sup> “tradition and school leaving culture” are not the only reasons early school leaving occurs; it also occurs because the education system cannot match the needs of “different” pupils.<sup>41</sup> High number of Romani children abandon mandatory education because they leave school at the age of 15, when the obligation of education ceases. But, due to failing grades, at that age they still usually haven’t finished all eight grades.<sup>42</sup> There are more and more Romani persons in secondary schools (503 in 2014). However, at the end of every school year, as a rule, there are 5-10 % less Romani pupils than at the beginning of the school year.<sup>43</sup> Also, within the Romani minority there are substantially fewer preschool children (44 %), only 40 % of them finish primary school, and only 9 % finish secondary school. In 2014 there were only 29 Romani students.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, Romani persons between the ages of 25 and 64 have on average six fewer years of education than non-Romani persons. Romani women go to school almost two years fewer than Romani males and almost 7 years fewer than their non-Romani peers. But, the younger generation is more educated because on average they finish two years of education more than the overall Romani population, and the gender differences are less pronounced.<sup>45</sup>

According to Eurostat, in the NEET group (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) – persons not in education, employment, or training between the ages of 18 and 24, there is a high number of persons with disability.<sup>46</sup> Of the persons with disability, 63 % have finished only primary school education or haven’t even finished primary school. Approximately 28 % have finished secondary education, and only 3 % have finished higher education.<sup>47</sup> In Croatia, the trend of early school leaving by persons with disability is lower than in Europe, but the problems are the ongoing transition from special schools to inclusive education, harmonization of professional profiles persons with disabilities are educated for and labour market’s needs and unsubstantial number of persons who continue tertiary education.

#### 2.4. Obstacles to participation in lifelong learning in Croatia

Rubenson<sup>48</sup> distinguishes between three types of obstacles to participation in adult education: situational, institutional and dispositional. Situational obstacles are real life situations which an individual faces at a certain moment and which could prevent his/her participation in education. For example, that can be a current situation at work, family circumstances, lack of free time etc. Institutional obstacles refer to the procedures or rules which can discourage or prevent an individual to join the educational cycle. Dispositional obstacles refer to person’s attitudes and self-perception i.e. how he/she perceives himself/herself as a possible student.<sup>49</sup> That also refers to the readiness to learn and previously acquired competences. Lack of confidence is one of the most significant obstacles to participation in education. The *European strategy for improving participation in and awareness of adult learning* of the European Commission from 2012 in a similar way categorizes obstacles into structural, situational and psychological<sup>50</sup>.

According to the *Adult Education Survey* from 2007, the most prominent obstacles to participation of persons aged 25 to 64 in adult education in Croatia are<sup>51</sup>:

- too high cost of programme (54,1%)
- lack of time due to family duties (50,4%)

40 Potočnik, D. et al. (ur.) (2014). *Romani everyday life in Croatia: Obstacles and opportunities for change*. Zagreb: UNDP / UNHCR / UNICEF.

41 Ibid., pg. 27.

42 Ibid., pg. 48.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., pg. 54.

45 Ibid., pg. 49.

46 Eurostat (2016 a). *Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training*. [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics\\_on\\_young\\_people\\_neither\\_in\\_employment\\_nor\\_in\\_education\\_or\\_training](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training).

47 Benjak, T. (2016). *Report on persons with disability in the Republic of Croatia*. Zagreb: HZJZ.

48 Rubenson, K. (2011). *Barriers to Participation in Adult Education*. U: Rubenson, K. ur. (2011). *Adult learning and education*. Oxford: Elsevier: 216-223.

49 Ibid.

50 European Commission (2012). *European Guide - Strategies for improving participation in and awareness of adult learning*. Brussels: European Commission.

51 Eurostat (2007). *Obstacles to participation in education and training*. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/main-tables>

With persons above the age of 55 this is not such a prominent problem (44,3% of persons within that group indicate this as a problem), but with persons between the ages of 35 and 44 it is (55% of them indicate this as a significant obstacle).

- insufficient support from employers (23,8%).

The last EU's survey on adult education from 2011 indicates three main obstacles to participation in education and other work commitments (18 %).<sup>52</sup>

The last survey carried out in Croatia<sup>53</sup> has demonstrated that the most common reason for participation in non-formal adult education is associated with effort to find a job, a better job or improve career (78,1 % of surveyed persons).

In Croatia, health-related reasons are more prominent within the elderly population. In the population between the ages of 55 and 64 these reasons are present in 36,2 % and in the total population between the ages of 25 and 64 in 11,5 % of cases. So the cost of education is a smaller problem for elderly persons (in the population aged 55 to 64 it is a problem for 47,6 % of persons), but a bigger problem for younger persons (in the population aged 35 to 44 it is a problem for 60,3 % of persons). Family duties are a considerably more present obstacle for women.<sup>54</sup>

Persons with the lowest level of formal education (primary school) cited in 89 % of cases that they do not wish to participate in adult education.<sup>55</sup>

## 2.5. Recommendations of European policies

A series of public policy documents tries to point out the need for promotion of lifelong learning. In the European Union that has been clearly visible since the beginning of the *Lisbon Process* (2000), when lifelong learning entered the central stream of EU's policies as an important tool for strengthening competitiveness and surviving on the world market. The *Europe 2020 strategy* continues in that direction with stronger connection of education for the development which includes contemporary competences suitable for new technological environments, new technologies and new forms of sustainable development. For that reason, the importance of constant renewal of knowledge and skills becomes crucial in this decade. This part of analysis indicates some key documents which could facilitate the understanding of priorities in the promotion of lifelong learning, i.e. adult learning, as the longest period of lifelong learning.

Since in the monitoring of lifelong learning the European Union mostly deals with the population aged 25 to 64, the *Renewed European Agenda for adult learning* and the *EU Council Resolution* from 2011 are crucial for such a concept of lifelong learning. The *Agenda* particularly emphasises the need for promotion of education for the purpose of employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, by:

- promoting better awareness amongst adults
- encouraging better awareness amongst employers
- encouraging higher educational institutions to accept less traditional groups of students, such as adults
- promoting the role of social partners and civil society
- promoting a balanced distribution of means for education and training throughout life.

<sup>52</sup> Eurostat (2011). *Obstacles to participation in education and training*. [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Obstacles\\_to\\_participation\\_in\\_education\\_and\\_training](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Obstacles_to_participation_in_education_and_training)

<sup>53</sup> Eurostat (2007). *Obstacles to participation in education and training*. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/main-tables>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

To achieve those tasks, it is necessary to:<sup>56</sup>

- include the social partners and raise awareness of the advantages, for them as well, of learning in the workplace (...)
- develop good-quality provision of education for elderly persons, with the aim of promoting active, independent and healthy aging (...)
- fulfil the commitment to promote adult education as a means of fostering solidarity amongst different age groups, for example by intergenerational cooperation and cooperation between peoples of different cultures.

The institutional assumption for that is to ensure an efficient connection “(...) with the competent ministries and interest groups, social partners, companies, relevant non-governmental and civil society organizations, with the aim to improve the compatibility between the adult education policy and wider socioeconomic policy”.<sup>57</sup>

The clearest priorities are defined in the framework *New Skills for New Jobs*. This approach encouraged Nóvoa,<sup>58</sup> who puts the totality of EU policies on lifelong learning under the mentioned denominator. One of the leading initiatives, which commenced with the *Europe 2020* programme, has many promotional elements.<sup>59</sup>

In the *Renewed initiative for new skills for new jobs* (2016), part of the initiative is focused on the promotion of education and training. Special attention is paid to:<sup>60</sup>

- promotion of entrepreneurial and innovative approach to education
- promotion of active inclusion of business and other organizations into education activities
- promotion of comparability of qualifications by the use of qualification framework model
- promotion of exchange of information and best practices in the recognition of skills and qualifications
- promotion of strategic use of European and national funds for programme financing
- promotion of interdisciplinary and cooperative approach in institutions
- promotion of mutual learning and evidence-based policies.

The objective of the *Programme for new skills and jobs* is to enhance the implementation of labour market reforms. The emphasis is on acquisition of necessary skills for future jobs, creation of new jobs and modernization of the EU legislation associated with employment.<sup>61</sup>

The Eurydice Report on improvement and widening of participation of adults in learning from 2015<sup>62</sup> leans on the *European Guide* from 2012 which comprises the strategies for improvement of participation and awareness of the significance of adult learning.<sup>63</sup> That document clearly defines the objectives, key stakeholders, target groups and instruments which would be used in the promotion of adult learning as a part of lifelong learning. The emphasis is on tools which strengthen the awareness of the importance of lifelong learning in all actors (state and non-state).

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56 Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (2014). *Strategy of Science, Education and Technology*. Zagreb: MSES. <http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=713> (pg. 14-16).

57 Ibid.

58 Nóvoa, A. (2013). The blindness of Europe: New fabrications in the European educational space. *Sisyphus Journal of Education* 1(1): 104-123.

59 European Commission (2008). *New Skills for New Jobs: Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM(2008) 868/3. Brussels: European Commission.

60 European Commission (2016). *A New Skills Agenda for Europe: Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM (2016) 381. Brussels: European Commission

61 Ibid.

62 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2015). *Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities. Eurydice Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

63 European Commission (2012). *European Guide - Strategies for improving participation in and awareness of adult learning*. Brussels: European Commission.

OECD strongly influences the policies of European countries associated with education.<sup>64</sup> That is why it is necessary to mention the special analysis of promotion of adult learning from 2005.<sup>65</sup> A chapter of that analysis is dedicated to the improvement and promotion of the benefits of adult learning. That analysis claims that in the promotion of adult learning it is necessary to clearly emphasise the benefits persons and employers will have from strengthening the human capital, whereat the qualification frameworks enable the expected transparency of the whole process. It is also important to ensure clear information for the potential students as well as the efficient leadership and direction in the process of inclusion and participation in adult learning. In the context of promotion of adult learning, this analysis/document also emphasises the importance of education financing, quality assurance and assurance of coordination of policies associated with adult learning.

## 2.6. Concluding deliberations about lifelong learning in Croatia

1. Lifelong learning comprises various forms of vocational and non-vocational formal and non-formal education, as well as informal learning. It can be categorized chronologically (it lasts throughout a lifetime) and per scope (it becomes lifewide, i.e. it concerns almost all competences an individual needs to fulfil different roles).
2. Dealing with lifelong learning should include all phases of the educational process (from preschool education to higher and adult education), as well as different forms of learning outside the educational process. Everyone participating in different forms of lifelong learning can be defined as a user or a participant in that process.
3. The actors who influence the lifelong learning are primarily individuals and everyone who ought to facilitate the availability of learning and mobility through education systems to individuals. It is precisely the individual who has the greatest responsibility for the choice of his/her learning paths, restoration of his/her skills and finally the facing of new challenges on the labour market.
4. In the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning the greatest attention is paid to its longest period, i.e. adult education. That is visible from the statistical data, strategies and laws dealing with this segment. Adult education and continuous vocational education significantly overlap in Croatia as well. In analyses of adult education, the barycentre is often on the new professional skills the adult students should acquire. Apart from the dominant learning for the labour market, the European objectives mention the importance of all learning forms which enable active aging or other forms of active participation of citizens in the society.
5. Adult participation (ages 25 to 64) in Croatia is at a low level. The low level of participation is particularly characteristic for elderly persons, persons with lower education and persons who work at difficult (physical) jobs, live in rural areas or are members of one of the vulnerable groups. That particularly applies to Romani and persons with disabilities. Both groups leave regular education early. On the other hand, lower participation is also present in rural areas.
6. The main obstacles in adult education are structural, situational and psychological. In Croatia they are high costs of education, family duties and lack of employers' support. Generational and gender differences should also be taken into account.
7. According to EU's documents, the main directions of promotional activities in the field of lifelong learning (especially adult learning) refer to all key actors: individuals, public authorities, employers, social partners... Almost every actor can help to make the participation of adults more intense and effective within its own area. In doing so, it is important to keep all students' key motivational elements in mind.

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<sup>64</sup> Puljiz, I., Šutalo, I. and Živčić, M. (2010). *International organizations of adult education: United Nations (UNESCO, World Bank, International Labour Organization, OECD)*. Zagreb: Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education.

<sup>65</sup> OECD (2005). *Promoting Adult Learning*. Paris: OECD.

## 2.7. Recommendation for promotion of lifelong learning

1. Lifelong learning comprises various forms of vocational and non-vocational formal and non-formal education, as well as informal learning. It lasts during the entire lifetime and refers to the acquisition of all competences an individual needs to fulfil different roles. Everyone participating in different forms of lifelong learning can be defined as a user or a participant in that process.
2. Special attention should be paid to the group of persons who join the learning processes after finishing regular education. Acquisition of assumptions for continuous learning in regular education and continuation of learning within intergenerational cooperation after the age of 64 is important for them. Special attention and incentives should be directed to the persons who do not join the lifelong learning processes. That primarily applies to persons with lower level of education, persons who have been unemployed for longer periods of time, persons who live in rural areas, elderly persons, workers who work at difficult manual jobs and members of vulnerable groups, especially the Romani and persons with disabilities.
3. In the promotion of lifelong learning it is important to clearly demonstrate the personal, social, economic and benefits for the communities in which the students live. The barycentre is on the new skills for new jobs and development associated with innovations. Apart from the dominant learning for the labour market, all forms of learning which enable free development of individuals, strengthening of their civic roles, appreciation in society, intergenerational cooperation and satisfaction with the process itself are also important.
4. Promotion of lifelong learning should influence the key actors whose actions can eliminate the obstacles for inclusion into lifelong learning. That particularly applies to structural and situational obstacles. It is important to familiarise the decision-makers on national, regional and local levels with all dimensions of execution and benefits from lifelong learning. Moreover, it is important to enhance the awareness that by eliminating obstacles and additionally motivating citizens it is possible to increase the participation in lifelong learning and achieve a higher level of participation, which is already recognized as a considerable problem in Croatia. Promotion should commence in institutions of early and preschool education, continue in primary and secondary schools, and finally be present in higher education and adult educational institutions.

### 3. VALUES AND VISION OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN CROATIA AS THE BASIS OF STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

By learning, we reveal and awake individual and social identities. The world in which we live/act changes constantly thanks to learning and implementation of knowledge and skills of all individuals and society as a whole. The emergence and development of the human culture and civilization are based on the processes of learning, understanding, remembering and critical questioning of acquired knowledge, skills and values.

The world of today is characterised by fast and constant progress of science and technology, through which the new knowledge which shapes almost all spheres of social life and their participants on all levels is acquired daily (Vekić, 2015).<sup>66</sup> Precisely such, fast progress influences the dispersion of knowledge which is imposed as a necessity in the context of an individual's absorption if he/she wants to survive in today's world. It also influences the change of perception associated with formal and non-formal learning processes and forms, and leads to a conclusion that formal education in its highest instances is no longer able to assure the following of scientific, technological and social trends (Vekić, 2015).<sup>67</sup>

Modern societies base their economic and social growth and development on lifelong education, with which we try to respond to the uncertainties and unpredictability of political and technological trends of the civilization of the 21st century. With lifelong learning we try to overcome numerous difficulties of the contemporary growth and development on global and local levels.

Economic and political crises, instability of the power of networked society, wars and economic and political migrations which wipe out cultural and ethnical borders, new demographics of the world – aging of the domicile population of developed countries, uncontrolled technological growth and numerous other problems of the modern life require a systemic deliberation based on knowledge, understanding and positive attitudes on human communion. Observation of a human being in the context of a personality which in accordance with behaviouristic understanding implies the behaviour a human being exhibits in relation to his/her environment, i.e. action and impression an individual leaves on others,<sup>68</sup> needs to be taken into consideration precisely due to the increasing individualization of a human in today's world.

Even though new technologies create an illusion that everyone is connected, there is actually an enormous alienation, and a sphere of individualism which borders on reality and leads to action in virtual communities and social structures is created. This should also be observed as a challenge in the context of the process of lifelong learning and designing of education stimulation forms/methods which will raise the interest of every individual in order not to confine himself/herself into artificially created worlds which can easily create a person which does not aspire to knowledge and questioning, thusly becoming an ideal material for various kinds of manipulations.

66 Vekić, M. (2015). Education in New Clothes: Lifelong Learning and Adult Education. *The Croatian Language: popular science journal for the culture of the Croatian language*, 2 (3), 5-14.

67 Ibid

68 Zvonarević, M.: *Social psychology*, 2nd edition, Školska knjiga, Zagreb 1978.

In the context of globality, multidimensionality and complexity (Morin, 2002),<sup>69</sup> learning becomes a necessity for civilizational survival. Lifelong learning is the only possible response to the challenges of the 21st century. In the *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia*, the concept of lifelong learning is emphasised as a priority with which the Croatian education system will encourage individuals from all age groups to learn and give them a constant access to education and recognition of different forms of learning.<sup>70</sup>

### 3.1. Why do we learn?

By learning we understand ourselves and our environment, assess and realize our life potentials and acquire the ability to live in our social and natural environment. We incorporate the acquired knowledge into our civilizational future. Human activity is always stimulated by the process of learning i.e. a realization which motivates an individual or society to act in the direction of achievement of a goal, precisely in that characteristic **learnt** way. The development of culture and civilization is achieved by the process of explorative learning – critical questioning of the level of acquired knowledge and search for a new and different explanation of rules and procedures.

Therefore, it can be concluded that learning is a central task of life. However, it is important to emphasise that learning is not only the main life task of an individual but also the central/key task of the whole mankind (Kolb, 1976).<sup>71</sup> Even though **lifelong learning** is a fact on which the very human existence is based, it was only recognized and accepted in the context of social value and utility during the 20th century<sup>72</sup> (Lindeman, 1926). By introducing the term *informal learning*, B. Yeaxlee (1929) sets the foundations for social recognition and development of knowledge and skills the adults acquired during life.

With the recognition of **informally acquired knowledge**, lifelong learning gains a new meaning in social life. Personal and social benefits obtained on the basis of recognition of all forms of learning are visible in all areas of economic, social and cultural life. **Formal education**, which was recognized as the only safe and valuable form of education for centuries, is nowadays supplemented by all other forms of informal and **non-formal education** which is evaluated and certified by the same standards as regular formal education.

Recognizing the value of knowledge acquired outside the regular education system is a big civilizational step into a new form of **freedom of learning**. This new human freedom, nowadays particularly encouraged by the endless possibilities of global learning via modern communication technologies, will make a permanent contribution to the growth and development of human potentials in all areas of life.

The process of learning is immanent to a person as a manner of research, understanding or human action. In this context, learning is realized throughout lifetime – encouraged by internal/individual and external/social factors. The internal/intrinsic motivation for researching, learning and understanding stems from the very essence of man's existence. Learning based on internal motivation unveils the personal interests and abilities of every individual. This kind of learning **unveils human talents**, so it is the most successful form of learning which simultaneously brings the highest level of satisfaction.

External/extrinsic motivation for learning is mostly based on individual's life needs, which can be satisfied by different learnt activities within a certain social environment. That is the leaning by which the **socially recognized and for a certain culture necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes** are acquired. Since the 1990s, the term education is more and more frequently being replaced by the term learning, which actually transfers the responsibility for acquiring new knowledge and skills from the state to the individual. The term lifelong learning, which purports all segments of learning during lifetime, appears precisely in this context (Vekić, 2015).<sup>73</sup>

69 Edgar Morin, *Education for the Future*, Educa, Zagreb, 2002.

70 Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (2014): *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology*, <http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=713>

71 Kolb, D. A. (1976.): *Management and the Learning Process*, *California Management Review*, 18 (3), 21-31.

72 Lindeman, E. (1926.): *Meaning of Adult Education*. London: New Republic (also available at: <https://archive.org/details/meaningofadulted00lind>).

Yeaxlee, B. (1929): *Lifelong Education*. London: Cassell & Co. (also available at: <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.224059>).

73 Vekić, op. cit.

### 3.2. What do we learn?

In learning, just like in any other activity, there is a discrepancy between wishes and possibilities – that is the driver of development and progress of every individual and the human society as a whole. Simultaneously, it is the source of controversy which breeds conflicts. In most modern states, there are **standardized competence contents** for acquiring different qualifications,<sup>74</sup> on basis of which the individuals which acquire them obtain social recognition and the right to actively participate in a certain work and/or learning process. The *Croatian Qualifications Framework (CQF)* defines descriptors for eight levels of learning outcomes. By defining the necessary knowledge and skills, the quality of occupational standard is assured. Acquisition of competences necessary for an occupation is realized in the regular formal education system via the common teaching contents.

Educational outcomes are achieved by standardized contents of the learning process. In institutionalized forms of learning, the teaching/learning contents are defined in accordance with the needs of final effects - educational outcomes, necessary for acquisition of certain competences for a certain level of qualification. Learning to qualify is most frequently directed at acquisition of competences for socially beneficial jobs which are in a certain social environment recognized as necessary for socioeconomic growth and development.

