EQAVET

# Quality Assurance in VET: Slovenia

This document provides an overview of quality assurance in VET in the respective country. It covers information on VET systems and how quality assurance takes place, which organisations are responsible for VET policy and any recent developments in VET policy.

| VET system and quality assurance |
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**Overview of the VET system and how quality assurance takes place**

 The Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF)[1] is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualifications into levels with regard to learning outcomes.

In the SQF, qualifications are classified into ten levels with regard to learning outcomes. The ten SQF levels are linked to the eight EQF levels through the level descriptors of both areas.

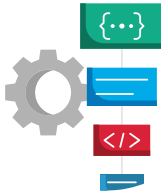The SQF includes three categories of qualifications:[2]
- Education is the result of formal education and indicates the stage and field of formal education acquired by an individual and can be obtained after successfully completing publicly approved formal educational or study program. It includes general education, vocational education, upper secondary education, short cycle and higher education programmes.
- Vocational qualification, that includes both National vocational qualifications (NVQ) and vocational qualifications obtained after completing vocational further training programs. The NVQ is the system for validation of non-formal and informal learning, introduced in 2000. It focuses on adults (aged 18 years and over). Vocational qualifications are demonstrated by an NVQ certificate issued in accordance with the regulations governing NVQs or another document certifying completion of a further training programme, issued in accordance with the regulations governing vocational, technical and higher education.
- Supplementary qualification demonstrated by a certificate of acquired supplementary qualification. Supplementary qualification means a qualification that supplements an individual's competence at the level attained and in a specific professional field, and it is tied to the labour market needs.

Gaining qualifications through formal education:

IVET in Slovenia is school and apprenticeship based. All VET programmes have a modular structure. Each vocational module or groups of modules lead to a vocational qualification. The modules are competence-based and include both, professional theory and practical training. Key competences are planned to be covered by

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[1] https://www.nok.si/en
[2] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia-u2

implementation of the whole VET programme. VET programmes also include work-based learning at companies or other working organisations. Practical training in VET comprises practical training in schools and work-based learning (WBL) in companies or other working organisations and partially in Intercompany Training Centres (MIC). Formal VET programmes in Slovenia are generally provided by public VET schools, which are often joined into larger school centres. Together with public providers for adult education (*ljudske univerze*) and private VET providers, public VET schools also offer CVET for adults (formal VET on EQF level 3,4 and 5 and informal trainings for adults).

More information about the VET system in Slovenia can be found on Cedefop's VET in Europe database: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia

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| <br>**System-level QA arrangements** | QA mechanisms integrated into VET system are:[3]<br>• Accreditation of educational institutions.<br>• Verification of educational programmes and national vocational qualifications.<br>• System of assessing knowledge, skills and competences defined and regulated at the national level.<br>• Introduction of new education programmes into practice is supported by relevant public research and development institutions (Institute of RS for VET, National Education Institute and Slovenian Institute for Adult Education).<br>• Public research and development institutions carry out continuous monitoring of the implementation of education programmes.<br>• Educational institutions implement self-evaluation procedures in accordance with legislation.<br>• School inspection carries out external reviews of VET providers every five years.<br>• National and partly external vocational matura in upper secondary technical education,<br>• Internal final examination takes place and students are assessed by five-member boards, whose members may include a representative of employers approved by the National Examination Centre in upper secondary vocational education.<br>• Slovenia participates in numerous international measurements of the learning achievements of participants in education: PISA, TIMMS, PIRLS, TALIS, SITES, CIVICS.<br>• In the adult education system, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education carries out national evaluations of the adult education system. |

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[3] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia-u2

- In the national vocational qualifications system, the Institute of the RS for VET carries out evaluation of the national vocational qualifications (NVQ) system.
- NVQs are reviewed every five years.