Since the contents, methods and forms of learning for socially beneficial qualifications (which fulfil socially beneficial jobs) are realized in institutions - schools, the learning process is standardized and therefore oftentimes unadjusted to the potentials and wishes of every individual. Such standardized contents, forms and ways of learning/teaching are very often a source of students' frustrations which can be so powerful as to cause the abandonment of formal education. Also, it should be noticed that many talented students fail to realize themselves and their talents in numerous standards and norms prescribed by the regular education system.

The regular formal education system is oftentimes in conflict with individual differences, talents and other possibilities for the individual. If we wish to save the talents and solve the problems of social exclusion, aggression and hopelessness – a flexible, open and available education might bring some positive effects. Of course, in doing so, it is necessary to take care of the orientation of the learning process towards the acquisition of basic competences which represent the ability of every individual to independently and responsibly act within the social community and develop in accordance with his/her own needs and abilities within the lifelong learning process.

Independence and responsibility for one's own actions come from an appropriate level of adoption of knowledge, skills and attitudes every individual achieves, which are according to the Croatian Qualifications Framework divided into eight levels. Acquisition of basic competences assumes the adoption of knowledge, skills and attitudes with which an individual can independently and responsibly act within the context of his/her professional, social and personal life.

The knowledge necessary for acquisition of basic competences is factual and theoretical, expressed in a certain volume and qualification level, most frequently acquired by formal education. Of course, the knowledge acquired in non-formal and informal ways is also a part of an individual's volume of competences. Non-formally and informally acquired knowledge can be evaluated and certified by special procedures and thusly become a constituent part of a formally recognized qualification. Skills, as a constituent part of competences, refer to the motoric, social and cognitive abilities of an individual to successfully act in his/her social environment, where he/she can achieve harmonic and efficient relations. Values and attitudes define a deeper relation of every individual toward himself/herself and the social environment. Also, values and attitudes are crucial for conscious, deliberate and value-oriented action in the society so special attention is paid to their formation from the earliest age.

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<sup>74</sup> Documents which define the scope, level and quality of the acquired qualification in order to make all qualifications acquired in different systems comparable, e.g. EQF - European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

Acquisition of basic competences through the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes is a key learning for life. The basic competences comprise:<sup>75</sup>

- communication in mother tongue
- communication in foreign language
- mathematical competence and basic competences on science and technology
- digital competences
- learning how to learn
- social and civic competences
- initiative and entrepreneurship
- cultural awareness and expression.<sup>76</sup>

Adopting basic competences should be put into the context of maximal flexibility by which the process of learning and acquiring these key competences would be adjusted to the abilities of every individual. The way of acquiring key competences on basis of which we will learn throughout life is extremely important for every individual and society as a whole.

### 3.3. How do we learn?

It is certain that no education system can develop enough different, flexible and applicable learning methods which would affect all students in an equally efficient way. Different ways of learning result in different relations of students with the contents and processes of learning. The expected positive effects of the education process are often lost due to the imposition of certain contents to the students, who subsequently cannot process those contents. “Forced” learning – learning that is practiced to achieve another goal (e.g. acquisition of a certificate) – offends the noble principles of human cognition. Learning for short-term reproduction and subsequent oblivion is the reality in many education systems, which makes the recommendation of the European Council for one of the key competences – *learning how to learn* even more important.

Different ways of learning need to be understood in the context of human differences, and accepted and recognized in the context of general human freedom. The learning process should contain as little violence as possible. The **vision of lifelong learning** should be accepted in its widest context. That purports the understanding of learning as a continuous holistic observation, detection and explanation of endless contents of life we approach with all of our abilities and talents.

If we approach learning from the position of our internal motivation for discovery and understanding, we would open many paths and ways of personal and social growth and development. It is a known fact that in the history of human society institutional learning has always been defined by the qualification-competence needs of the social, cultural and economic environment. Acquisition of prescribed, for the society necessary competences through different forms of institutionalized approaches, was mostly based on the necessity/coercion of students to adopt certain, pre-prescribed knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to use them in predictable conditions of work or future learning.

The OECD’s scenario according to which *“the development of educational consumerism due to the importance of diplomas as the key for employment encourages the growth of education market”*<sup>77</sup> anticipates the emergence of education industry which will base its growth and development on the necessity of lifelong learning.

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<sup>75</sup> According to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC).

<sup>76</sup> Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (2010). *National Curriculum Framework for Pre-School Education and General Compulsory and Secondary Education*. Zagreb: MSES.

<sup>77</sup> UNESCO (2007): *Towards knowledge societies: UNESCO World Report*. Zagreb: Eduka. (pg. 77).

### 3.4. When do we learn?

A person's life stages in their own way determine the suitability for acquisition of certain knowledge and skills. Attending a regular educational process even nowadays supposes a focus on acquiring basic life and professional competencies. Learning oriented toward personal and professional growth and development is defined in national and supranational standards of competences for life, work and further learning. The time of growing up, as well as the time of preparation for full and active participation in the social and economic life, is defined by the number of years anticipated for education on the state standard level – qualification frameworks.<sup>78</sup>

The qualification frameworks on the state level prescribe the quality, volume and level of educational achievements which are certified, most often within the regular, formal education process.

The growing need for qualified workforce in the 20th century contributed to the emergence and establishment of new forms of education and recognition/certification of educational achievements. Formal and non-formal forms of adult education gradually evolve into a **form of socially recognized lifelong learning** by which the modern societies try to systematically respond to the unpredictability and pace of changes in all areas of life.

Standing up for establishment of the lifelong learning system in the 21st century, Jacques Delors proposes the introduction of the *“right to time for learning”*.<sup>79</sup> The time during which a person will acquire key and other professional competences is no longer limited to only a specific time in life. Even though the process of regular education is still the basic education principle for young people, modern educational trends indicate the development of a different approach to the learning process. Classic ways of education are being replaced by new and fully personalized forms of learning in the virtual environment. Acquisition of key competencies and knowledge of different areas of human activity is possible in a time and situation which an individual, on the basis of his/her own abilities, chooses himself/herself. Time for learning is becoming based on personal decisions and needs, and lasts throughout life.

### 3.5. What is our relationship with learning?

Every day in a life opens a new possibility of discovery something, a new value of cognition, new opportunity to act, to change oneself and the environment. Learning comes from the internal wish to know, understand, explain, act in the right way... However, the relationship with learning is not shaped only by our internal desire.

Numerous life situations in which we are forced to learn one-off instructions, facts that do not interest us and values with which we are in conflict contribute to the negative attitude towards learning as a process. Moreover, such situations blur the essence of learning and contribute to alienation - demotivation. Alienation from learning is alienation from the essence of human existence. That alienation contributes to the enslavement of human creative potentials. When we stop learning, we stop being interested in our personal growth and development, we stop developing our own identity, we consent to the enslavement of our own life.

Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that learning techniques are a segment which should be studied and learnt, and it is necessary to realize that they remain in the shadow<sup>80</sup> of many contents, which is in contemporary society imposed in the context of its necessary absorption. However, to avoid a negative attitude towards learning and understanding of learning in general, it is important to orient ourselves to the questions which direct us toward realisation of the true human needs for acquisition of knowledge and skills in all segments of life, not just in the context of satisfying the form of traditional formal education.

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78 The CQF – Croatian Qualifications Framework, which defines all levels of qualifications (1-8), enables a clear comparison of the level of qualifications acquired in the Republic of Croatia with the qualifications acquired in other countries, on the basis of time anticipated/spent on learning in order to acquire the specific qualification.

79 Ibid pg. 82

80 Brlas, S. (2005). Difficulties in learning and mastering the teaching material (research results), *Life and School: Journal for Education Theory and Practice*, LI (14), 61-68.

Research results,<sup>81</sup> among other things, point to the fact that students face a problem regarding the organization of learning, regardless of whether learning at home or at school is in question. Considering that fact, and in the context of promotion/encouragement of understanding of the importance of lifelong learning, it is necessary to motivate every individual (student) in the earliest phase in different ways.

Negative attitudes towards learning should be overcome, in the interest of the individual and the society. Lifelong learning can be the “second or third chance” to develop personal and/or professional competences necessary for a meaningful and complete life.

### 3.6. What makes learning valuable?

Human life is enriched with many activities for which we can claim that they are either the consequences/results of learning or learning itself. So, the values of learning arise from the very essence of human existence. Learning is a continuous life process – a lifelong process during which we acquire various knowledge, skills and attitudes by which the people:

- understand themselves and their environment
- assess themselves and their life community
- form attitudes about their power/abilities
- direct their actions toward different goals
- by acting in their social environment, on the basis of acquired knowledge and skills, gain personal and social benefits - create new values.

The education values according to the National Framework Curriculum, also adopted by the *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology*<sup>82</sup> are:

- **Knowledge.** The key factor of social growth and development is knowledge which is applied in all areas of the human life. Encouragement of learning by which knowledge is acquired and applied in all life situations contributes to the common progress and social stability. *“The Republic of Croatia has opted for the development of the knowledge society because knowledge is the fundamental production and developmental strength. Knowledge, education and lifelong learning are the key drivers of development of the Croatian society and every individual. They enable better understanding and critical reflection of oneself and everything that surrounds us, dealing with new situations and success in life and work”.*<sup>83</sup>
- **Solidarity.** A special education value which refers to a person’s social life is solidarity with other people (especially weaker and socially vulnerable people), intergenerational care and care of the social and natural environment.
- **Identity.** Considering the strong globalization processes of the modern world, the question of personal and national identities is studied and learnt with special attention. Understanding and realisation of the particularity of one’s own culture is the only way of preserving the diversity of world’s cultural heritage.
- **Responsibility.** Responsible action and behaviour in every social relationship and relationship towards nature and technological environment is a value based on conscientious relationship with freedom and responsibility. Responsible action is based on continuous critical reflection of life situations in which a person actively participates.

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81 Ibid

82 MSES, 2010; MSES, 2014.

83 MSES, 2010, pg. 22.

Specific values of vocational education in the Republic of Croatia according to the proposal of the *Nacional Curriculum for Vocational Education* are:

- **Knowledge and skills.** *Along with knowledge, development of skills is a vocational education core value which enables practical application of learnt contents. With interdisciplinary approach to learning, students acquire appropriate skills necessary for work in different areas.*
- **Relevance.** *Acquisition of qualifications in vocational education is based on the adoption of those knowledge and skills which will provide employability and adaptability in ever-changing circumstances.*
- **Lifelong learning.** *Lifelong learning is a value which improves the generic and professional competences necessary for adjustment to the changing conditions on the labour market.*
- **Cooperation and social partnership.** *The cooperation of all participants of the vocational education system and the economy raises the quality of education. Cooperation relations between vocational schools, the local community, economic factors, professional chambers and trade unions open a possibility of adjustment of the existing and creation of new qualifications and occupations in accordance with the labour market needs. Social partnership will ensure the conditions necessary for a functional and efficient vocational education and its fast adjustment to new technologies and changes on the labour market.*
- **Entrepreneurship.** *In vocational education, the emphasis is put on activation of personal and business potentials and recognition of opportunities for action and assuming responsibility in the personal and business environment.*
- **Integrity.** *Integrity assumes honesty and authenticity of all persons included in the education process. In vocational education, along with the personal integrity, an individual's professional integrity is also developed.*
- **Respect.** *Respect assumes the mutual respect of all participants of the education process in school and the workplace.*
- **Health.** *Health assumes the understanding of health as the basis of personal wellbeing and source of a healthy community and society. Healthcare in its narrower sense includes recognition, understanding and adoption of healthy habits, healthy lifestyles and responsible behaviour.<sup>84</sup>*

The listed values of the learning process defined by national documents represent an accepted opinion on what kind of a society we wish to build. Economic growth and development based on knowledge and entrepreneurship can be ensured only by continuous investments into people, which purports the encouragement of all learning processes, creativity and innovativeness in every individual in various ways. The fact that one USD invested into education returns increased by 10-15 times is sufficient reason and justification of the economic efficacy of investment into an already developed education industry.

The power of knowledge is enormous, but the responsibility for its application is proportional to that power: *"We are witnesses of the paradoxical growing ignorance about the whole, while on the other hand, the knowledge about parts advances. Thence the necessity for the education of tomorrow to unite particular knowledges from the natural sciences, to place the human condition into the world, as well as the cognitions of humanities, to lighten the human multidimensionality and complexity; thence the need for the education of tomorrow to integrate the invaluable contribution of not just philosophy and history, but also literature, poetry and arts."*<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> National Curriculum for Vocational Education, proposal, February 2016. (<https://esavjetovanja.gov.hr/ECon/MainScreen?entityId=3495>).  
<sup>85</sup> Morin, E. (2002): *Education for the Future*, Educa, Zagreb, pg. 54.

On the basis of the mentioned values and other determinants of lifelong learning made by a team of experts, the subject strategic framework for promotion of lifelong learning proposes a vision and slogan for the promotion of lifelong learning.

**VISION OF THE PROMOTION OF LIFELONG LEARNING:**

*Lifelong learning in Croatia - recognized, attractive and desirable.*

**SLOGAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF LIFELONG LEARNING:**

*Get involved (include everyone) into learning!*  
*(Make the whole of Croatia learn throughout entire life!)*

## 4. BASIC STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN CROATIA

### 4.1. Socioeconomic context of promotion of adult learning

In their recommendations for prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, the European Commission has set a series of priorities within the so-called European Semester, to which the Croatian government needs to respond with the *National Reform Programme* (and other relevant reform documents). Recommendations for 2017 are given in the *2017 European Semester: Country Report – Croatia*.<sup>86</sup> Amongst five domains of priorities analyses in this report (public finances; private sector debt and financial sector; labour market, social policies and education; business environment and investment; public sector governance), in the context of this strategic framework, the domain associated with the labour market, social policies and education, which highlights some relevant trends in the Croatian education environment, is particularly important.<sup>87</sup>

In the subject document, the European Commission notices that:

- *Many students have low (and increasingly poor) basic skills, which will probably lead to a shortage of necessary skills on the labour market, which derives from poor results of the OECD study Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of 15-year-old school pupils in 2015. In this study, Croatian pupils achieved one of the worst results in the EU in applied science and mathematics (with an increase in the share of students with poor results in mathematics from 30 % in 2012 to 32 % and the share of students with poor results in applied science from 17 to 25 %). OECD also points to the fact that the share of best pupils is, on average, under 5 %, which also isn't satisfactory. From the aspect of digital skills, some progress has been made, because in 2016, 55 % of Croatian citizens had (at least) the basic digital skills, which is a progress in relation to the share of 51 % in 2015, but still under the EU average, which is 56 % (2016).*<sup>88</sup>
- *The education reform is postponed, especially the complete curricular reform, which was focused on the improvement of teaching contents and inclusion of transferable skills (learning how to learn, entrepreneurship, personal and social development, health, sustainable development, use of information and communication technologies and civic education) into the teaching curricula.*
- *Recovery of the labour market uncovers the limitations in the supply of workforce on all levels of available skills. While on one hand the rate of unemployment in Croatia remains high, employers from seasonal sectors struggle to find adequate employees and request an increase of the quotas for import of workforce. On the other hand, there is also a shortage of employees with high level of skills, especially in the information-communication and healthcare sectors, mostly due to the insufficient mobility within the country, but also due to high international workforce mobility.*

<sup>86</sup> European Commission: Country Report Croatia 2017, Including an In-Depth Review on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-european-semester-country-report-croatia-en.pdf>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pg. 35-37.

<sup>88</sup> Digital Economy and Society Index, [http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/document.cfm?doc\\_id=42995](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/document.cfm?doc_id=42995)

- *Introduction of 28 new qualifications, adjustment of qualification standards and their adjustment to the labour market needs* are considered positive aspects of the Croatian education system. The intention of improvement of curriculum in vocational education is also determined on the basis of the same methodology.
- *The Croatian education system lags in improvement of skills in the working population.* The aforementioned data on the rate of lifelong learning of only 3,1 % (for the age group 25-64, compared to the average rate of 10,7 % in the EU), as well as the fact that, of the unemployed, 50 % are persons who have been unemployed for longer periods of time, indicate the *inadequate results in lifelong learning*. The report lists the *absence of a system for recognition and validation of previous learning, lack of resources for retraining programmes and other forms of lifelong learning, as well as insufficient engagement of employers* as shortcomings of the education system.
- *Education results in higher educational institutions are not connected enough with the demands of the labour market*, considering the disproportionately high share of students enrolling into social science and humanities studies compared to the EU average, which leads to the shortage of qualified finished students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).<sup>89</sup> Even though the introduction of enrolment quotas based on the labour market needs and the use of appropriate higher education policies would be adequate help in solving that problem, there is a lack of relevant data from the labour market.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the current state of lifelong learning in Croatia could be improved by promotion of lifelong learning, in accordance with the detailed action plan given further in this document.

## 4.2. Raising awareness, information and motivation for participation in lifelong learning

In this day of fast-changing trends in a globalized world, an education system must enable flexibility and adjustability in order to respond to the current and future challenges and needs of the individual, society and labour market. In such circumstances of fast changes and development of new technologies, formal education cannot respond to all needs; it must be based on the concept of lifelong learning and open a path to new knowledge, skills and continuous learning along with different forms of non-formal and informal lifelong learning.

Different forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning are necessary for acquisition of key competences for lifelong learning and functioning in the society. *“According to the recommendations of the Council of the EU and the European Parliament from 2006, it is desirable to acquire key competences in the earliest age, during the initial formative period, in different forms and ways of learning and education. The key competences comprise: communication in mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competences and basic competences in science, engineering and technology, digital competences, competence to learn how to learn (capability for learning processes, for organization of one’s own and other people’s time, for collection, analysis and evaluation of information etc.), social and civic competences, initiative and entrepreneurship, fostering cultural awareness and national identity, creative and artistic expression. In the process of adoption and development of some groups of key competences it is necessary to foster: critical thinking, aesthetic evaluation, responsibility in relation to oneself, others and the environment, teamwork, orientation toward problem solving, fundamental ethical values, parenting skills, civic activism, media, financial and consumer literacy etc.”* (MSES, 2014) It is possible to acquire the mentioned competences precisely with a network and efficient supplementation of formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning, which among others, includes various forms of work-based learning and experiential learning. Along with the key competences, these recommendations introduce skills which intertwine with all competences, which include: critical thinking, problem solving, taking initiative, creativity, taking risks, decision-making and regulation of emotion.

Ten years after defining these key competences, we live in the times of increasing globalization and permanent structural changes, such as demographical and technological changes, which dictate the need for every society

<sup>89</sup> CEDEFOP (2016). *Mismatch priority occupations Croatia*. [http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical\\_highlights/croatia-mismatch-priority-occupations](http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical_highlights/croatia-mismatch-priority-occupations)

and individuals therein to be competitive and ready for life under conditions of fast changes, and to have the skills and knowledge which will enable adjustment to changes, good-quality life, employment and prosperity. These demands place a serious need in front of every society to create an environment which will enable a full inclusion of all citizens and develop awareness and knowledge about the society, active and democratic citizenship and citizens' place in it.

The *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia* states: “The outcomes of lifelong learning should primarily lead to the realisation and development of personal potentials and be an important element of active citizenship, enabling a better employability for the individual, i.e. increase of his/her competitiveness on the labour market. Dynamism, adjustability and competitiveness of developed (“learning”) societies based on knowledge are connected with the degree of citizens’ inclusion into various forms of lifelong learning and the quality of the education process. It is desirable for individuals to incessantly learn, but the same goes for organizations as well. It is important they constantly learn and support a learning environment – in the economy as well as in the public, state and local administration.” (Strategy, 2014)

In the context of these changes, lifelong learning has become indispensable for all citizens. It is clearer than ever before that individuals should develop personal, social and competences associated with their personality, work and whole life. However, living in the times of constant changes adds some risks for the society and countries; some parts of the population can be excluded from the society due to their low level of knowledge, skills and competences which no longer fit the needs of today’s labour market. Erosion of skills, knowledge and competences can mitigate an individual’s personal development as well as his/her employment opportunities, and very likely lead to a great polarization of wages and unequal income. That is why high unemployment rates, long-term youth unemployment and high share of working-age but inactive population require special attention. Lifelong learning has thusly become the main factor of not just the issues of work, employment and labour market, but also of social and economic issues.

In 2016, even though there were 21 million of unemployed persons in the EU, 40 % of employers stated that they cannot find suitable workforce, i.e. workforce with the necessary skills. Of that number of unemployed persons, more than 10 million were unemployed for more than one year, and 6 million for more than two years. More than 3 million of young people are unemployed, which confirms the fact that they were educated for occupations which are no longer necessary or adequate in the contemporary economy.<sup>90</sup>

On the EU level, it was concluded that it is necessary to ensure an opportunity to adopt digital skills to as many citizens as possible. That has become a priority because it was established that 90 % of jobs today require a certain level of digital literacy. Eurostat shows that 40 % of EU citizens have none or very low digital skills. Filling that gap is considered crucial because soon there will be no jobs which won’t require digital literacy.<sup>91</sup>

Knowledge, skills and attitudes are a key factor of innovativeness, productivity and competitiveness of every economy. To be able to follow the fast changes and introduction of new technologies, we need to not just renew our knowledge necessary for the jobs we do, but also have the basic competences which will help us cope with the changes happening around us. The European Commission’s document “*Europe’s next leaders: the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative*” defines how innovative European entrepreneurs should be given an opportunity to become leaders in the world market. Special attention is paid to the entrepreneurs’ or their employees’ skills.<sup>92</sup> The subject document states that scale-up companies need to employ workers with appropriate skills, especially technical, financial and digital skills. The entrepreneurial spirit, management and leadership skills are also crucial for company’s growth. Based on the document “*New Skills Agenda for Europe*” (June 2016), the Commission is working on increasing the quality of skills and their importance for the labour market.<sup>93</sup>

90 European Commission (2015): Key employment and social challenges in view of the 2016 European semester. [http://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files/article/files/issues\\_paper\\_in\\_view\\_of\\_AGS\\_2016\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.epsu.org/sites/default/files/article/files/issues_paper_in_view_of_AGS_2016_2_.pdf).

91 Ibid.

92 European Commission (2016 a). *Europe’s next leaders: the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative*. <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14261-2016-INIT/hr/pdf>.

93 Ibid.

Three initiatives will be focused on solving those challenges: the upcoming “*Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition*”, with the purpose of supporting the cooperation between education, employment and industry, “*Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills*”, the aim of which is to improve the analysis of the needs for skills and solve the problems of shortage of skills, and the upcoming “*Big Data Europe*” for analysis and prediction of the needs for skills within the “*Skills Panorama*”. The Commission also established two frameworks for improvement of studying and assessing skills: *Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp)* and *Digital Competence Framework (DigComp)*.<sup>94</sup>

The way in which an individual adopts information and knowledge constantly changes; people of all ages need new competences for the digital new world, not just by adopting technical skills, but also by adopting a deeper understanding of the opportunities, challenges as well as ethical and social issues which arise from new technologies.

The bases of lifelong learning are in a good initial education which should give citizens the key competences that will prepare them for life in the modern world and foundations for further lifelong learning. Today, an individual needs to integrate lifelong learning, learning from the cradle to the grave, with a wide outlook on life, along with formal, non-formal and informal learning. Now, more than ever before, it is necessary to develop awareness in the society that learning and development of competences start at the earliest age and, with a good formal education, never cease.

Adult learning is connected with entrepreneurship, development of skills and processes which make an individual employable, including personal development and adoption of “soft” and communication skills. The *Strategy of Learning for Entrepreneurship 2010-2014*,<sup>95</sup> adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia states that: “*The growth of global market integrations undoubtedly points to the need to raise awareness amongst the people regarding the meaning and significance of entrepreneurship, the need to educate for entrepreneurship and learn to practice entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and abilities. The most developed countries in the world, as well as the European Union members states, have recognized the importance of supporting entrepreneurship, the constant need for enabling a positive entrepreneurial environment and encouragement of entrepreneurial education in the national context.*”

It also states: “*The objectives of the Strategy of Learning for Entrepreneurship, with emphasis on entrepreneurial Croatia, are multilateral. First of all, true initiation of entrepreneurship implies a systematic approach to development of a series of personality traits – creativity, independence, criticism, innovativeness, initiative, ability to take reasonable risks, organizational abilities, leadership and managerial abilities, collaborative abilities and other traits. Their systematic development is most efficiently achieved via formal education. Entrepreneurial competence is therefore included in all European national curricula as one of eight basic competences. Secondary vocational education is unimaginable without the adoption of knowledge, acquisition of skills, development of abilities and development of personality qualities necessary for entrepreneurial achievements. The quality of higher education programmes also implies the introduction of selective and optional programmes and modules on entrepreneurship for the purpose of understanding and adopting the logic of the economic system and basic entrepreneurial deliberation techniques. The use of examples of good practice and exchange of ideas are assessed as effective methods in the education and training of entrepreneurs.*”

Research shows that in the general population of a country, only 5-8 % of the population have innate characteristics of entrepreneurs, and that around 16 % of the population have no such characteristics at all. That implies that around three quarters of the population can learn entrepreneurship, i.e. the education system and positive entrepreneurial environment can act to develop the entrepreneurial potential of an individual.<sup>96</sup> Development of entrepreneurial competences is therefore even more important, because starting one’s own entrepreneurial ven-

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94 Ibid.

95 Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship (MELE, 2010). *Strategy of Learning for Entrepreneurship 2010-2014* Zagreb: MELE. [http://www.hzz.hr/UserDocImages/Strategija\\_ucenja\\_za\\_poduzetnistvo\\_2010-2014.pdf](http://www.hzz.hr/UserDocImages/Strategija_ucenja_za_poduzetnistvo_2010-2014.pdf).

96 Brusić, A. et al. (2009). *Entrepreneurship*. Zagreb: Vern.

ture can be a good business decision for all parts of the society, especially having in mind the fact that the public sector will not have the possibility of large-scale employment in the future and the fact that more than 80 % of new jobs are created in small and medium-sized companies.

In support of the fact that entrepreneurship can be a good decision for the young as well as the older subgroups of the population, speaks the *Study on the Projections of Future Labour Market Needs*<sup>97</sup> made by the Institute of Economics, Zagreb, as part of the project “Support to the work of CQF sector councils and other stakeholders in the process of implementing the CQF” of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. The aim was to make projections of the future labour market needs which will serve as an information for the work of CQF sector councils and other stakeholders in the process of implementing the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CQF). For that purpose, the future labour market needs are projected.

The Study states: *“The usefulness of projections of the future labour market needs is important for formation of public policies related to the labour market and education. Even though projections cannot give a precise answer to the question what kind and number of occupations we will need in the future, they provide a good information about the general trends of the future labour market needs and how the economic and other forces shape the labour market. Some activities in the Croatian economy will experience a strong growth, other will continue to fall, and some will stagnate or grow slightly, which will result in the demand for workforce in certain occupations or excess workforce in the falling activities. In accordance with that, apart from the need to adjust the education system to these projections, it will be necessary to ensure additional education for those whose knowledge, skills and competences are no longer appropriate for the labour market, as well as entrepreneurial education for those who can initiate new entrepreneurial ventures in the growing activities.”*

Even though today, despite everything said, in the general public still prevails the opinion that learning is intended for young people only, mostly in the process of formal education, and when formal education ceases – the learning ceases as well. The concept of lifelong learning is not well known in the wider public, especially by some stakeholders in the society who can be most affected by the abandonment of learning. It is not well known in the world of entrepreneurship either, even though entrepreneurs recognize the shortage of skills and knowledge as the first few challenges of the obstacles to growth and development. It is known that adults who have been outside the educational process for long, seldom decide to return to education, and with the existence of financial and family limitations, further development is additionally disabled due to lack of interest in learning as well.

It is necessary to create the need and desire for learning. It is not enough to stimulate that need only in persons with low skills, the unemployed and working-age inactive population, who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, but also among the employed and highly educated who wish to further develop their skills, taking into account the fact that the number of years one spends working is increasing. Parallel with that, it is extremely important to ensure a clear and present promotion of learning as a positive value. The main message or perception of the wider public should become the message that knowledge and skills change lives, govern the economy and affect the chances for success in life. Very few areas affect our lives as much as education does.

Furthermore, there is an obvious need for inclusion of more people into lifelong learning processes, especially those from underrepresented and vulnerable social groups which are threatened by social exclusion. *“Depopulation and population aging have characterised the demographic picture of Croatia from 1990 until today. Projections until 2050 point to a demographic tendency of increase of ageing of the total population, but also of ageing of the working-age population, as well as a significant decrease of the number of school-age children. Such changes in the natural dynamics, migration balance and population age structure greatly influence the reproduction of workforce, which has a limiting effect on the total working potential and labour productivity, i.e. the total economic development of Croatia.”* (MSES, 2014) Those changes also create the necessity for adjustment of educational institutions on all levels of education, from preschool education to adult education, and put emphasis on the inclusion of more members of non-traditional groups in education systems into different forms of formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning.

<sup>97</sup> The Institute of Economics (2016). *Study on the Projections of Future Labour Market Needs*. Zagreb: The Institute of Economics. [www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=1073](http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=1073).

**Motivation for lifelong learning**, by its definition, refers to permanent and independent encouragement and orientation of behaviour towards a desired aim/object, i.e. inclusion (and retention) in the process of lifelong learning.<sup>98</sup>

In andragogy we differentiate:<sup>99</sup>

- *motivational orientation theories*, which by research seek to establish the motivating factors and isolate the goals and physical/mental activities associated with learning
- *life cycle theories*, which link one's age and personal circumstances with educational needs
- *decision theories*, which demonstrate the link between psychological and social conditions and learning.

There is a number of more complex theories which say that motivation is a process of complex influences of psychological and sociological nature:<sup>100</sup>

- The Fishbein and Ajzen model, which premises the formation of the intent for learning on the basis of interaction between *subjective attitudes and social influences* (norms). It is important to mention that subjective attitudes depend on *expectations* (whether it is possible and worthwhile to learn something) and the *perceived value (attractiveness) of learning outcomes*.
- DeVries, Dijkstrin and Kuhlman's, i.e. Bandura's deliberation of *self-efficacy*, which usually extends the previously described model, refers to a person's previous conviction that he/she is able to organize and successfully master learning activities and with their help achieve desired goals.
- The level of *aspiration*, which is, according to Kurt Lewin, affected by individual successes and failures, as well as social expectations, which can be easily applied to the level of knowledge and qualifications and their (perceived) connection with social success.
- *Sources of motivation*, deliberation of which comes from Herzberg's research, refers to the differentiation of intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) motivation for learning, in terms of opposition of desire for learning as a personal challenge and desire for learning due to external stimuli and/or awards.

An important motivating factor for active inclusion of individuals into lifelong learning are also the **benefits users recognize related to personal and professional growth and development, as well as better possibilities on the labour market or for continuation of education**. Evaluation and recognition of previously acquired knowledge and skills play a crucial role in that. Recognition of the knowledge and skills acquired by non-formal and informal ways, as well as the skills acquired in the formal system, but without finishing, appear in European education policies as one of the main instruments of lifelong learning. The recognition of knowledge and skills acquired by non-formal and informal learning contributes to the improvement of employability and creation of preconditions for further continuation of education. The idea to formalize the competences acquired outside the education system and thusly "make learning visible" is the greatest benefit of recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal learning. The Recommendations of the Council of the European Union for evaluation of non-formal and informal learning, mention the establishment of national systems for evaluation of non-formal and informal learning connected with national qualification frameworks as a specific objective.

All described factors are a potential source of activities of promotion of lifelong learning, because they are equally applicable to all target groups toward which promotional activities can be directed. Therefore, the strategic approach will be based on deliberation how to define the objectives and activities of motivating on the basis of presented scientific cognitions.

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98 Radovan, M. (2001). *Motivacija odraslih za izobraževanje: vrednotni, kognitivni in socialno-kulturni vidiki motivacije brezposelnih za izobraževanje (Raziskovalno poročilo)*, Ljubljana: Andragoški center RS, pg. 5-6.

99 Op. cit., pg. 7-8.

100 Op. cit., pg. 9-17.

### 4.3. Description of strategic orientation

It is necessary to raise awareness of the social role of lifelong learning as a positive value and create a positive and active attitude toward learning at any age and in all stakeholders in the society, in accordance with the previously expressed vision and values of lifelong learning in the Croatian society. This implies the following objectives of raising awareness of the significance of lifelong learning:

- **Change of attitude toward learning** – learning supports an individual’s personal and social development, skills, creativity and entrepreneurship. Learning, life and business experience, as well as cultural experiences, prepare a person for an active life, develop the power of reasoning, the ability to analyse the living environment and one’s place in it, and give the possibility of self-realization.
- **Comprehensive learning opens new possibilities** – the environment for learning becomes wider, so it does not refer only to the formal or school context; learning implies the learning that happens throughout life, regardless of age and one’s life situation. An individual, apart from formal and organized learning, learns in the workplace, at home, by doing hobbies and volunteering. By such learning, an individual learns to govern his/her own life, make life decisions and achieve prosperity.
- **Renewal of knowledge** – for the purpose of achieving social inclusion, good quality of life and prosperity, it is important to constantly renew the knowledge relevant for one’s work as well as one’s civic role. For adults that means satisfying the labour market needs, especially for those adults who are at risk of losing their jobs and risk of exclusion.
- **Raising awareness of the direct link between knowledge and skills and position on the labour market and employment opportunities.**

After the positive attitude and awareness of the benefits of lifelong learning have been formed, it is necessary to inform of the possibilities of lifelong learning, which is achieved by:<sup>101</sup>

- providing structural information about the possibilities of learning
- engaging all social actors/stakeholder in the planning, promotion and attraction of persons to learning
- providing appropriate introductory experiences of lifelong learning.

Appropriate information and counselling about the advantages, benefits and possibilities of lifelong learning play a key role in the promotion of lifelong learning to target groups. Currently in Croatia, within the Croatian Employment Service (CES), there are centres and information points where it is possible to get professional counselling and orientation about the opportunities on the labour market, pre-qualifications, further career development or continuation of education. Advisers employed at the CES help their clients explore, follow and attain their career-related goals through various ways of providing counselling and professional orientation services, e.g. individual, group or online counselling, by telephone etc. With such counselling and orientation processes it is crucial to raise one’s awareness of himself/herself, his/her own interests, strengths and weaknesses, improve understanding of the importance of continuous work on oneself, teach how to manage one’s processes of learning and acquisition of new knowledge and skills, as well as how to encourage positive changes in one’s career.

Apart from the CES, various forms of information and counselling associated with continuance of education, competing on the labour market and career development are available in primary and secondary schools, higher educational institutions and institutions for adult learning. It is important to note that their existence and intensity

101 23. European Commission (2015). An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, pg. 150-152.

greatly vary and depend on the capacities and resources of each institution, so it is not possible to talk about systematic professional orientation. Also, providers of information and counselling services, with particular emphasis on certain target groups such as the young, national minorities, socially vulnerable groups, pupils and students with disabilities etc. exist in civil society organizations as well. However, their existence and intensity also significantly vary and depend on the capacities and resources of each organization.

Complementary to the objectives of promotion of lifelong learning and crucial for information on the possibilities of lifelong learning is the *Strategy for Lifelong Professional Orientation and Career Development in the Republic of Croatia*.<sup>102</sup> The main objective of this Strategy in the strategic period up until 2020 is to establish a “complete system for lifelong professional orientation which will enable the availability of good-quality professional orientation service to the citizens to develop their career in accordance with their abilities, interests, personality traits and labour market needs throughout their lives.” (Strategy, 2015)

In accordance with the Strategy, lifelong professional orientation must be directed to the needs of individual users, it must be impartial, available and provide equal possibilities to everyone, in order to satisfy different citizens’ needs. The Strategy recognizes that professional orientation focused on the individual generates much wider benefits because it connects the individual’s plans with the economic and social goals of the economy and society as a whole. “Professional orientation can therefore be used in companies, local communities and educational institutions for the purpose of improving the learning outcomes, transfer of knowledge, productivity and innovativeness. In short, professional orientation and counselling can help individuals and organizations to adjust to the circumstances and be productive in new and untypical economic and social conditions.” (Strategy, 2015)

Furthermore, the *Strategy for Lifelong Professional Orientation and Career Development* emphasises that professional orientation is the key integrative dimension of lifelong learning and the training system for (re)orientation of all generations towards adoption of 21st-century skills. Professional orientation can orient people of different ages towards desirable learning possibilities which lead to the development of new skills needed on the labour market, which is why attention to lifelong learning should be paid on all levels of the education system.

Therefore, it is crucial that advisers in the process of lifelong professional orientation are educated experts who will recognize the competences of clients and direct them toward acquisition of new knowledge and skills with the aim of their personal and professional development and better employability. The defines the key challenges in the area of lifelong professional orientation which are complementary to the objectives associated with informing on the possibilities of lifelong learning, which are:

- to enable access to services and information on lifelong professional orientation
- to assure the quality and efficacy of services of lifelong professional orientation
- to ensure lifelong professional orientation for all target groups (pupils, students, adults, employed persons, unemployed persons, socially vulnerable young persons and other vulnerable groups)
- to professionalize advisers for lifelong professional orientation
- to establish career centres
- to enable the acquisition of career management skills
- to raise awareness of the importance of lifelong professional orientation.” (MSES, 2014)

<sup>102</sup> Strategy for Lifelong Professional Orientation and Career Development in the Republic of Croatia 2016-2020, (2015): <http://www.hzz.hr/UserDocImages/Strategija%20cjelo%C5%BEivotnog%20profesionalnog%20usmjeravanja%20i%20razvoja%20karijere%20u%20Republici%20Hrvatskoj%202016.-2020..pdf>.

The aforementioned document of the European Commission describes the **motivation activities for lifelong learning** as “*organization of learning which fits the needs of students and employers*”.<sup>103</sup> It is further discerned into:<sup>104</sup>

- definition and understanding of the needs and motivation for lifelong learning
- definition of the current and future needs of employers and adequate adjustment to the offer of lifelong learning
- promotion of flexibility and innovative approaches to lifelong learning
- insurance of paths for advancement by which it is possible to advance through levels of (relevant, author’s comment) qualification framework, by evaluation of knowledge, skills and competences previously acquired in non-formal and informal ways.

The first two factors obviously refer to the educational needs and motivation of participants, as well as the demand for knowledge by the employer, while the other two factors can be observed in the context of removing obstacles to lifelong learning.

In the context of general trends in Europe, *CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training)* anticipates further increase of the share of citizens with middle-level and especially higher qualifications and decrease of the segment of population with low qualifications, whereat women will acquire higher qualifications to a greater extent than men. The trend of employment in the service industry is expected to continue, with growing demands for a high level of knowledge and skills, and further decline in employment in agriculture, energy production and processing industries, where the demands for middle-level and higher qualifications will prevail.<sup>105</sup>

In Croatia, the study of priority groups of occupations is still in the planning phase, within sectors and subsectors of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, which is why it is difficult to talk about future priorities of economic and education policies in the context of sectoral needs for human potentials and their characteristics at the time of writing this strategic framework.

However, the study of the Zagreb Institute of Economics (INOMICS), which gives projections of trends on the labour market in Croatia,<sup>106</sup> made in 2016, provides a solid basis for motivation of participants and providers of services in lifelong learning, to direct their attention to key sectors and subsectors of the CQF. In accordance with predictions of the INOMICS, in the period between 2015 and 2020, the total employment will rise by 3,7 % (in comparison with 2014). Very high rates of the growth of employment are expected in the following activities, which would account for 1,3 percentage points in the total growth of employment:<sup>107</sup>

- employment activities
- promotion (advertising and propaganda) and market research
- legal and accounting activities
- renting and leasing activities
- management activities, consultancy on management
- services related to the management and maintenance of buildings, planning and maintenance activities
- real estate
- catering
- office administration and other auxiliary activities
- computer programming, consultancy and associated activities
- healthcare
- information service activities.

<sup>103</sup> European Commission (2015 b).

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> CEDEFOP (2010): *Skills supply and demand in Europe Medium-term forecast up to 2020*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

<sup>106</sup> [www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=1073](http://www.kvalifikacije.hr/fgs.axd?id=1073)

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., pg. 44-45.

Furthermore, it is predicted that the following 25 activities will account for 3,1 percentage points in the total growth of employment:<sup>108</sup>

- extraction of crude oil and natural gas
- other professional, science and technical activities
- sports, entertainment and recreational activities
- other personal service activities
- accommodation
- repair of computers and personal and household products
- membership organizations activities
- scientific research and development
- architectural and engineering activities, technical testing and analysis
- veterinary activities
- security and investigation activities
- libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities
- travel agencies, tour operators and other reservation and associated services
- creative, arts and entertainment activities
- gambling and betting activities
- production of films, videos and television programme, sound recording activities, music publication activities
- waste collection, waste treatment and disposal activities, material recycling
- social welfare activities with accommodation
- wholesale, except for trade in motor vehicles and motorcycles
- education
- retail, except for trade in motor vehicles and motorcycles
- financial services auxiliary activities and insurance
- wholesale and retail of motor vehicles and motorcycles, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- production of ready metal products, except for machines and equipment
- fisheries.

The *insufficient harmonization of the education system and the labour market* is an obvious problem. Even though that problem has been detected on the level of short newspaper articles or public officials' insights,<sup>109</sup> there is also empirical research about it. A doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Zagreb in 2011,<sup>110</sup> found that there are 18,5 % of overqualified persons (in relation to the administrative criterion of complexity of occupation), whereas this data varies from 25 % (when employers' demands in job advertisements are observed), to 40 % (when the surveyed subjective opinion of young people is observed). It is interesting that discrepancies in the measurement of overqualification are the lowest for tertiary education (professional study – between 47,1 and 55 %, academic study – between 32,5 and 38,4 %). Furthermore, the disparity between the occupation for which the person was educated and occupation of first employment is determined at the level of 41,5 % by the survey. However, the greatest disparity between the occupations of education and employment was determined at the level of three-year (40,2 %) and four-year vocational education (54,3 %), while these indicators are considerably lower for tertiary level of education (professional study – 38,2 %, academic study – 28,7 %).

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108 Ibid., pg. 45-46.

109 <http://www.mrms.hr/povezivanje-obrazovanja-i-potreba-trzista-rada/>.

110 Matković, T.: *Forms of Transition from the Education System to the World of Work in Croatia*, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, 2011.

On the other hand, the educational situation in Croatia is characterised by a relatively *high level of formal educational attainment*, which indicates the fact that the domestic education policy has reached the goal of increasing the formal level of education, and which is visible from the comparison with European and national averages, and the comparison between younger and older contingent of the population (see Table 3).

**Table 3:** Educational achievements in the EU 201

	25-54 years			55-74 years		
	Low (ISCED 0-2)	Medium (ISCED 3-4)	High (ISCED 5-8)	Low (ISCED 0-2)	Medium (ISCED 3-4)	High (ISCED 5-8)
<b>EU-28</b>	20.8	46.5	32.6	37.4	42.6	20.0
<b>EA-19</b>	23.8	44.6	31.6	41.8	38.5	19.7
<b>Belgium</b>	20.9	39.1	40.0	44.4	31.0	24.7
<b>Bulgaria</b>	16.9	54.2	28.9	27.8	51.4	20.8
<b>Czech Republic</b>	5.2	70.3	24.5	13.7	72.9	13.4
<b>Denmark</b>	17.1	43.1	39.8	30.6	43.1	26.3
<b>Germany</b>	12.9	58.7	28.3	16.2	59.3	24.5
<b>Estonia</b>	9.2	51.9	38.9	12.1	52.5	35.3
<b>Ireland</b>	15.6	37.6	46.8	45.9	30.7	23.3
<b>Greece</b>	24.2	44.2	31.7	56.8	26.4	16.8
<b>Spain</b>	38.1	23.5	38.4	66.7	14.0	19.3
<b>France</b>	18.3	43.7	38.0	39.8	39.5	20.6
<b>Croatia</b>	12.5	62.5	25.0	33.1	49.7	17.2
<b>Italy</b>	36.3	44.6	19.1	61.1	28.5	10.4
<b>Cyprus</b>	17.4	37.8	44.8	47.5	31.8	20.6
<b>Latvia</b>	10.3	55.9	33.8	13.9	63.3	22.8
<b>Lithuania</b>	6.8	51.5	41.7	13.8	60.3	25.9
<b>Hungary</b>	14.9	58.6	26.5	28.1	55.2	16.7
<b>Malta</b>	50.4	26.6	23.0	77.8	13.8	8.5
<b>Netherlands</b>	19.9	42.1	38.1	40.0	35.5	24.5
<b>Austria</b>	13.1	53.9	33.1	26.2	53.7	20.1
<b>Poland</b>	7.2	60.0	32.7	20.3	65.8	13.9
<b>Romania</b>	21.9	58.5	19.6	45.3	46.6	8.1
<b>Slovenia</b>	9.9	56.2	33.9	25.1	56.5	18.4
<b>Slovakia</b>	6.9	69.6	23.5	17.3	69.3	13.4
<b>Finland</b>	9.6	45.4	45.0	27.8	39.0	33.2
<b>Sweden</b>	13.1	44.2	42.7	29.0	42.6	28.4
<b>United Kingdom</b>	18.5	37.7	43.8	29.4	38.7	31.9
<b>Iceland</b>	22.9	35.1	42.0	37.1	38.0	24.9
<b>Norway</b>	16.8	37.2	46.1	20.6	49.5	29.9
<b>Switzerland</b>	10.8	44.8	44.4	17.2	53.5	29.3
<b>FYR of Macedonia</b>	31.0	48.8	20.2	47.4	38.1	14.5
<b>Turkey</b>	62.7	19.1	18.2	84.3	8.2	7.5

Source: Eurostat, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Share\\_of\\_the\\_population\\_by\\_level\\_of\\_educational\\_attainment,\\_by\\_selected\\_age\\_groups\\_and\\_country,\\_2015\\_\(%25\).png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Share_of_the_population_by_level_of_educational_attainment,_by_selected_age_groups_and_country,_2015_(%25).png)

It is apparent that in the **promotion of lifelong learning in Croatia, less attention should be paid to the encouragement of formal educational achievements.** The **insufficient harmonization of the functioning of the education system and the labour market needs** is a bigger problem, which is the fundamental intention of reforms, based on the introduction of the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CQF).<sup>111</sup> However, the initial projects of introduction of the CQF are limited only to providers of education services on the tertiary level, i.e. on (re)structuring of higher educational institutions curricula. **The dimension of availability of information about the CQF and motivation of participants for attending programmes, based on the CQF principles,** has not been emphasised enough in our education policy.

It is necessary to mention the disputed and discussed information on the **extremely low participation of adults in lifelong learning**<sup>112</sup> of only 3,2 % (in 2016), as previously indicated in the analysis of the state of lifelong learning in Croatia (first chapter of this strategic framework). This information should be viewed in comparison with the target level of participation of 15 % which the EU wants to achieve by 2020.<sup>113</sup> That confirms the **need to increase the motivation of adults in Croatia for lifelong learning as well as their competences for lifelong learning.**

Furthermore, the *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia*<sup>114</sup> anticipates the need to establish a system of recognition of knowledge and skills acquired in non-formal and informal ways. In accordance with this Strategy, the system of evaluation of non-formal and informal learning is intended mostly for adults who possess life and work experience. *“Evaluation of the outcomes of different forms of learning and education shortens the time necessary for adult education, thus achieving significant savings – equally for the individual and the community, as well as eliminating barriers between the system of formal education and competences acquired by other forms of learning and education. The Recommendations of the Council of the European Union define the main phases of the process of evaluation of non-formal and informal learning:*

- *identification of learning outcomes the individual previously achieved*
- *documentation of achieved learning outcomes*
- *assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes the individual achieved*
- *certification of assessed learning outcomes in the form of award of qualification, partial qualification or in another form.*

*In the evaluation and recognition of the outcome of non-formal and informal learning, it is necessary to ensure professional support and leadership, as well as acquisition of additional competences for all participants in the process of evaluation and recognition of previous learning. Evaluation should be done in institutions which are the most competent for certain contents of knowledge and skills.”*<sup>115</sup>

The *Croatian Qualifications Framework Act*<sup>116</sup> created foundations for development of the system for recognition of previous learning, in formal education as well as non-formal and informal learning. The procedures of recognition of previous learning are the subject of the *Ordinance on Recognition and Evaluation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning*, which is currently being drafted. Since learning outcomes are at the centre of the *Croatian Qualifications Framework (CQF)*, and not the process or environment which produced those outcomes, and by assuming that certain learning outcomes can be achieved outside the formal education, it is necessary to ensure an evaluation of non-formally and informally achieved learning outcomes under the same principles as those achieved in formal conditions.

111 Revised strategic plan of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System 2016-2018, [http://www.mrms.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/STRATE%C5%A0KI-PLAN-MRMS\\_2016\\_2018.pdf](http://www.mrms.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/STRATE%C5%A0KI-PLAN-MRMS_2016_2018.pdf).

112 Within 4 weeks before conducting the survey Croatia was not included in the research of adult education (in 2011) which measures the rate of participation in lifelong learning within 1 year prior to the survey.

113 Promoting Adult Learning, [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/adult-learning/adult\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/adult-learning/adult_en).

114 MSES (2014).

115 Ibid.

116 Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, Official Gazette no. 22/2013, 41/2016.

Further to the *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia*, as well as all other relevant European guidelines, along with lifelong learning, the lifelong professional orientation is also crucial for that process. In regard to that, the *Strategy for Lifelong Professional Orientation and Career Development in the Republic of Croatia*,<sup>117</sup> described in chapter 3.3 was adopted in 2015.

Evaluation of non-formal and informal learning is a great potential for individuals and the society in the context of lifelong learning. An individual can attain a higher level of qualification than the one he/she already possesses in a shorter period, and thus have better chances on the labour market, while the human resources and public financing are efficiently directed toward raising the general level of citizens' qualifications.

Apart from the procedures and tools associated with recognition of non-formal and informal learning, it will be extremely important to develop confidence in the system and reduce the risk of possible abuse of evaluation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning via a transparent quality assurance system. Therefore, the *Croatian Qualifications Framework Act* prescribes that "the assurance of the quality of the procedure of evaluation and recognition of learning outcomes is performed by an institution authorized for quality assurance which is subject to regular evaluation of quality assurance procedures" (article 15).

Considering the mentioned data on low participation of adults in lifelong learning in Croatia, it is **not easy to deduce to what extent the described state stems from low motivation, and to what extent it is a result of obstacles to inclusion into lifelong learning**. For example, the Adult Education Survey from 2011 for the EU approximates the average rate of 21,8 % of adults who cite family duties as the basic problem for active inclusion into lifelong learning. For 13,8 % of the respondents it is concluded that they do not join lifelong learning due to work obligations, and 7,1 % due to lack of previous (formal) qualification i.e. insufficiently flexible education system.<sup>118</sup> However, Croatia was not included in that survey in 2011 so it is difficult to make any empirically based conclusions.

The current *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology*, in the part which refers to adult education, recommends adoption of measures focused on "overcoming the psychological and situational obstacles to greater participation of citizens",<sup>119</sup> which is why this strategic framework will also anticipate measures for elimination of obstacles to motivation for lifelong learning.

#### 4.4. Priorities and objectives of promotion of lifelong learning in Croatia

The priorities and objectives of promotion of lifelong learning in Croatia will be directed toward **two key areas**. The first area is **increasing competitiveness on the labour market**, with its content determinants being:

- the necessity of continuous renewal of knowledge and acquisition of new skills with the purpose of increasing one's own chances on the labour market as well as better employability
- the need for formation of attitudes and opinions on the importance of knowledge, skills and competences as a path towards employment and prosperity.

On the other hand, lifelong learning should **affirm personal and social growth and development**, whereby the following content determinants are recognized:

- the need for raising citizens' awareness of the personal benefits of learning and personal initiative for learning
- raising awareness of the need for acquisition of all key competences, especially digital skills, enterprise and innovativeness in the modern society.

<sup>117</sup> Strategy for Lifelong Professional Orientation and Career Development in the Republic of Croatia 2016-2020 (2015).

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., pg. 74 (see figure 4.1.).

<sup>119</sup> <https://vlada.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//Glavno%20tajni%C5%A1tvo/Materijali%20za%20istaknuto/2014/Strategija%20obrazovanja%20znanosti%20i%20tehnologije//3.%20obrazovanje%20odraslih.pdf>.

**The lifelong learning promotion activities will be directed toward key target groups. The following common principles will be used when planning the subject activities:**

- all activities will be directed toward communication of advantages and benefits of lifelong learning, adjusting the information to the specificities and needs of different target groups
- all activities will include concrete implementation measures, for example national and local information centres which will provide information on the possibilities of inclusion into various forms of lifelong learning, national and local campaigns and examples of good practice adjusted to each target group.

**Priority 1: To raise awareness of the need for learning throughout the entire lifetime.**

- Objective 1.1: To examine the perception, awareness and motivation for lifelong learning, with the aim of making a foundation for the future guidelines of the Strategic framework for promotion of lifelong learning.
- Objective 1.2: To raise awareness of the importance of good-quality early and preschool education as a basis and motivation for further learning.
- Objective 1.3: To raise awareness among the stakeholders in the society about the benefits of learning and responsibility for learning.
- Objective 1.4: To raise awareness of the importance of partnership between the stakeholders in lifelong learning: national and local governments, the public sector, private sector, education system, business community, social partners, non-governmental sector, citizens, etc.

**Priority 2: To raise awareness of the need for learning for personal and social development.**

- Objective 2.1: To promote the values and vision of lifelong learning as the driver of personal and social development of Croatia.
- Objective 2.2: To inform of the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, enterprise and innovativeness in the modern society.
- Objective 2.3: To promote lifelong learning as the new opportunity for acquiring new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system.
- Objective 2.4: To inform of the needs and possibilities of civic education.

**Priority 3: To raise awareness of the benefits of lifelong learning for adjustment to changes in the labour market and students' specific needs, career advancement and better employability.**

- Objective 3.1: To inform of the importance of learning and upgrade of knowledge, skills and competences for active participation and competitiveness in the labour market.
- Objective 3.2: To inform of the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, enterprise and innovativeness with the aim of adjustment to changes on the labour market and better employability.
- Objective 3.3: To promote and create positive perceptions of vocational education and occupations as well as learning based on work.
- Objective 3.4: To inform of attractive occupations, available education programmes as well as available measures and incentives for additional education and training.
- Objective 3.5: To stimulate adjustment of education programmes in accordance with labour market's needs and specific students' needs.
- Objective 3.6: To inform of the benefits and advantages of learning in the workplace and the need to make free time for learning.

**Priority 4: To raise awareness of the significance of non-formal and informal forms of learning and the recognition and evaluation of acquired knowledge and skills.**

- Objective 4.1: To inform of all forms of learning, for the sake of better social recognition of learning: from spontaneous, accidental learning from mistakes, volunteering, online learning, social activities...
- Objective 4.2: To inform and encourage continuous learning in the workplace in partnership with employers and trade unions.
- Objective 4.3: To inform of the possibilities of recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal lifelong learning.
- Objective 4.4: To promote the creation of modular education programmes on all levels of the education system.

## 5. ACTIVITIES OF PROMOTION OF LIFELONG LEARNING FOR TARGET GROUPS: ACTION/COMMUNICATION PLAN

### 5.1. Students involved in the formal education system

#### *Coverage and characteristics*

International studies such as TIMSS<sup>120</sup> and PISA 2015<sup>121</sup> show that students who spent at least three (or more) years in early and pre-school education achieved better average results than their peers who spent just one year or less in early and pre-school education (TIMSS 2011 and 2015). 15-year-olds who were included in education programmes in early and pre-school age achieve better tests results (PISA 2015).<sup>122</sup> UNICEF's study also emphasises that:<sup>123</sup> “research suggests the multiple positive effects of investing in pre-school education programs, from enabling the parents to participate in the labour market, (...) through mitigation of demographic pressures (...) to contributing to the development of (non)cognitive skills, integration of the child and mitigation of the consequences of child poverty, with particular emphasis on the importance of equality of opportunities from the earliest age” (pg. 166). This indicates the necessity of equalizing opportunities for all children and their inclusion in the education system from the earliest age. In the context of international guidelines, international research and article 63 of the Croatian Constitution (“Education in the Republic of Croatia is accessible to everyone, under equal conditions, in accordance with their abilities.”), today we need to talk about the child's right to early and preschool education.

The developmental objectives mentioned in the *Education System Development Plan 2005 - 2010* were to increase the number of children enrolled in preschool programmes from 43 to 60 % by 2010 and to increase the preschool coverage from 96 to 98 %.<sup>124</sup> According to the *Education and Training Monitor Report, 2016*, the share of children aged 4 in Croatia in 2015 was 72,4 %.<sup>125</sup> Even though we registered an increase, we still lag behind European counties in terms of children's involvement in kindergartens. The EU average in 2015 was 94,3 %. The European Commission has, in accordance with the *Europe 2020 strategy*, set a priority of special care for early and pre-school education in the period between 2014 and 2020. For the purpose of early cognitive and socio-emotional development, by 2020 it is necessary to (1) increase coverage - from age 4 until commencement of regular education the coverage must be at least 95 % and (2) make early and pre-school education a part of the education system. Croatia still faces the challenge and commitment to create conditions for the coverage of 95 % of children within that system.

At the moment, 153.471 children are included in regular full-day programmes, and 41.783 children are included in preschool programmes. 44.247 (28,8 %) children aged 6 months to 3 years and 109.224 (71,2 %) children from the age of 4 until commencement of regular education are included in the early and preschool education system. Of the total number of preschool institutions, 347 (43,5 %) are private and 450 (56,5 %) are public. Private kinder-

120 See TIMSS reports available at <https://www.ncwvo.hr/medunarodna-istrazivanja/timss/>.

121 European Commission (2016): *PISA 2015 - EU performance and initial conclusions regarding education policies in Europe*. [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/pisa-2015-eu-policy-note\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en.pdf).

122 Ibid.

123 UNICEF (2013). *How parents and communities take care of children of the earliest age in Croatia*. Zagreb: UNICEF Office for Croatia, pg.

171. ([http://www.unicef.hr/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Kako\\_roditelji\\_i\\_zajednice\\_brinu\\_o\\_djeci\\_najmlade\\_dobi.pdf](http://www.unicef.hr/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Kako_roditelji_i_zajednice_brinu_o_djeci_najmlade_dobi.pdf)).

124 MSES (2005). *Education System Development Plan 2005 - 2010* Zagreb: MSES.

125 European Commission (2016).

gartens accommodate 21,68 %, and city/municipal/county kindergartens 78,32 % of preschool children.<sup>126</sup> It is necessary to once again point out the fact that, according to the aforementioned UNICEF report, a third of parents plan to use the services of nursery school, but most parents rely on non-formal sources of care. In one third of cases, the grandparents are the fundamental and only form of caring for children of nursery school age, while the same applies to nursery schools in only 1/6 of all cases.<sup>127</sup>

In Croatia, most students continue their education after the mandatory primary school. The rate of early school leaving is among the lowest in Europe.<sup>128</sup> The most common reasons for early abandonment of education are low level of educational achievements, lack of motivation and discipline problems.<sup>129</sup> As per the rate of grade repetition (under 3 %), Croatia is, together with Lithuania, United Kingdom and Iceland, among the countries with the lowest rate of grade repetition.<sup>130</sup> On the other end of the spectrum are Belgium (36,1 %), Spain, Luxemburg and Portugal (all above 30 %). Croatian 15-year-olds stand out in Europe according to one more indicator. As per PISA-results<sup>131</sup>, the Croatian students are the leading in Europe with an average satisfaction of 7,9 (on a scale from 0 to 10). The students in Finland and Lithuania are equally satisfied (7,9) - 47,8 % of students are very satisfied, 7,3 % are unsatisfied (OECD average: 34,1 % very satisfied and 11,8% unsatisfied students).

The number of students in gymnasium programmes in school year 2014/2015 was 53.652. In the same year, 70,7 % of regular secondary school students, approximately 140.000, were enrolled in one of 279 vocational curricula and programmes: "66,25 % of students were enrolled in four-year (and one five-year) vocational education programmes, 32,17 % in three-year education programmes (for associated crafts - UEM) and the so-called classic education model for craftsmanship and industry) and 1,58 % of students were enrolled in two-year, one-year and education programmes for students with disabilities".<sup>132</sup>

In the secondary school system in the Republic of Croatia, the students are educated for continuation of education and/or for acquisition of occupation/qualification for employment. Generally speaking, the secondary school system in Croatia includes the students aged 14 to 19, within three types of educational institutions: gymnasiums, vocational schools and art schools. According to the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, there were 751<sup>133</sup> secondary schools in Croatia in 2015, in which 171,102 students were educated.

The structure of education programmes in secondary schools depends on the type of secondary school. Secondary education of gymnasiums school students is based on a wide spectrum of general subjects which prepare the students for continuation of education at different faculties. Even though within the Croatian education system the gymnasiums often focus on certain scientific areas such as science or foreign languages, it is important to emphasise that students in all gymnasiums acquire knowledge of almost all scientific disciplines. That mean that they all learn all subjects, while the difference of programme focus is reflected only in the different number of hours of certain subjects.

In vocational schools, the structure of education programmes is based on the specific requirements of competences necessary for the qualification/occupation with which the student will enter the world of work. Education in vocational schools is carried out in accordance with teaching plans and programmes as well as vocational curricula comprising general and vocational contents. The ratios of general and vocational contents are different – depending on the level of qualification for the occupation and the sector within which the learning program is carried out. In art schools, the students are educated in accordance with the prescribed curricula which consist of the general contents and artistic part of the curriculum.

126 Ministry of Science and Education (2017). *Early and preschool education in numbers*, <https://mzo.hr/hr/rani-predskolski-odgoj-obrazovanje-u-brojka>, accessed on 2 May 2017.

127 UNICEF (2013).

128 The rate of early school leaving was 2,8 % in Croatia in 2015, while the European average is 11 % (European Commission, 2016).

129 European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/CEDEFOP (2014). *Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

130 Ibid.

131 The PISA Report 2015 (edition III) – Student's Well-Being. (2017) OECD.

132 *Vocational Education and Training System Development Plan (2016 - 2020)*, [http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocsImages/Program%20SOO\\_HR.pdf](http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocsImages/Program%20SOO_HR.pdf), pg. 6.

133 [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2016/08-01-03\\_01\\_2016.htm](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2016/08-01-03_01_2016.htm).

According to the number of students enrolled in secondary vocational schools, it can be concluded that most students are educated in different four-year programs, totally 81.584 in school year 2015/2016. In the same year, 53.394 students attended gymnasiums and 36.147 students attended industrial and similar schools. Art schools were attended by 5387 students (in the same year).

From the above data it can be concluded that in Croatia there is a great interest for secondary education, mostly education which enables employment and continuation of education. This is confirmed by the fact that very few students leave secondary education, (2,7 % in 2015)<sup>134</sup>.

**Table 4:** Number of schools and students at the beginning of school year 2015/2016

	Schools		Students		Students who finished school	
	total	classes	total	female students	total	female students
Secondary schools – total	751	7565	177.102	89.034	46.934	23.515
Secondary schools – regular	707	7338	175.512	88.367	46.474	23.331
Technical and associated	260	3361	81.584	39.504	20.389	10.058
Secondary art schools	54	118	5387	3791	1091	812
Industrial and craft	196	1746	35.147	12.138	11.422	4120
Secondary schools for students with disabilities	44	227	1590	667	460	184
Adult education	63	392	4815	1710	1974	713

Source: [http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2016/08-01-03\\_01\\_2016.htm](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2016/08-01-03_01_2016.htm)

There is also a great interest in enrolment in four-year secondary schools which enables continuation of education. In terms of enrolment in four-year secondary schools, the students show the most interest in enrolment into gymnasiums and four-year secondary schools in which the structure of curriculum is based on a wider spectrum of general subjects. The interest in enrolment into three-year vocational schools in Croatia is much lower. Three-year vocational schools fulfil their enrolment quotas in the second and third enrolment period, and even then, the quotas for certain occupations often remain unfulfilled.

**Gymnasiums** in Croatia usually fulfil their enrolment quotas with students who have the best results in primary education in the first enrolment period. According to curricular specificities, in the Croatian education system, there are general, language, classics, science-maths, science, sports and vocational experimental gymnasiums (healthcare gymnasium, tourist gymnasium, economics gymnasium, technical gymnasium). In terms of curricula, gymnasiums educate students mostly for continuation of education, so the educational course is focused on attaining an appropriate level and volume of general knowledge in order to successfully continue education at a higher level. Vocational gymnasiums carry out programmes designed in the last few years as a result of many EU development projects. The curricula of vocational gymnasiums are carried out with the aim of finding possibilities for a flexible harmonization of general and vocational learning contents and the needs of the economy.

Students finish gymnasium programmes after four years of successful education and passing the state leaving exam, by which they, according to the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, acquire a 4(2) qualification level on the basis of which they continue education at colleges or faculties, or possibly find employment.

<sup>134</sup> According to Eurostat data.

**Vocational schools** are a part of the education system in Croatia which comprises various education programmes for acquisition of qualifications on basis of which the students can find employment immediately after finishing education, but can also continue education at colleges or faculties. Vocational schools curricula are mostly based on the need to acquire different competences/qualifications for working in different economic sectors. Education in vocational schools can last from one to five years, depending on the sector and the qualification in question.

Work-based learning is particularly important in vocational education. According to the document *Work-Based Learning in Europe*<sup>135</sup> of the European Commission from 2013, work-based learning is the key element of vocational education and it is connected with the mission of vocational education to ensure acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences for the students. The mentioned document lists three models of *work-based learning* (WBL) in initial VET:

- **Alternance schemes or apprenticeship**, are typically known in Austria and Germany as the dual system. These are fundamentally based on the integration of companies as training providers together with VET schools or other education/training institutes. In these programmes, students spend a significant time on training in companies. In parallel, or in “alternating” periods, they acquire general and occupation-related knowledge and often complementary practical skills and key competences in VET schools or other education/training institutes. True apprenticeship differs from alternance schemes in several elements. It includes long periods of training and a high portion of training in the workplace. A contract binds the apprentice and the employer, and the apprentice earns a wage or award. Social partners are responsible for the quality of training in companies.

- **School-based VET** which includes on-the-job training periods in companies. On-the-job training periods typically cover internships, work placements or traineeships that are incorporated as a compulsory or optional element of VET programmes leading to formal qualifications. They can be of varying duration but typically represent less than 50% of the training programme duration (often around 25-30% or less). They are primarily intended as effective school-to-work transition mechanisms that allow young people to familiarise themselves with the world of work and thus facilitate their transition from education to employment.

- **Work-based learning** that is integrated in a school-based programme, through on-site labs, workshops, kitchens, restaurants, junior or practice firms, simulations or real business/industry project assignments. The aim is to create “real life” work environments, establish contacts and /or cooperation with real companies or clients, and develop entrepreneurship competences. Many countries in Europe combine these three general models of WBL. In general terms, VET at upper-secondary level is mainly school-based. Apprenticeship programmes often coexist with school-based systems. Strategic and professional documents (*Strategy of Education, Science and Technology, Vocational Education and Training Development Plan*) recognize the importance of WBL and provide a basis for its improvement and raising of its quality and coverage.

In VET in the Republic of Croatia, all three models of WBL are included and implemented in the forms shown in the following table.

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<sup>135</sup> European Commission (2013): *Work-Based Learning in Europe, Practices and Policy Pointers*. [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/work-based-learning-in-europe\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf).

**Table 5:** Types of Vocational Education in the Republic of Croatia

Types of vocational education in Croatia	Alternance schemes or apprenticeship	Periods of training in companies	School-based VET
Three-year education programmes for associated crafts (WBL is carried out in practical classes and exercises at a licenced craftsmen's and/or legal persons' facilities or in school workshops)	X		X
Three-year industrial and similar education programmes (WBL is carried out in practical classes and exercises in school workshops, at employers' facilities and in school laboratories, with professional practice carried out at employers' facilities (included in most programmes)		X	X
Four-year vocational education programmes (WBL is carried out in practical classes and exercises in school workshops and laboratories, with professional practice carried out at employers' facilities (included in most programmes)		X	X
Five-year vocational education programme – general nurse (WBL is carried out in practical exercises in school practicum classes, laboratories and clinical exercises).		X	X

Source: *Vocational Education and Training System Development Plan (2016-2020)*, [http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocImages/Program%20SOO\\_HR.pdf](http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocImages/Program%20SOO_HR.pdf), pg. 7.

Secondary vocational education finishes with the apprenticeship exam and/or thesis defence. The students of four-year and five-year vocational schools can take the state leaving exams along with the thesis defence. By doing so, they acquire the right to continue education at colleges or faculties. According to the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, after finishing a four-year vocational school the students acquire a 4.2 qualification/occupation level, on the basis of which they find employment and/or continue education at colleges or faculties. The students who finish three-year education programmes, according to the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, acquire a 4.1 qualification level or a 3 qualification level for one-year or two-year secondary vocational education.

**Art schools** in the Republic of Croatia carry out education programmes comprising the general and artistic/vocational contents. Secondary art schools carry out different programmes connected with different branches of arts for which the students are educated. The students can attend a whole programme in one art school (e.g. applied art and design school) or in two schools (e.g. music and dance schools).

Education in art schools lasts four years, after which the students acquire competences/qualifications for continuation of education and/or inclusion in the world of work. For continuation of education at colleges, academies or faculties, the students are required to pass the general programme state leaving exams. According to the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, after finishing art school and taking the state leaving exams, the students acquire a 4.2 qualification level, on the basis of which they can continue education at colleges, academies or faculties or find employment.

**The current state of the secondary education system** in Croatia indicates to several important facts on the basis on which it is possible to efficiently develop lifelong learning:

- The students want to acquire as high level of education as possible. That desire/motivation of students for education should be viewed as a special social value – social capital which should be treated by further development of learning opportunities and acquisition of various competences/qualifications in the process of lifelong learning.
- The education of students in three-year vocational schools represents a problem which needs to be solved by making structural changes in the education system – not basing that form of education on compulsion – poor success in the primary school enables the students to enrol into three-year vocational schools without any motivation for work in that field. Most often the students don't see their future in the occupation for which they are educated and try to leave it (by transferring to another school, retraining, finding employment which is not related to the occupation they were educated for).
- It is necessary to evaluate the relationship towards work and learning as to merge education and wider social benefits into one holistic approach to the need for acquiring knowledge and skills by which one's true potentials and talents will be truly realised.

Regardless of the different incentives given by the local community and various companies, there isn't much interest in three-year vocational education in Croatia. The motivation for enrolment into three-year vocational schools exists only for occupations where there is a recognized and promoted possibility of creative work as well as a possibility of continuation of education, for example occupations such as cook, hairdresser or photographer.

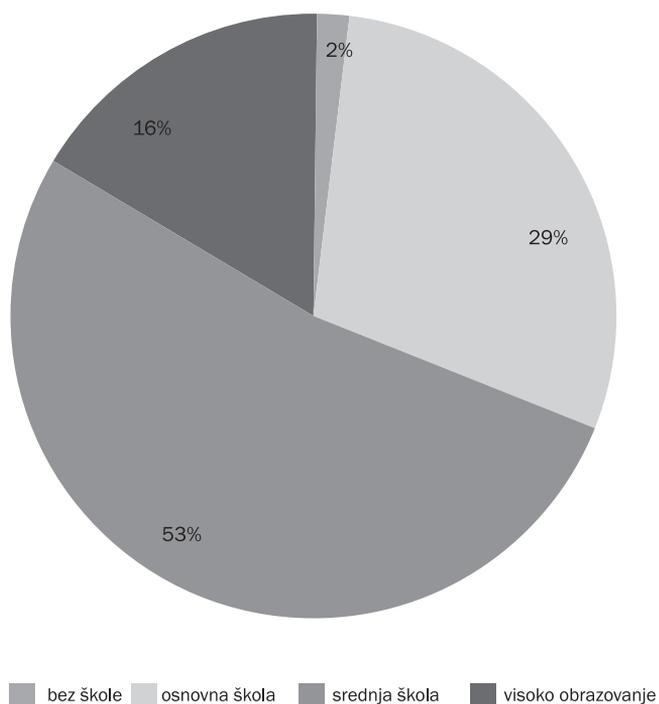
The development objective listed in the *Education System Development Plan 2005 - 2010* was to increase the total number of higher education graduates by 30 % by 2010. 134.493 students in total (105.004 full-time and 29.489 part-time) study at ten universities in Croatia (8 public and two private). At polytechnics and colleges, the ratio of full-time and part-time students is different; of 29.489 students in total, 13.003 were part-time and 16.931 full-time students. 117.525 students attend academic study programmes and 46.902 professional study programmes. There are 14 polytechnics in Croatia (11 public and 3 private) and 24 colleges (4 public and 20 private). Even though in terms of referent indicators of the *Education and Training 2020* Croatia lags behind the European average for acquisition of tertiary education (ages 30 to 34), in comparison with 2012, when that number was 23,1 %, there was a noticeable increase so in 2015 that number rose to 30,9 %.<sup>136</sup>

**Table 6.** Institutions and students (2016/2017)

Institution	No. of institutions	No. of children/students
Kindergarten	797	153.471
Primary school	899	321.307
Secondary school	402	159.695
Higher education	48	164.427

<sup>136</sup> European Commission (2016).

## EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION:<sup>137</sup>



**Table 7:** Key indicators (in %)<sup>138</sup>

		Croatia		EU average	
		2012	2015	2012	2015
<b>Referent values of the ET 2020 framework</b>					
Persons who leave education and training early (ages 18 to 24)		5,1	2,8	12,7	11
Acquisition of tertiary education (ages 30 to 34)		23,1	30,9	36	38,7
Early and preschool education (age 4 to the commencement of regular education)		71	72,4	93,2	94,3
Share of 15-year-olds with poor results:	Reading	18,7		17,8	
Share of 15-year-olds with poor results:	Mathematics	29,9		22,1	
Share of 15-year-olds with poor results:	Science	17,3		16,6	
Rate of employment of recent graduates as per acquired qualification (persons aged 20 to 34 who finished education 1 to 3 years before the reference year)	ISCED 3-8 (total)	60,2	62,6	75,9	76,9
Adult participation in lifelong learning (ages 25 to 64)	ISCED 0-8 (total)	3,3	3,1	9,2	10,7

<sup>137</sup> Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2016): Census 2011. Zagreb: CBS.

<sup>138</sup> European Commission (2016).

5.1.1. *Communication Plan: Children in Early and Preschool Educational institutions and Primary School Students*

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To raise awareness of the importance of good-quality early and preschool education as the basis and motivation for further learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform of the necessity of investment into preschool children as form of social investment and community strengthening</li> <li>2. To inform of the necessity of inclusion of children into a structured form of education (kindergarten, play-rooms etc.) for growth and development</li> <li>3. To encourage a partnership approach to insurance of structured programmes for all preschool children</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production of fliers for parents and the PLRG about the benefits of participation in early and pre-school education (EPE)</li> <li>2. Meetings with PLRG representatives, presentation of basic information on the importance of EPE</li> <li>3. Roundtables for parents and PLRG representatives for the purpose of open coordination</li> <li>4. Visits to the PLRG as examples of good practice for the purpose of exchange of experience and networking</li> <li>5. Informing the PLRG of the possibilities of using EU funds for the development of EPE</li> <li>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, PLRG, civil society organizations, association of counties and cities, competent ministries (Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Ministry of Agriculture)</p>

<p><b>To promote the values and vision of lifelong learning as drivers of personal and social development of the Republic of Croatia</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To influence the formation of students' positive attitudes towards knowledge and learning</li> <li>2. To encourage educational institutions, their founders and parents to learning, use of innovative pedagogical practices, project and problem learning and other innovative approaches to learning</li> <li>3. To encourage educational institutions, their founders and parents to non-formal and informal learning by partnering with civil society organizations</li> <li>4. To inform (primary school) 8th grade students about occupations attractive on the labour market and different career paths, to provide first career guidance experience</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production of promotional materials on the value of knowledge and learning (for children and students)</li> <li>2. Production of promotional and didactic materials for stakeholders in the teaching process in primary schools (teachers, parents, founders) about innovative approaches to learning and innovative pedagogical practices</li> <li>3. Themed workshops and lectures in cooperation with civil society organizations</li> <li>4. Themed lectures, workshops and counselling on the possibilities of secondary education and career guidance</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, primary schools, PLRG, civil society organizations, association of counties and cities, competent ministries (Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy)</p>
<p><b>To promote and create positive perceptions about vocational education and occupations, and work-based learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To influence the positive attitudes of parents and students towards learning and work-based learning, as well as vocational education and occupations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National informative-motivational campaign (special events, media releases, professional visits, workshops and lectures for primary school students, student competitions)</li> <li>2. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE CES, CCIC CCE, CEA, CCTC</p>

<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness in the modern society</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform students about the acquisition of competences for personal growth and development, and competitiveness on the labour market</li> <li>2. To inform and motivate teachers and other stakeholders in primary school education to direct the learning process towards acquiring key competences</li> <li>3. To inform and motivate teachers and other stakeholders in primary school education to acquire digital competences</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production of promotional materials on the value and applicability of knowledge and learning (for students)</li> <li>2. Production of promotional and didactic materials for stakeholders in the teaching process in primary schools (teachers, parents, founders) about innovative approaches to learning and innovative pedagogical practices</li> <li>3. Organization of lectures, workshops and other activities associated with professional orientation (for 8th grade students), with presentation of possibilities of continuation of formal secondary education.</li> <li>4. Organization of student competitions and events.</li> <li>5. Organization of motivational workshops on learning.</li> <li>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, CES, CCIC, primary schools, civil society organizations, PLRG and the local community, media</p>
<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To encourage partnerships with civil society organizations and programmes of social benefits of secondary schools</li> <li>2. To encourage student volunteering</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lectures, roundtables, workshops and other special events</li> <li>2. Marking the day of volunteer work</li> <li>3. Professional visits to civil society organizations in the local community</li> <li>4. Media releases about school cooperation in cooperation with civil society in specialized media</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, secondary schools, Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, National Foundation for Civil Society Development, PLRG and local communities, civil society organizations, volunteering centres, companies, media</p>

5.1.2. Communication Plan: Secondary School Students

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To promote the values and vision of lifelong learning as drivers of personal and social development of the Republic of Croatia</b></p>	<p>1. To influence the formation of secondary school students' positive attitudes about the <b>significance of usefulness/usability of</b> acquired knowledge and skills in all areas of life</p> <p>2. To encourage secondary schools, their founders and other secondary education stakeholders to use innovative pedagogical practices, project and problem learning and other innovative approaches to learning</p>	<p>1. Production of promotional materials on the value and applicability of knowledge and learning (for students)</p> <p>2. Production of promotional and didactic materials for stakeholders in the teaching process in secondary schools (teachers, parents, founders) about innovative approaches to learning and innovative pedagogical practices</p> <p>3. Themed workshops and lectures organized by the local community and relevant civil society organizations.</p> <p>4. Visits to social and economic institutions where students are informed about the work and challenges of developmental and/or unexpected situations</p> <p>5. Reports on the importance and value of lifelong learning in specialized media</p> <p>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, secondary schools, civil society organizations, PLRG and local communities, companies, media</p>

<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness in the modern society</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform students about the acquisition of competences for personal growth and development, and competitiveness on the labour market</li> <li>2. To inform and motivate teachers and other stakeholders in secondary school education to direct the learning process towards acquiring key competences</li> <li>3. To inform and motivate teachers and other stakeholders in secondary school education to acquire digital competences</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production of promotional materials on the value and applicability of knowledge and learning (for students)</li> <li>2. Production of promotional and didactic materials for stakeholders in the teaching process in secondary schools (teachers, parents, founders) about innovative approaches to learning and innovative pedagogical practices</li> <li>3. Organization of lectures, workshops and other activities associated with professional orientation, with presentation of possibilities of continuation of formal education</li> <li>4. Organization of student competitions and events in cooperation with companies, where the acquired competences will be assessed and evaluated by mentors from the economic sector</li> <li>5. Organization of students' professional visits to companies, with presentation and exchange of knowledge with employees</li> <li>6. Organization of motivational workshops on learning</li> <li>7. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, CES, CCIC, secondary schools, civil society organizations, PLRG and local communities, companies, media</p>
<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To encourage partnerships with civil society organizations and programmes of social benefits of secondary schools</li> <li>2. To encourage student volunteering</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lectures, roundtables, workshops and other special events</li> <li>2. Marking the day of volunteer work</li> <li>3. Professional visits to civil society organizations in the local community</li> <li>4. Media releases about school cooperation in cooperation with civil society in specialized media</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, MSE, secondary schools, Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, National Foundation for Civil Society Development, PLRG and local communities, civil society organizations, volunteering centres, companies, media</p>

5.1.3. Communication Plan: Students in the Higher Education System

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness for the purpose of adjusting to changes on the labour market and better employability</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To encourage secondary school students, especially potential students from untraditional and vulnerable social groups, to continue education at higher educational institutions</li> <li>2. To inform about the possibilities of performing professional practice in companies, institutions and civil society organizations</li> <li>3. To inform about the possibilities of self-employment and forms of support to beginner entrepreneurs</li> <li>4. To encourage participation in student competitions for development of business ideas and start-up companies, and use of available entrepreneurial infrastructure</li> <li>5. To influence the formation of positive attitudes towards the “right to a mistake” and learning from mistakes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specialized, special events in cooperation with implementation partners</li> <li>2. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and specialized media, intended for the academic community</li> <li>3. Specialized and targeted reports in specialized professional journals</li> <li>4. Establishing and regularly updating (AVETAE) specialized portals and communication via social networks (preparation of useful advice, links, short testimonials of successful students and/or recently employed former students etc.)</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, Higher educational institutions (with particular emphasis on managements, centres/offices for career management (and similar units within institutions)            Student associations            Competent ministry of education/science            Local and county authorities            Chamber of economy and employers’ associations            Institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure (development agencies, centres for development and stimulation of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial incubators etc.)            Andragogy associations            Media            Publishers of specialized/professional journals</p>

<p><b>To inform about the possibilities of recognition and evaluation non-formal and informal lifelong learning</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise students with the principles and possibilities of recognition and evaluation non-formal and informal learning (for the purpose of continuation of education) in the context of Croatian Qualifications Framework</p> <p>2. To familiarise higher educational institutions with the principles and possibilities of recognition and evaluation non-formal and informal learning (for the purpose of continuation of education) in the context of Croatian Qualifications Framework</p> <p>3. To encourage higher educational institutions to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning (for the purpose of continuation of education) in the context of Croatian Qualifications Framework</p>	<p>1. Making specialized portals for recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal learning; regular communication of the advantages of recognition and evaluation via the portal</p> <p>2. Promotional events intended for motivation of higher educational institutions to establish centres for recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Specialized events (conferences, events) in cooperation with implementation partners</p> <p>4. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and specialized media, intended for the academic community (e.g. magazines, TV and radio shows for the student population, student media)</p> <p>5. Examples and testimonials of successful personal experiences related to the advantages of recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>Competent ministry of education/science Higher educational institutions Chamber of economy and employers' associations Publishers of specialized journals</p>
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<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise future students with occupations required on the labour market</li> <li>2. To motivate future students to choose education programmes which guarantee better employability in deficit occupations</li> <li>3. To motivate finished students in surplus occupations to new learning and professional training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specialized events (career, job and employer fairs,) in cooperation with implementation partners</li> <li>2. Continuous career governance and counselling</li> <li>3. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and specialized media, intended for the academic community (e.g. magazines, TV and radio shows for the student population, student media) and on internet portals and social networks</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>Competent ministries of education/science and labour and the pension system Higher educational institutions Chamber and employers' associations Local and county authorities</p>
<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise students with the advantages of volunteering in civil society organizations during studies for the purpose of acquiring new skills in active citizenship and solving real social problems</li> <li>2. To inform higher educational institutions about the importance of application of the method of socially beneficial learning for realization of the civil mission of certain higher educational institutions, more effective connection with the civil sector and local community, and education of active citizens</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promotional events (conferences, seminars) intended for motivation of higher educational institutions to establish partnerships with the civil society organizations and initiate socially beneficial programmes</li> <li>2. Examples of good practice, testimonials of volunteer programmes participants</li> <li>3. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and specialized media, intended for the academic community</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>Competent ministry of education/science Higher educational institutions Student associations Civil society organizations Local and county authorities</p>

## 5.2. Existing and potential participants in adult education (ages 25 to 64)

From the official data it is evident that there aren't many participants in adult education in Croatia, and that there are many persons who need education. The data from the Labour Force Survey show that in Croatia, only 3,2 % of adults aged 25 to 64 participated in education and training in 2016<sup>139</sup>, which puts Croatia well below the European average and objectives of European and national strategies. It is therefore important to work on the full coverage of all categories of adults.

As far as the motives for participation are concerned, the data (referring to non-formal education) shows that in more than three quarters of cases (78,1 %) they are finding employment, finding a better job and career advancement.<sup>140</sup> If we analyse the categories of adults in Croatia per their work status, the share of participants in adult education in the total number is the highest in the group of inactive persons. According to the definition of the International Labour Organization, also used by Eurostat, those are the persons who are not part of the labour force, i.e. persons who are not employed nor have an unemployed status. In that group, there are 4,7 % of male and 5 % of female participants.

In terms of position in the workplace, the most represented persons are the persons in the group of high (managerial) positions (62,5 %), while in the group of manual workers the share of participation is 19,6 %.<sup>141</sup> Those with a high level of education participate more. In the group with secondary education, participation is at 3 %, in the group with higher education, participation is at 6,6 %, and in the group with unfinished primary education, participation is at 0,3 %.<sup>142</sup> This confirms the statements from the introduction which assert that the persons who need education the most participate in adult education the least. Even though Croatia was not included in the PIAAC survey, it can be assumed that in Croatia, as well as in rest of the EU, one fifth of the population have low reading and mathematical literacy, and one quarter have low computer literacy. If beside that they happened to be elderly persons, they will not find a cure for their lack of competence very easily. Therefore, it would be crucial to focus on persons who haven't finished primary school education, all persons who haven't finished secondary school education and persons without the necessary competences or renewed basic skills.

Looking at all the participants, there are more female than male participants in adult education. Such a ratio and those differences should be put in the context of gender differences in the family and professional lives<sup>143</sup> as well as the context of offered programmes. Some programmes are traditionally more frequently attended by men, and some by women, and for some programmes the names exist only in the female genus.

In terms of age groups, persons aged 25 to 34 (10,2 %) participate the most, and persons aged 55 to 64 the least (0,3 %).<sup>144</sup> There are big difference between participation in urban (5,4 %) and rural areas (1,9 %).<sup>145</sup> Universities develop programmes for persons of the third age. Despite the increasing number of elderly persons in Croatia, and despite the need for their active lives in the third age, the offer of programmes for that population exists only in a few bigger cities in Croatia.

It can be concluded that everyone needs education and that it is necessary to raise the level of total participation, but some groups require extra effort for their inclusion into educational processes. It is particularly important to focus activities on persons with lower level of education, persons in rural areas, elderly persons who lack the necessary competences and vulnerable groups.

139 Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

140 Eurostat (2007) Adult Education Survey. Database Population and social conditions / Education and Training. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/adult-education-survey>

141 Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

142 Ibid.

143 Eurobarometer (2015). Gender Equality. Special Eurobarometer 428. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/eurobarometer\\_report\\_2015\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/eurobarometer_report_2015_en.pdf)

144 Eurostat (2016) Education and training / Participation in education and training (Database). <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database/>

145 Ibid.

5.2.1. Communication plan: Employed Adults

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of learning and upgrading knowledge, skills and abilities for active participation and competitiveness on the labour market</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise employed adults with the importance of lifelong learning</li> <li>2. To encourage employed adults to inclusion into additional learning and training programmes</li> <li>3. To inform employed adults about the benefits of learning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National campaigns with the purpose of raising awareness of the need for additional learning and training</li> <li>2. Specialized reports about this subject in the media which are more available to employed adults – social networks</li> <li>3. Roundtables, conferences and other events dedicated to the need for additional learning and training</li> <li>4. Specialized portal dedicated to the subjects of employed adult learning, with list of available training programmes</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, trade unions, employers, educational institutions, local community</p>
<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness for the purpose of adjusting to changes on the labour market and better employability</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise employed adults with the importance of additional learning for participation in the labour market</li> <li>2. To raise awareness amongst employers about the significance of lifelong learning and employee professional training, with particular emphasis on owners of small and medium-sized companies</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Informational flier about the need for education upgrade available in places frequently visited by employers</li> <li>2. Informative workshops for owners of small and medium-sized companies</li> <li>3. Examples of good practice and personal testimonials about lifelong learning of employed adults</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, trade unions, employers, educational institutions</p>

<p><b>To inform about all forms of learning, for better social recognition of learning: spontaneous, accidental learning from mistakes, volunteering, online learning, social activities etc.</b></p>	<p>1. To inform employed adults about the forms of non-formal and informal learning as possibilities of additional training</p> <p>2. To familiarise employed adults with the benefits of non-formal and informal learning for competition on the labour market</p>	<p>1. National public campaigns about all forms of learning for the purpose of raising awareness amongst employed adults</p> <p>2. Specialized reports in the media</p> <p>3. Specialized portal dedicated to these subjects</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, educational institutions, business community, trade unions, competent ministry</p>
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5.2.2. Communication plan: Unemployed Adults and Adults Who Have Been Unemployed for Long Periods of Time

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness for the purpose of adjusting to changes on the labour market and better employability</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time about required skills, such as digital skills, which are necessary along with basic skills</li> <li>2. To motivate adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time to further learning and training by examples of good practice</li> <li>3. To familiarise unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time with the benefits of learning and training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National public campaigns for the purpose of raising awareness amongst the target group and the public, about their responsibility for learning</li> <li>2. Promotion events intended for unemployed persons for demonstrating the benefits of acquiring new knowledge</li> <li>3. Organization of national and local lifelong learning weeks for the purpose of better inclusion of unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time by use of positive examples</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>CES, CCIC, AVETAE, institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure, trade unions, employers, competent ministries</p>

<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time with adult education programmes available to them</li> <li>2. To inform unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time about occupations required on the labour market</li> <li>3. To encourage unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time to self-employment through entrepreneurial education programmes</li> <li>4. To encourage education service providers to offer entrepreneurial education programmes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public campaigns with messages about the existing adult education programmes</li> <li>2. Organization of promotional campaigns for the purpose of raising the profile of deficit occupations</li> <li>3. Educational institutions promotional activities will be focused on unemployed adults and adults who have been unemployed for long periods of time</li> <li>4. Promotional national and continuous campaigns for the purpose of creation of attitudes on the need for development of entrepreneurship</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, competent ministries, educational institutions, CES, CCIC, local government units, entrepreneurial infrastructure</p>
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### 5.2.3. Communication Plan: Adults Who Learn for Personal Development

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness in the modern society</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform the citizens (the general population) of the possibilities and places of creative workshops</li> <li>2. To inform employers about the importance of non-formal programmes for strengthening key competences</li> <li>3. To motivate the citizens to participate in various forms of non-formal education programmes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review of the creative workshops and other non-formal education programmes with links to providers and publication on the AVETAE website / special website or sub-domain</li> <li>2. Dedicate one subject to art as an important addition to STEM areas (STEAM instead of STEM) in the Lifelong Learning Week</li> <li>3. Promotional lectures for employers on the importance of personal development in the development of competitiveness and innovativeness</li> <li>4. Publish examples of good practice on AVETAE and EPALE website where the contribution of non-formal education to the quality of one's life is shown (link to institutions carrying out such programmes)</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE in cooperation with centres for culture (City of Zagreb, independent centres for culture), the Croatian Andragogy Society and association of librarians</p>

<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise the citizens with the importance of civic competences and possibilities and places of their adoption</li> <li>2. To motivate the citizens to join various forms of civic education</li> <li>3. To inform decision-makers in the local government about the importance of encouragement of civic education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a short promotional text on the possibilities and importance of civic education of adults and places where it is acquired, and expanding it by using EPALE and social networks</li> <li>2. Publishing examples of good practice regarding the importance and usefulness of civic education for the participation of citizens on local, regional and national levels (e.g. anticorruption activities, participation in decision-making regarding local budgets)</li> <li>3. Organization of promotional lectures about the importance and possibilities of civic education on local and regional levels</li> <li>4. Informing the general population about the importance of civic education for stability of democracy and overall development</li> <li>5. Link to various forms of civic education per regions and types of content (links from the AVETAE website)</li> <li>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, MSE, National Foundation for Civil Society Development, Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, associations providing civic education programmes</p>
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<p><b>To promote the values and vision of lifelong learning as drivers of personal and social development of the Republic of Croatia</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform the general population about the width and scope of the concept of lifelong learning</li> <li>2. To inform the professional public about the objectives and instruments of implementation of lifelong learning (concepts and current objectives on the EU level)</li> <li>3. To encourage key decision-makers to adopt the concept of lifelong learning and incorporate it in their key development documents</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promotional articles and examples of good practice as texts in the media for the purpose of demonstration of the transfer from lifelong education to lifelong learning</li> <li>2. Participating in professional seminars on adult education regarding the importance of non-formal and adult education for personal development</li> <li>3. Sending links to key EU and EAEA documents regarding these subjects to all persons involved in education in various ministries</li> <li>4. Publishing a thematic issue of professional-science journal on this subject</li> <li>5. Publishing texts about the examples of importance of education for personal development on EPALE and other appropriate publications</li> <li>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, MSE, specialized media in the area of education, professional associations for adult learning, university departments for pedagogy</p>
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### 5.3. Employers

The Croatian economy consists of a total of 168.931 business entities: 168.443 small and medium-sized enterprises and 488 big enterprises.<sup>146</sup> So, more than 99 % of all enterprises in Croatia are small and medium-sized enterprises and there are less than 1 % of big enterprises. In that regard, the Croatian economy is almost the same as the economies of all other countries where small and medium-sized enterprises account for more than 99 % of the total economy.

These statistical data date back to 2012, when the *First Report of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Observatory in the Republic of Croatia* was made, but it is safe to assume that the statistical indicators of today are similar. It is necessary to emphasise that, due to several different definitions of small and medium-sized enterprises and different classifications of enterprise sizes used by institutions keeping administrative and financial records on small and medium-sized enterprises, it is not possible to obtain accurate data using the available numeric indicators for different legal forms of small and medium-sized enterprises. In this context, all business entities regardless of their legal form (company, craft, association) are defined as enterprises. There are 155.828 (92,5 %) micro enterprises, 10.599 (6,3 %) small enterprises and 2015 (0,2 %) medium-sized enterprises. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasise the fact that micro enterprises, enterprises with up to 10 employees (> 92 %) dominate the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The main conclusions of the analysis of financial data from the *First Report of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Observatory* are as follows: first of all, the size of the enterprise matters. Of all three groups of small and medium-sized enterprises; micro, small and medium-sized, only the results of small enterprises were better, in comparison with the other two groups, micro enterprises and medium-sized enterprises. Those results were better not just during the expansion period, i.e. before the crisis of 2008, but also in the recession period, i.e. during the crisis, which is from 2008 onwards. Small enterprises were more successful than other enterprises in terms of generated added value, export and number of new jobs. Their abilities for flexibility and adjustment during the business cycle produced better results in terms of profits in the expansion phase, as well as fewer losses during the economic crisis. Small enterprises are also the leading force in terms of creation of new jobs. Unlike them, micro enterprises are more sensitive and exposed to the influence of the business cycle. Medium-sized enterprises are limited by the rigidness which hinders a quick adjustment to the changing market conditions and are concentrated in the process manufacturing sector, which is more exposed to external competition. Those indicators help us understand the need to create different development policies for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, because their needs and possibilities are not the same, just as the measures and activities of economic policies directed towards them.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are a crucial part of Croatian and any other economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Croatia generate 55 % of added value (EU average is 58 %) and 67 % of jobs (which is comparable to the EU average). However, the productivity, expressed as value added per capita, is still low, especially in micro enterprises. Precisely those enterprises are important for employment because they employ 9 out of 10 employees. That means that every 99 out of 100 enterprises are small and medium-sized, that every 2 out of 3 employees work in small and medium-sized enterprises, and that small and medium-sized enterprises generate 55 lipas of every kuna of added value.

The Small Business Act for Europe (SBA) is the leading initiative of EU policy which supports the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. It consists of a group of measures organized around ten principles, from entrepreneurship and “accessible public administration” to entering the international market. Based on this Act, fact sheets on small entrepreneurship are published annually for every member state. The intention is to increase the understanding of the latest trends and national policies which impact small and medium-sized enterprises. On the basis of these fact sheets, it is possible to compare the development of policies for small and medium-sized

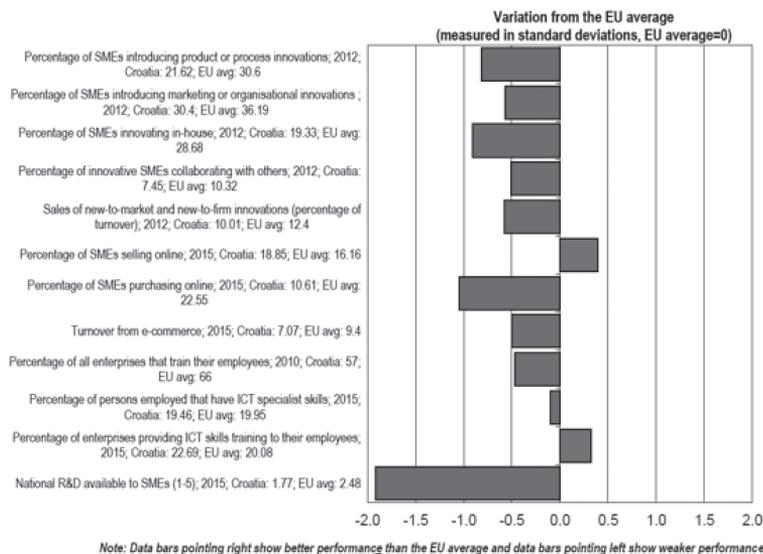
<sup>146</sup> Report of the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Observatory in the Republic of Croatia 2012, <https://poduzetnistvo.gov.hr/UserDocImages/EU%20projekti/IPA%20IIIC/Pobolj%20C5%A1anje%20administrativne%20u%C4%8Dinkovitosti%20na%20nacionalnoj%20razini/Izvjestaj%20opservatorija-2012.pdf>.

enterprises and the actual state and development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Croatia and other countries.

The Croatian fact sheet for 2016 shows under-average results in regards to most principles.<sup>147</sup> “Entrepreneurship” is assessed as particularly weak, while somewhat better results were achieved in “public procurement” and “accessible administration” areas, but tremendous efforts need to be invested for Croatia to finally become a friendly environment for small and medium-sized enterprises. The same fact sheet for Croatia for 2016 for profile “skills and innovations” states that in that area, Croatia received grades lower than the EU average, and that very little progress has been made since 2008. The percentage of small and medium-sized enterprises which introduce product or procedure innovations, marketing or organizational innovations, or deal with internal innovations, is very low, among the lowest in the EU, and that it continues to fall over the years.

A significant number of small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those in the process manufacturing industry, suffer from the shortage of workforce with skills and competences, which points to the weaknesses of the education system. Participation in lifelong learning is very low, as a consequence of undeveloped adult education system. However, the same report emphasises that, despite relatively weak results, education is enabled in a relatively wide network of providers of education and is also publicly available in an online version. Such a platform is useful for small and medium-sized enterprises because it enables free education for employees and is offered by public and private educational institutions. It is also indicated that the measures for encouragement of innovativeness, implemented over the past few years, mainly focused on the encouragement of cooperation between the business and academic communities, still haven’t yielded the expected results.

In the following table,<sup>148</sup> in the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA) fact sheet, in the report for Croatia, it is visible that the percentage of small and medium-sized enterprises which educate their employees is lower than the EU average, as well as the percentage of persons who possess ICT specialist skills, while the percentage of small and medium-sized enterprises which enable ICT education for their employees is above the EU average.<sup>149</sup>



Source: 2016 SBA Fact Sheets Croatia, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/22382/attachments/5/translations/en/renditions/pdf>, str. 12.

<sup>147</sup> 2016 SBA Fact Sheets Croatia, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/22382/attachments/5/translations/en/renditions/pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Data bars pointing right show better performance than the EU average, data bars pointing left show weaker performance.

The previous overview of the economy, mostly based on enterprise size, is an important factor for creation of lifelong learning policies in the context of employers' role. It can be concluded that small and medium-sized enterprises will not have the same needs and possibilities in comparison with big enterprises, and within the sub-groups of small and medium-sized enterprises it is not possible to expect the same policies, measures and results. According to the knowledge and experience of the employers' community, big enterprises, due to more financial and other resources that they possess, invest the most in the education of their employees. Such enterprises also create the programmes of student and other practices during education, volunteering, practice for persons with disabilities and different forms of non-formal and informal learning. However, to our knowledge, there are no statistical and other indicators about the share of lifelong learning activities.

On the other hand, small and medium-sized enterprises have considerably different possibilities and needs. It should be kept in mind that around 500 big and around 160.000 small and medium-sized enterprises represent the employers' community. The later are dominated by micro enterprises with the share of 92 %. Micro enterprises have up to 10 employees, while the average micro enterprise in Croatia has 5 employees. That fact shows that an enterprise with 5 employees cannot enable the same opportunities for learning to the entrepreneur – founder, and its employees. In such micro enterprises, the business processes are most often conducted in a way that all employees perform almost all jobs and there are no possibilities for major specialization, while an absence of just one employee is a risk for conduction of business processes. Small enterprises need workforce which will have a combination of technical and soft skills, such as group work, solving problem, innovativeness, knowledge of languages and managerial competences. Except in some specific sectors, small enterprises usually cannot offer wages as high as those in big enterprises for the same set of skills.

That, among others, is one of the reasons why employment in small enterprises is not attractive to the workforce. Small and medium-sized enterprises have been facing these difficulties for many years. The document *Action Plan of the Small Business Act for Europe*, which is currently in the preparation stage, is a result of these cognitions. This document, which in regard to the Act has an intention to, more concretely and in the sense of operational and applicable document, draw attention and activities to only some of the 10 chapters from the Act, and give instructions to policy-makers for small and medium-sized enterprises on the EU level. Unlike the *Small Business Act*, which observes and analyses 10 areas in the entrepreneurial environment, the subject Action Plan focuses on only six areas, of which particularly important are entrepreneurship and skills, and education. The Action Plan states that in 2006, initiative and entrepreneurship were accepted as one of eight key competences, but there is still no consensus about what defines entrepreneurship as a competence. Half of EU member states use the definition of entrepreneurship based on the document regarding key competences, a third of member states use their own definition, and about 10 member states have no common definition on the national level, so there is still a need for a clear definition of entrepreneurship as a competence. That is necessary to define the framework and components of that competence in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and relevant assessment tools. Broadly speaking, initiative and entrepreneurship can be defined as the ability to turn ideas into action, and every citizen should have some sense of initiative and entrepreneurship in order to personally develop, fulfil his/her role of an active citizen, be socially included and have an opportunity to find employment in the knowledge society.

Many member states face the problem of population aging. In that context, the shortage of workforce with the necessary skills is particularly pronounced, especially in some sectors and some regions. Shortage of workforce is particularly pronounced in the sectors of healthcare and social services, ICT, and research and engineering.

In 2015, a survey carried out by *Eurochambres* on a sample of 60.000 enterprises showed that the shortage of competent workforce is the fourth most important challenge enterprises face. Despite the differences between members states, there is a trend of young people opting for classic academic education, while simultaneously the number of young people who opt for vocational education is on the decline. However, some countries register an increased interest in vocational education, which is very important because it can solve two problematic phenomena: overqualification on one side, when young people with tertiary education must accept jobs intended for lower level of qualifications, and inadequate qualifications on the other side.

The main challenge for future workforce and labour market in EU member states will be how to achieve the level and type of qualifications which will satisfy the needs of the labour market and avoid a shortage of skills and imbalances. The EC sees a confirmation of that in the fact that over the years the number of job advertisements did not change, i.e. it did not fall, while the unemployment grew, which proves the imbalance between supply and demand on the labour market. That especially represents a problem in finding suitable workforce for small and medium-sized enterprises, and impedes their possibilities for growth and competitiveness. Along w the fact that almost 40 % of employers in the EU cannot find qualified workforce, it is necessary to note that one quarter of all adults in the EU nowadays “struggle” with the basic skills such as literacy, reading, numerical and digital skills.

5.3.1. Communication plan: Employers

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>In partnership with employers and trade unions, inform about and encourage continuous learning in the workplace</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise trade unions and employers with the importance of lifelong learning</li> <li>2. To inform trade unions and employers about different forms of learning, with particular emphasis on learning in the workplace</li> <li>3. To motivate trade unions and employers to better inclusion in employee learning activities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Campaigns focused on trade unions and employers</li> <li>2. Roundtables about learning in the workplace, with the aim of informing about different forms of learning</li> <li>3. Organization of national and local Lifelong Learning Weeks with the aim of better inclusion of trade unions and employers</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, competent ministry, employers, trade unions, local community, CES, CCIC</p>
<p><b>To inform about the benefits and advantages of learning in the workplace and the need to make free time for learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To raise awareness among trade unions and employers about the need to make free time for learning</li> <li>2. To raise awareness about the importance of digital skills as necessary competences</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National media campaigns on improving the skills and competences of employed persons</li> <li>2. Specialized events intended for owners of small and medium-sized enterprises, with the aim of raising awareness of the need for continuous learning of entrepreneurs and employees</li> <li>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, business community, CCE, CEA, trade unions, local community, educational institutions, institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure, competent ministries, CES</p>

<p><b>To inform about the importance of learning and upgrade of knowledge, skills and abilities for active participation and competitiveness on the labour market</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform and motivate owners of small and medium-sized enterprises to better inclusion into activities of additional learning in the workplace</li> <li>2. To motivate educational institutions and institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure to insure more co-financed or free education programmes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National media campaigns on improving the skills and competences of employed persons</li> <li>2. Special events for employers, with the aim of ensuring learning in the workplace as a factor of attractiveness of employment in small and medium-sized enterprises</li> <li>3. Special events for developing links and partnerships for learning in the workplace</li> <li>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, business community, CCE, CEA, trade unions, local community, educational institutions, institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure, competent ministries, CES</p>
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## 5.4. Vulnerable social groups

It is important to mention the groups in unfavourable positions which actually or potentially participate in adult education less. In a situation when the less educated, persons of low socioeconomic status, members of minority groups, immigrants, the elderly and the unemployed participate less, precisely those who need education the most, who could improve their social and economic position, are excluded. Detailed information about those groups are given in the introduction.

Persons who left the regular education system traditionally joined adult education, so adult education institutions are often seen as a second chance for those persons. Currently, Croatia has a very low rate of early school leaving, but that does not mean this problem should be ignored, especially because it is often associated with specific groups. That especially refers to Romani and persons with disabilities. A considerable number of Romani children do not finish mandatory education because they leave school at the age of 15, when the education obligation ceases. Gender and age differences are present as well. Romani women abandon education earlier than Romani men, and within that group, younger persons are more educated than elderly persons. Another risk group are persons with disabilities. The highest number of persons with disabilities finished only primary education, and creation of institutional preconditions for their better inclusion is still ongoing. That refers to openness to inclusive education, harmonization of curricula and encouragement for further education.

Managerial position in the work process provides more chances for participation in education. Persons who perform routine, manual jobs rarely participate in education. They are often less educated workers who didn't continue secondary education. The situation is not improved by non-formal training occasionally organized by some employers because workers don't often participate in those either. If persons in the vulnerable groups are employed at routine, manual jobs which require no qualifications, they are at a double risk.

Age differences are also important. Young adults aged 25 to 34 participate the most, but participation falls with age, especially after mid-forties. There are also differences between urban and rural areas. Persons in cities participate more than persons in rural areas. Therefore, elderly persons from vulnerable groups in rural areas are in particularly difficult situation when it comes to additional education.

The main obstacle in all groups with low education is the fact that they don't see the need for training or aren't aware of the benefits the education might bring them. Apart from that, those who don't participate justify that with shortage of time due to other obligations (which are obviously a priority for them) and high programmes costs. Employed persons expect a certain support from their employers, which they often don't get. Age and gender differences are present here as well. Family duties will more frequently limit women, costs will be a bigger obstacle to younger persons, and health to the elderly.

Due to all these reasons, which are explained in more detail in the introduction, special attention should be paid to all groups which for various reasons participate in education less. Each of those groups has specific problems, educational needs and ways of their fulfilment. The groups are very often not homogenous so they differ as per age and gender criteria or work status. That is why it is necessary to do more for those groups, in order to bring their participation to the same level as that of other participants.

5.4.1. Communication Plan: Persons with Low and Unfinished Education

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of learning and upgrade of knowledge, skills and abilities for active participation and competitiveness on the labour market</b></p>	<p>1. To motivate the persons who haven't finished primary education to lifelong learning and finishing primary education</p> <p>2. To motivate the persons who haven't acquired first qualification (finished secondary education) to lifelong learning and acquiring formal qualification</p> <p>3. To familiarise the persons without formal qualification with the possibilities of acquiring them locally.</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Providing specialized individual and group professional orientation counselling for persons with low and unfinished education</p> <p>3. Organizing specialized workshops about the opportunities and incentives for returning to formal education while employed</p> <p>4. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p> <p>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE CES and CCIC Trade union centres and individual trade unions Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...) Adult education institutions Chambers and employers' associations Employers Local and county authorities Andragogy associations Media Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences</p>

<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs.</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness of the need for lifelong learning and professional development in the workplace amongst all employed persons with low qualifications or without formal qualifications</p> <p>2. To raise awareness of the need for lifelong learning amongst persons who have been unemployed for long periods of time, especially middle-aged and older</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Promotional events (lectures, info days) aimed at informing employers about the need to upgrade knowledge, skills and competences of employees with low and unfinished education</p> <p>3. Promotional events (lectures, info days) aimed at informing adults about the need to upgrade knowledge, skills and competences</p> <p>4. Organizing specialized workshops about the opportunities and incentives for returning to formal education while employed</p> <p>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>CES and CCIC Chambers and employers' associations Trade union centres and individual trade unions Employers Local and county authorities Adult education institutions Andragogy associations</p>
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<p><b>To inform about the possibilities of recognition and evaluation non-formal and informal lifelong learning</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness about the value of knowledge acquired by work experience, non-formal and informal learning amongst the persons with low qualifications or without formal qualifications</p> <p>2. To encourage schools and adult education institutions to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Promotional events aimed at motivating schools and adult education institutions to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Specialized events (lectures, fairs, info days) in cooperation with partners in implementation</p> <p>4. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p> <p>5. Examples and testimonials of successful personal experiences regarding the advantage of recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>CES and CCIC Chambers and employers' associations Trade union centres and individual trade unions Local and county authorities Adult education institutions Andragogy associations</p>
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<p><b>To promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<p>1. To counsel and motivate persons without formal qualifications to acquire the first qualification in the adult education system</p> <p>2. To counsel and motivate persons without formal qualifications about the possibilities of (co) financing for acquisition of first qualification</p>	<p>1. Providing specialized individual and group professional orientation counselling regarding the advantages of lifelong learning for persons with unfinished education</p> <p>2. Making partnerships for opening local information points in local institutions or company offices (banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, the Croatian Post, utility companies, FINA...), for the distribution of promotional materials of the AVETAE and partners in promotion, as well as promotional materials about available adult education programmes in local educational institutions</p> <p>3. Organizing specialized workshops about the opportunities and incentives for returning to formal education while employed</p> <p>4. Organization of promotional events (information points, info days) about the skills required in the labour market and retraining possibilities</p> <p>5. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p> <p>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>CES and CCIC Chambers and employers' associations Trade union centres and individual trade unions Local and county authorities Adult education institutions Andragogy associations Local institutions: the Croatian Post, FINA, banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, utility companies, libraries</p>
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<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To inform the persons with low qualifications or without formal qualifications about the existence of local institutions and programmes for adult education</p> <p>2. To motivate the persons with low qualifications or without formal qualifications to personal counselling in local adult education institutions</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Making partnerships for opening local information points in local institutions or company offices (banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, the Croatian Post, utility companies, FINA...), for the distribution of promotional materials of the AVETAE and partners in promotion, as well as promotional materials about available adult education programmes in local educational institutions</p> <p>3. Specialized presentations of institutions and programmes for adult education (e.g. in the workplace, at fairs or info-days) in cooperation with partners in implementation</p> <p>4. Organization of promotional events (information points, info days) about the skills required in the labour market and retraining possibilities</p> <p>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>CES and CCIC Chambers and employers' associations Trade union centres and individual trade unions Local and county authorities Adult education institutions Andragogy associations Local institutions: the Croatian Post, FINA, banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, utility companies, libraries</p>
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#### 5.4.2. Communication Plan: Young Persons Outside Education and Employment

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of learning and upgrade of knowledge, skills and abilities for active participation and competitiveness on the labour market</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise young unemployed persons with measures of active employment policies and possibilities of personal counselling on career and professional development</p> <p>2. To inform young unemployed persons about the possibilities of self-employment and available forms of support to beginner entrepreneurs</p> <p>3. To motivate young unemployed persons to use the services of institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure.</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Providing specialized individual and group professional orientation counselling for young persons outside education and employment</p> <p>3. Organization of promotional events (information points, info days) about the possibilities of self-employment and available forms of support to beginner entrepreneurs</p> <p>4. Organization of promotional events (information points, info days) about the skills required in the labour market and retraining possibilities</p> <p>5. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p> <p>6. Examples and testimonials of successful personal experiences regarding the advantage of personal development and lifelong learning</p> <p>7. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, CES and CCIC</p> <p>Trade union centres and individual trade unions</p> <p>Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...)</p> <p>Institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure (development agencies, centres for development of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial incubators, etc.)</p> <p>Adult education institutions</p> <p>Chambers and employers' associations</p> <p>Employers</p> <p>Local and county authorities</p> <p>Andragogy associations</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences</p>

<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To motivate young unemployed persons to a proactive approach to career and professional development planning</li> <li>2. To inform and motivate young unemployed persons to training without employment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</li> <li>2. Providing specialized individual and group professional orientation counselling on career and professional development planning</li> <li>3. Specialized events (lectures, fairs, info days) about available possibilities for training and acquisition of new skills</li> <li>4. Promotional events for presenting measures and incentives available for training, retraining and employment, as well as institutions implementing those measures and incentives</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, CES and CCIC  Trade union centres and individual trade unions  Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...)  Institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure (development agencies, centres for development of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial incubators, etc.)  Adult education institutions  Chambers and employers' associations  Employers  Local and county authorities  Andragogy associations  Media  Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences</p>
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<p><b>To inform about the possibilities of recognition and evaluation non-formal and informal lifelong learning</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness amongst young unemployed persons about the value of knowledge acquired by work experience, non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. To encourage schools and adult education institutions to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Promotional events aimed at motivating schools and adult education institutions to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Specialized events (lectures, fairs, info days) about the value of knowledge acquired by work experience, non-formal and informal learning in cooperation with partners in implementation</p> <p>4. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p> <p>5. Examples and testimonials of successful personal experiences regarding the advantage of recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, CES and CCIC Trade union centres and individual trade unions Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...) Institutions of entrepreneurial infrastructure (development agencies, centres for development of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial incubators, etc.) Adult education institutions Chambers and employers' associations Employers Local and county authorities Andragogy associations Media Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences</p>
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<p><b>To promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise young unemployed persons with finished gymnasium with the possibilities of retraining for vocational occupations in local schools and adult education institutions</li> <li>2. To inform young unemployed persons about the possibilities of studying at local higher education institutions and acquisition of additional qualifications, which ensure the conditions for enrolment into local higher education institutions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing specialized individual and group professional orientation counselling on the advantages of lifelong learning for young persons outside education and employment</li> <li>2. Making partnerships for opening local information points in local institutions or company offices (banks, insurance companies, shopping centres), for the distribution of promotional materials of the AVETAE and partners in promotion, as well as promotional materials about available adult education programmes in local educational institutions</li> <li>3. Organization of promotional events (info days) about the skills required in the labour market and retraining possibilities</li> <li>4. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE, CES and CCIC Trade union centres and individual trade unions Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...) Adult education institutions Chambers and employers' associations Local and county authorities Andragogy associations Media Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences, banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, utility companies, libraries</p>
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<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise young unemployed persons with the existence of local adult education institutions and programmes</p> <p>2. To motivate young unemployed persons to personal counselling in local adult education institutions</p>	<p>1. Specialized presentations of adult education institutions and programmes (e.g. in CES, CCIC, at fairs, info-days) in cooperation with partners in implementation</p> <p>2. Making partnerships for opening local information points in local institutions or company offices (banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, the Croatian Post, utility companies, FINA...), for the distribution of promotional materials of the AVETAE and partners in promotion, as well as promotional materials about available programmes</p> <p>3. Organization of promotional events (info days) about available possibilities for professional orientation and counselling</p>	<p>AVETAE, CES and CCIC  Trade union centres and individual trade unions  Competent ministries (education, labour, economy...)  Adult education institutions  Chambers and employers' associations  Local and county authorities  Andragogy associations  Media  Institutions dealing with persons serving sentences, banks, insurance companies, shopping centres, utility companies, libraries</p>
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### 5.4.3. Communication Plan: Persons Who Live in Rural Areas

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise adults in rural areas with the importance of all forms of learning for their personal and professional development</p> <p>2. To familiarise adults in rural areas with the possibilities of distance learning and the importance of improving digital competences for professional development and new learning possibilities</p>	<p>1. Making promotional materials indicating the problems of educational structure in rural areas and the importance of additional education for professional development, new professions and new necessary competences.</p> <p>2. Holding informative meetings in associations of agricultural producers, presentation of all forms and possibilities of distance learning.</p> <p>3. Sending promotional messages and short instructions by smartphones (to addresses gathered with the help of local education providers or associations), calling for distance learning and combined learning in local education centres.</p> <p>4. Sending promotional messages on local radio stations, inviting the rural population to learn in various forms (local education centres, distance learning, participation in education activities of professional associations).</p> <p>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Ministry competent for agriculture Ministry competent for regional development Associations of agricultural producers Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs</p>

<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise adults in rural areas with places where they can acquire or evaluate competences</p> <p>2. To familiarise associations in rural areas which gather different target groups with the possibilities of cooperation with educational institutions</p>	<p>1. Making a catalogue of educational programmes available to persons in rural areas with poor traffic connections with regional centres (distance education, incentives for participation, free programmes etc.); per counties and general overview for Croatia</p> <p>2. Familiarising offices responsible for education on the county level with promotional activities and informing about all possibilities of education of persons with difficult access to regional education centres (letters and joint meetings of county representatives)</p> <p>3. Motivating associations in rural areas to include stimulation and participation in adult education into their programmes (sending basic information about different forms of flexible formal education, incentives for education and expected benefits)</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Ministry competent for agriculture Ministry competent for regional development Associations of agricultural producers Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs</p>
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#### 5.4.4. Communication Plan: The Romani National Minority

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise members of the Romani community with the need to upgrade knowledge, skills and competences throughout life</li> <li>2. To familiarise educational institutions with the importance of adjustment of educational programmes to each target group, including adult Romani persons</li> <li>3. To promote inclusive education as a precondition for acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences of Romani persons</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organization of promotional events for the general Romani population in cooperation with Romani associations about the importance of lifelong learning</li> <li>2. Organization of meetings with the representatives of Romani associations, familiarisation with the importance, programmes and institutions for adult education</li> <li>3. Organization of joint meetings within LPE with the representatives of Romani associations, employers, education providers and local authorities about the importance of inclusion of Romani persons into adult education</li> <li>4. Making brochures/fliers for promotion of education of the Romani</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs Romani associations CES Local government units LPE</p>

<p><b>To promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise adult Romani persons with lifelong learning and promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity for acquisition of knowledge and skills</p>	<p>1. Organization of informative evets about finishing primary school for adults in cooperation with Romani associations on the local level</p> <p>2. Organization of informative evets about inclusion into secondary education of Romani persons who left early education early in cooperation with Romani associations on the local level</p> <p>3. Publishing examples of good practice about the importance and benefits of education for Romani persons who finished secondary education in adult education programmes (sending ready materials to printed and electronic media and portals)</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE CES Romani associations</p>
<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To inform members of the Romani community about targeted measures and incentives for education of Romani persons</p> <p>2. To inform Romani associations about available measures (e.g. EU projects) through which they can organize education and training for their members</p>	<p>1. Making fliers with a list of all measures and incentives for education and training available to the Romani</p> <p>2. Organizing informative workshops for representatives of Romani associations about the possibilities of withdrawing national and EU funds for projects of education and training of their members</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Romani associations MSE</p>

<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise Romani persons with the importance of civic education with the aim of acquiring knowledge about rights and skills for exercising those rights</li> <li>2. To motivate Romani persons to inclusion of the equality problem and solving educational problems associated with the Romani persons into all phases of civic education implementation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizing a media campaign focused on the importance of civic education as a form of learning about rights and ways of exercising those rights</li> <li>2. Organizing roundtables related to inclusion of subjects connected to non-discrimination of the Romani into all phases of civic education implementation</li> <li>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE MSE Romani associations</p>
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#### 5.4.5. Communication Plan: Persons with Disabilities

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise persons with disabilities with the need to upgrade knowledge, skills and competences throughout life</li> <li>2. To familiarise educational institutions with the importance of adjusting facilities and classes to persons with disabilities</li> <li>3. To promote inclusive education as a precondition for acquiring knowledge, skills and competences of persons with disabilities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organization of promotional events in cooperation with associations of persons with disabilities about the importance of lifelong learning</li> <li>2. Making a manual about legal regulations associated with physical adjustment of facilities to persons with disabilities, with emphasis on educational institutions</li> <li>3. Organizing workshops about the possibilities and the need to use assistive technology in adult education</li> <li>4. Making brochures/fliers promoting the principle of inclusion into education</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE Associations of persons with disabilities Disability ombudsman</p>
<p><b>To promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform persons with disabilities about lifelong learning and promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills within professional rehabilitation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizing informative events in cooperation with associations of persons with disabilities about the procedure and conditions for inclusion into professional rehabilitation of persons with disabilities</li> <li>2. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE CES Centres for professional rehabilitation Associations of persons with disabilities</p>

<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise persons with disabilities with the target measures and incentives for education and training of that social group</p> <p>2. To inform associations of persons with disabilities about available measures (e.g. EU projects) through which they can organize education and training for their members</p>	<p>1. Making fliers with a list of all measures and incentives for education and training available to persons with disabilities</p> <p>2. Organizing informative workshops for representatives of associations of persons with disabilities about the possibilities of withdrawing national and EU funds for projects of education and training of their members</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Associations of persons with disabilities</p>
<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise persons with disabilities with the importance of civic education with the aim of acquiring knowledge about rights and skills for exercising those rights</p> <p>2. To raise awareness about the importance of inclusion of subjects connected to persons with disabilities into all phases of civic education implementation</p>	<p>1. Organizing a media campaign focused on the importance of civic education as a form of learning about rights and ways of exercising those rights –focusing a part of campaign on the rights of persons with disabilities</p> <p>2. Organizing roundtables related to inclusion of subjects connected to persons with disabilities into all phases of civic education implementation</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE MSE Associations of persons with disabilities Disability ombudsman</p>

#### 5.4.6. Communication Plan: Migrants

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform adult immigrants, asylum seekers and asylees about the need to upgrade knowledge, skills and competences throughout life</li> <li>2. To familiarise educational institutions with the importance of adjusting educational programmes to the needs of immigrants, asylum seekers and asylees</li> <li>3. To promote education as a precondition for successful integration</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organization of promotional events in cooperation with associations working with asylum seekers, immigrants, refugees and persons under subsidiary protection</li> <li>2. Printing and distributing manuals about legal regulations associated with rights and possibilities of education of asylum seekers or persons under subsidiary protection</li> <li>3. Organizing workshops in centres for accommodation of asylum seekers and promoting education in cooperation with associations working with asylum seekers</li> <li>4. Making brochures/fliers promoting the principle of inclusion of immigrants and asylum seekers into education</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE Associations of persons working with asylum seekers, representatives of the biggest immigrant associations</p>

<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<p>1. To inform immigrants and asylum seekers about lifelong learning and promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills</p>	<p>1. Organizing informative events in cooperation with immigrant and asylum seekers associations, familiarisation with procedures of recognizing previously acquired education</p> <p>2. Making an overview of all levels and forms of education necessary for new immigrants and asylum seekers (from learning Croatian to retraining and further education); mobile-friendly website with links to pages or social networks most frequently visited by those groups</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Associations working with asylum seekers and persons under subsidiary protection Representatives of the biggest immigrant associations</p>
<p><b>To inform about the needs and possibilities of civic education</b></p>	<p>1. To familiarise the persons moving to Croatia from countries with undemocratic regimes with the importance of civic education for the purpose of acquiring knowledge about the significance of liberal democracy, their own rights and responsibilities</p> <p>2. To raise awareness about the importance of subjects connected to forced migrations into all phases of civic education implementation</p>	<p>1. Organizing meetings with organizations dealing with immigrants' or asylum seekers' education about encouragement and systemic civic education of those target groups</p> <p>2. Organizing promotional events in facilities where asylum seekers gather and discussions about the importance of civic education</p> <p>3. Creating an online review of all organizations carrying out different elements of civic education of asylum seekers, persons under subsidiary protection (basic information and instructions)</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE MSE Associations working with asylum seekers and persons under subsidiary protection Representatives of the biggest immigrant associations</p>

5.4.7. Communication Plan: Persons of the Third Age and Intergenerational Learning

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To raise awareness amongst the stakeholders in the society about the benefits of learning and responsibility for learning</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise persons of the third age with the need for and importance of learning in the older age</li> <li>2. To familiarise adult education institutions with the concept of universities of the third age</li> <li>3. To inform the representatives of the local government units about the possibilities of learning in the older age</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Printing promotional materials (fliers) about the possibilities of and need for learning in the older age</li> <li>2. Organizing meetings in pensioners' associations about the possibilities of learning in the older age</li> <li>3. Organizing promotional exhibitions and discussions in libraries about learning in the older age</li> <li>4. Organizing roundtables for representatives of university pedagogy departments about the possibilities of including geragogy into university programmes</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE Croatian Association of School Librarians, andragogy associations, university representatives</p>

<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise persons of the third age with the possibilities of using their knowledge and experience in various forms of work</li> <li>2. To familiarise employers with the possibilities and advantages of intergenerational learning and use of senior experts' mentorship</li> <li>3. To inform the general public about various forms of paid and volunteer work of elderly people which improve the competitiveness of the economy and social cohesion</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publishing texts about the <i>Silver economy</i> and the role of intergenerational learning on the EPALE (links to pensioners' associations, employers' associations and andragogy associations' websites)</li> <li>2. Familiarising pensioners' associations with various forms and possibilities of inclusion of pensioners into the labour market, whereat they would use their knowledge and experience to mentor younger experts</li> <li>3. Organizing meetings with employers' associations and their familiarisation with the advantages of intergenerational learning by using older experts' experience</li> <li>4. Promoting volunteering in the third age by publishing examples of good practice and sending such materials to printed and electronic media</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE CEA CCTC CES Andragogy associations Pensioners' associations</p>
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<p><b>To inform about occupations attractive on the labour market, available education programmes, available measures and incentives for additional education and training</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To familiarise persons of the third age with the facilities where systematic education of persons of the third age is carried out</li> <li>2. To encourage the organizers of education of persons of the third age to organize promotional activities to attract new students</li> <li>3. To encourage the networking of organizers of education of persons of the third age in order to achieve synergy in the promotion of that activity</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Printing a review of facilities for education of persons of the third age with information on the educational specificities and contact information (fliers and brochures available in all pensioners' associations, libraries, adult education institutions)</li> <li>2. Organizing open door days in all organizations which systematically deal with the education of persons of the third age</li> <li>3. Participating in specialized programmes on public television with clear instructions where the persons of the third age can join education</li> <li>4. Organizing the initial meeting in the AVETAE which would gather all organizers of education of persons of the third age, and where they would agree upon the joint promotional activities</li> <li>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE Croatian Association of School Librarians andragogy associations, university representatives, universities of the third age and similar programmes</p>
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## 5.5. Decision-makers in education policy and providers of services in lifelong learning

In the European context, cooperation and coordination of education policies, especially those from the area of adult education, date back to 1951, when the support for retraining and vocational education was being considered, as a key factor of workforce mobility. Considering the different national circumstances of development of education policies, the European dimension has certain limitations, which can be overcome with the open coordination method. This method purports the transfer of knowledge, experience and good practices in the area of public policies, institutional and other associated solutions between different political systems. Therefore, it is possible to talk about a multi-level education policy on the EU level, because it purports the coordination of member states' national education policies focused on common objectives (workforce mobility and competitiveness, development of tolerance, inclusiveness and democracy) by the use of common instruments such as strategies and indicators, resources etc.<sup>150</sup>

Even though it is difficult, if not impossible, to develop a common European education policy and therefore lifelong learning and/or adult education policies, it is possible to recognize best practices, common objectives and challenges, applicable on the EU level. In the report to the European Commission from 2015,<sup>151</sup> as common challenges stand out: increase of adult learning rate, reduction of the share of adults with low basic skills and considerable reduction of the share of adults with finished lower secondary school qualification. At the same time, an increase of public investments into learning and education is recommended, with a focus on excluded and vulnerable social groups, increase of learning in the workplace and creation of positive attitudes about lifelong learning amongst key target groups. An entire analytical framework, recommended by that study, is shown in the following image.

As it is visible from the previous deliberations, key factors of success of efficient adult education are entirely recognized and applied in this strategic framework, which is especially evident from the action plan priorities, which refer to: raising awareness about the necessity of lifelong learning for personal and social development; promotion of lifelong learning amongst excluded and vulnerable social groups; direction of lifelong learning towards employers' and participants' needs, and encouragement of available good-quality adult education, with particular emphasis on flexibility and recognition of non-formal/informal learning.

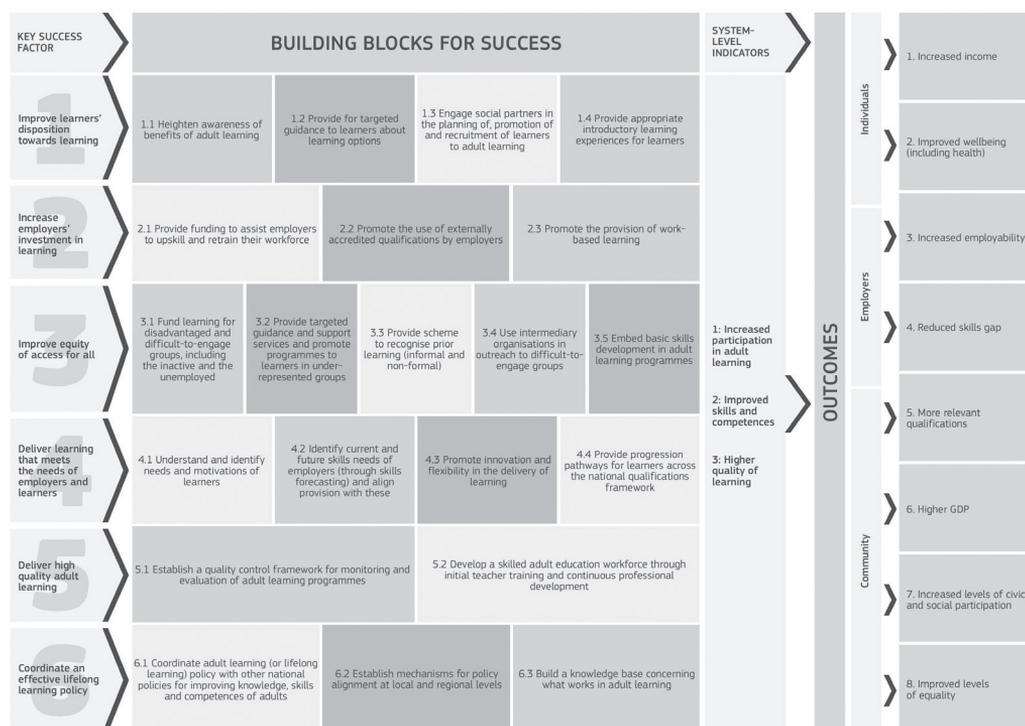
In the continuation of the strategic framework action plan, special attention will be paid to the coordination of all actors who participate in adoption and implementation of education policy:

- public sector institutions, i.e. public authority and local government institutions, whose activities are relevant for promotion of lifelong learning, whereas the formal (functional) authorities of institutions will not be evaluated as key factors
- supporting institutions, such as education agencies, employment services (CES, CCIC), bodies dealing with social work and other associated/similar sectoral and intersectoral activities
- associations of lifelong learning stakeholders, mentioned as target groups in this strategic framework, and
- providers of education services, regardless of their place in the education system and the type (formal, non-formal, informal) and level of education they provide.

<sup>150</sup> Puljiz, Šutalo and Živčić (2010).

<sup>151</sup> European Commission (2015 a).

## Framework for analysing adult learning policies in the EU



Source: *Towards more effective policies of adult education* (summary), <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=hr&pubId=7961&furtherPubs=yes>.

Teaching staff on all levels of education are a special target group. The data shows that fewer teaching staff participate in professional training, one of the important forms of lifelong learning. The ETTA<sup>152</sup> data shows that more workers<sup>153</sup> in the education system for which they are competent participate in some form of professional training. Incomplete AVETAE data shows that around 30 % of teachers and other workers in education participate in permanent professional training.

Even though there are no detailed analyses about the reasons of lower participation in lifelong learning, it can be assumed that they are in the limited offer of contemporary professional training programmes mostly due to insufficient financial resources, a part of institutions has no professional training annual plan, the offer of professional training doesn't meet their interests, etc.

In many cases there is a lack of intrinsic motivation for professional development of educational workers, and the existing incentive system within the education system is not sufficient.<sup>154</sup>

One of the five medium-term objectives of the *Riga Conclusions*,<sup>155</sup> supported by ministers in charge of vocational education and training of EU members states, candidate countries and European Economic Area countries in

152 Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) (2013). *Analysis of the existing ETTA system for professional training of educational workers and assessment of the needs for professional training of educational workers*. Zagreb: ETTA

153 Preschool teachers, primary and secondary school teachers, teaching assistants, expert associates, principals.

154 ETTA, op. cit.

155 Riga Conclusions of the ministers in charge of vocational education and training, within the Copenhagen Process on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training. <http://www.asoo.hr/UserDocsImages/ZAKLJUČCI%20I%20RIGE%202015.docx>

2015, is to present systemic approaches and possibilities for initial and continuous professional development of vocational teachers and mentors in schools and workplace environments. In June 2016, the European Commission adopted a comprehensive New Skills Agenda for Europe. Support for teachers and vocational teachers was emphasized with the aim of system modernization.

The *Strategy of Education, Science and Technology* lists the improvement of the system of permanent professional development and upgrading of educational staff as one its the main objectives (4th objective). Also, the Strategy emphasises that good-quality and motivated teachers are the basis of the whole lifelong learning system and that for them it is necessary to establish structural preconditions in order to become aware and face the need for constant pedagogic, psychological, andragogic and professional training. The Strategy recognizes the need for introduction of a comprehensive quality assurance system in teachers' professional development, which would comprise initial education, internship and permanent professional training.

The *VET System Development Programme (2016 – 2020)* lists the needs in the professional training system of vocational teachers: the need to increase the number of teachers participating in the professional training process; ensuring greater availability, relevance of content and materials for professional development; strengthening the quality of the professional training process; harmonization of national priorities and training based on the needs of teachers/schools and long-term definition of vocational training objectives; providing mechanisms and measures to strengthen the teaching competences and motivation for professional development; the development of a comprehensive vocational training strategy and the improvement of teacher advancement system.

Increasing the number of teaching staff at all levels of education participating in professional training, as a form of lifelong learning, can also contribute to raising adult participation in lifelong learning processes and approaching the ET 2020 target of 15 %.

### 5.5.1. Communication Plan: Decision-Makers in Education Policy

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/ tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To explore the perception, awareness, motivation and information about lifelong learning for the purpose of making foundations for future guidelines of the Strategic framework for promotion of lifelong learning</b></p>	<p>1. To do a research of all relevant social stakeholders about the key determinants of lifelong learning</p>	<p>1. Communication of research results to all relevant social stakeholders of lifelong learning, via special scientific and professional events, media releases and appropriate internet campaign.</p> <p>2. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, ASHE, AMEUP, MSE, educational and science institutions, with particular emphasis on science-educational institutions in the field of education sciences, media, bodies and institutions in charge of planning and implementation of educational reform in Croatia</p>
<p><b>To raise awareness amongst the stakeholders in the society about the benefits of learning and responsibility for learning</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness of the dimension of significance and responsibility of institutions for lifelong learning, regardless of the area of work and formal authorities, amongst all government and local government authorities</p> <p>2. To inform the government and local government authorities about relevant activities and initiatives of the competent ministry and education agencies</p> <p>3. To encourage the stakeholders of lifelong learning to proactive participation in public discussions about public competitions, calls and other forms of social support to learning</p>	<p>1. Organizing regular meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of the local government, about the support for activities and holders of lifelong learning in local communities</p> <p>2. Organizing regular coordination meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of the competent ministry and educational agencies</p> <p>3. Organizing regular coordination meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of the competent ministry and educational agencies and representatives of key state institutions (ministries, the Parliament...), about the support for activities and holders of lifelong learning in local communities</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE, ETTA, ASHE, AMEUP, MSE Other ministries in the Croatian Government Croatian Parliament Public administration offices, county, city and municipal administrations</p>

<p><b>To raise awareness about the importance of partnership amongst stakeholders lifelong learning: national and local authorities, the public sector, private sector, the education system, the business community, social partners, non-governmental sector, citizens etc.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To raise awareness amongst all stakeholders in lifelong learning, regardless of the area of work and formal authorities, about the importance of partnership in planning and implementation of lifelong learning activities</li> <li>2. To inform the stakeholders in lifelong learning about public competitions, calls and other possibilities for making partnerships and partnership action in the field of lifelong learning</li> <li>3. To create systems and mechanisms of support to promotion of educational programmes and lifelong learning institutions, and making partnerships and partnership action in the field of lifelong learning</li> <li>4. To create systems and mechanisms of influence of participants/ persons who learn on the education policy in the field of lifelong learning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Targeted campaign, aimed at stakeholders in lifelong learning and key persons (principles of institutions and organizations) about the possibilities of including and financing partner activities from national and EU funds, within the Lifelong Learning Week and specialized events</li> <li>2. Organization and media releases about info-days, "open door days" as occasional, and info-points as a permanent form of informing about the possibilities of cooperation and partnership in the field of lifelong learning</li> <li>3. Promoting internet databases of stakeholders, interested parties in projects and other activities in the field of lifelong learning, with a possibility of interactive searching, within EPALÉ and other internet portals</li> <li>4. Promoting internet info-points, with information about public competitions and other forms of financing partnership projects in the field of lifelong learning</li> <li>5. Creating internet feedback and public discussion systems, and organizing partnership meetings with representatives of the users of educational programmes and other persons who learn</li> <li>6. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAÉ, ETTA, ASHE, AMEUP, MSE Other ministries in the Croatian Government Croatian Government Office for Civil Society National Foundation for Civil Society Development CCE CAE Unions Representatives of the teaching staff, educational institutions and their associations Public administration offices, county, city and municipal administrations</p>
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<p><b>To inform about the importance of learning and upgrade of knowledge, skills and abilities for active participation and competitiveness on the labour market</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness of the dimension of responsibility of lifelong learning institutions amongst government and local government authorities working in social welfare</p>	<p>1. Organizing regular meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of social welfare institutions, about the support for activities and holders of lifelong learning in local communities</p> <p>2. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of target groups and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE ETTA ASHE AMEUP MSE ESC CES Centres for social welfare and other institutions from the social work and care system, county, city and municipal administrations</p>
<p><b>To inform about all forms of learning, for better social recognition of learning: spontaneous, accidental learning from mistakes, volunteering, online learning, social activities etc.</b></p>	<p>1. To raise awareness of the social significance and available forms of lifelong learning amongst all stakeholders in lifelong learning, regardless of the area of work and formal authorities</p>	<p>1. National campaign (special events and media releases) focused on the proclaimed values and vision of lifelong learning – in the initial phase, within the Lifelong Learning Week, subsequently as an independent communication activity</p> <p>2. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of lifelong learning stakeholders and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE ETTA ASHE AMEUP MSE ESC Representatives of the teaching staff, educational institutions and their associations, representatives of non-profit organizations</p>

<p><b>To promote lifelong learning as a new opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, retraining and formal education on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To inform and motivate the representatives of the local government working in social welfare to encourage their beneficiaries to lifelong learning and all forms of formal education</li> <li>2. To encourage and include local government institutions working in social welfare into common activities and projects with educational institutions and other partner organizations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizing regular meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of social welfare institutions, about the promotion of lifelong learning to their beneficiaries and partner activities directed towards achieving the said goal</li> <li>2. Establishing an internet database of stakeholders, interested parties in projects and other activities in the field of lifelong learning, with a possibility of interactive searching, within EPAL and other internet portals</li> <li>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</li> </ol>	<p>AVETAE ETTA ASHE AMEUP MSE ESC CES Centres for social welfare and other institutions from the social work and care system, county, city and municipal administrations</p>
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<p><b>To promote the creation of modular educational programmes on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<p>1. To encourage educational institutions to create modular programmes and to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning as an appropriate form of evaluation within those programmes</p> <p>2. To inform the key stakeholders of implementation of the Croatian Qualifications Framework about all dimensions of lifelong learning and specificities of their implementation</p> <p>3. To inform educational institutions on all levels of the education system about public competitions, calls and other possibilities for financing the production and implementation of modular educational programmes</p>	<p>1. Organizing regular meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of educational institutions, on all levels of the education system, about encouraging the modular approach to creation of educational programmes and recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. Organizing coordination meetings with key stakeholders of implementation of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, in the function of good-quality implementation of lifelong learning programmes</p> <p>3. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of stakeholders and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>4. Establishment of an internet info-point, with information about public competitions and other forms of financing partnership projects in the field of lifelong learning</p> <p>5. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE ETTA ASHE AMEUP MSE</p>
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5.5.2. Communication Plan: Service Providers in Lifelong Education, with Particular Emphasis on Adult Educational Institutions

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To inform about the importance of having all key competences, especially digital skills, entrepreneurship and innovativeness for the purpose of adjusting to changes on the labour market and better employability</b></p>	<p>1. To connected providers of education services with the representatives of employers and their associations, i.e. other relevant organizations familiar with labour market requirements</p> <p>2. To encourage providers of education services to create educational programmes relevant for the labour market requirements</p>	<p>1. Organizing regular tripartite meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of the holders of education policy, associations of the teaching staff and associations and organizations which represent employers</p> <p>2. Organizing regular coordination meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) between the holders of education policy, employment policies and entrepreneurship stimulation</p> <p>3. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE AMEUP Local partnerships for employment Ministry of Labour and Pension System Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts Representatives and associations of the teaching staff and institutions, sectoral councils</p>
<p><b>To encourage the adjustment of education programmes according to the needs of the labour market and specific participants' needs</b></p>	<p>1. To motivate providers of education services to research and use information from the labour market</p> <p>2. To encourage providers of education services to create educational programmes relevant for the labour market requirements</p> <p>3. To motivate providers of education services to use innovative methods and forms of learning</p>	<p>1. Creating systems and communication channels for continuous information of providers of education services about the trends on the labour market (newsletters, mailing lists, specialized internet portal and/or upgrade and popularization of existing portal of the MLPS, providing sectoral information)</p> <p>2. Roundtables, conferences and other forms of scientific and professional special events about e-learning and innovative pedagogic practices</p> <p>3. Publicising case studies and examples of good practice in e-learning and innovative adult teaching practices on the EPALE portal and other specialized media</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE Ministry of Labour and Pension System Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts Representatives and associations of the teaching staff and institutions, sectoral councils, science and educational institutions in education CARNET</p>

<p><b>To promote the creation of modular educational programmes on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<p>1. To encourage providers of education services to create modular programmes and to recognize and evaluate non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. To inform educational institutions on all levels of the education system about public competitions, calls and other possibilities for financing the production and implementation of modular educational programmes</p>	<p>1. Organizing regular meetings (quarterly, semi-annual, annual...) with representatives of educational institutions, on all levels of the education system, on encouraging the modular approach to creation of educational programmes and recognition and evaluation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>2. National campaign (special events and media releases) about lifelong learning, education and professional training, in the function of raising awareness and motivation of stakeholders and affirmation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>3. Publicising case studies and examples of good practice in creation of modular programmes and recognition of informal and non-formal learning in adult education on the EPALE portal and other specialized media</p> <p>4. Promoting persons and organizations which affirm lifelong learning and its values with their own examples</p>	<p>AVETAE ETTA ASHE AMEUP MSE Representatives and associations of the teaching staff and institutions, sectoral councils, science and educational institutions in education CARNET</p>
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### 5.5.3. Communication Plan: Teaching Staff on All Levels of Education

Strategic objective	Communication objectives	Communication activities (with suggestion of possible channel/tool)	Possible partners in implementation
<p><b>To promote the importance of lifelong learning and professional development of teaching staff on all levels of the education system</b></p>	<p>1. To motivate the teaching staff on all levels of the education system to participate in lifelong learning</p> <p>2. To encourage all institutions in the education system to provide professional training possibilities</p> <p>3. To encourage higher and adult education institutions to develop programmes which fit the needs of the teaching staff on all levels of the education system</p>	<p>1. Targeted campaign focused on the teaching staff on all levels of the education system about the possibilities of inclusion into lifelong learning, within the Lifelong Learning Week and specialized events</p> <p>2. Specialized and targeted reports in mass media and on social media/networks</p>	<p>AVETAE ETTA AMEUP Ministry of Science and Education Representatives and associations of the teaching staff and institutions</p>



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