Social partners are involved in VET system during the following stages:[4]
- Preparation of occupational standards as a base for formal VET programmes and national occupational qualifications.
- Preparation of formal VET programmes, national and supplementary qualifications.
- Membership in Council of experts for VET (consulting body for Ministry of Education, Science and Sport), which adopts occupational standards, formal VET programmes and vocational qualifications.
- Cooperation with VET providers at local level in preparing 'open curricula' – part of curricula, which is defined on the level of VET providers (local employers are into the process of development open curricula).
- Practical training for students.
- Final exams and vocational matura.
- Assessment process in the NVQ system and in the supplementary qualification system.

Mechanisms for QA integrated into the VET system were additionally upgraded with quality arrangements influenced by European policy and the EQAVET framework.

The Vocational and Technical Education Act (OG. RS, no.79/2006,) and additionally reinforced with Organisation and Financing of Education Act (OG. RS, no. 16/07), guide IVET providers to establish quality committees in their organisations, which consists of at least 5 members representing different stakeholders:
- VET providers staff.
- 1 representative of employers.
- 1 representative of students.
- 1 representative of parents.

Self-evaluation is obligatory method in QA according to legislation and need to be implemented in-line with the principles of total quality management.

In 2017 a set of 11 quality indicators on VET were adopted by the Council of experts at the Ministry for Education, Science and Sport. A set of indicators includes all 10 EQAVET indicators, which need to be monitored on both system and VET provider level. Quality reports of VET providers need to be prepared annually and published on the

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[4] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia-u2

VET provider's web page according to the Vocational and Technical Education Act. VET providers are autonomous in defining structure and content of quality report, but they are obliged to report the data in relation to national indicators to Institute of RS for VET, when required.

The Vocational and Technical Education Act also brought in the national quality report on VET (system level). In practise, the preparation of the national quality report on VET is managed by Institute of RS for VET, on the basis of 11 national quality indicators and as a result of monitoring and self-evaluation process on system level. The Institute is gradually involving different stakeholders into the process of self-evaluation, like wider range of internal staff, representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, National Examination Centre and others.

External provider reviews of VET providers' QA frameworks are undertaken by Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training and other public professional institutions such as the National Education Institute, the Educational Research Institute and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Findings of those reviews are also occasionally reported in national quality report. [5]

In 2017 the national framework for QA in Education was adopted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (for kindergarten, elementary school and upper secondary school). The framework focuses on both system and school level. It defines quality areas of teaching and learning process, supporting documentation in quality cycle and describes processes of different national institutes, professional bodies and Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in QA of Education on the system level.

**Provider-level QA arrangements**

The Vocational Education Act requires IVET providers to establish a quality committee, consisting of representatives of professional school employees, employers, students and parents. Annual self-evaluations are compulsory for IVET providers, as stated by The Organisation and Financing of Education Act. All CVET providers also have to carry out self-evaluation.

Teaching and learning are obligatory quality area for self-evaluation according to the national framework for QA in Education and 11 national indicators (all 10 EQAVET indicators included) need to be addressed in the process of self-evaluation of VET providers.

Guidance and recommendations to help VET providers evaluate their own performance, establish and upgrade internal QA framework have

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[5] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/205aa0ac-460d-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

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| | been prepared by the national school for leadership in Education, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET, National Institute for VET, National Examination Centre and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.[6] |
| **Which organisation(s) are responsible for VET policy?** | VET is centralised; decisions about founding VET schools or distributing VET programmes among schools are taken at national level.<br><br>The Ministry for Education, Science and Sport is responsible for the regulation, financing and governance of vocational education of young people and adults. While the education ministry deals with VET at systemic level, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET has a prominent role in developing and supporting VET at the practical level (Cedefop, 2021).<br><br>The Ministry for Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities holds the responsibility for adoption of occupational standards, NVQ system and training of the unemployed and jobseekers.<br><br>Social partners are involved in four national expert councils playing a consulting role to the education ministry: Expert Council for VET; Expert Council for General Education; Expert Council for Adult Education; and the Expert Council for Higher Education. Among stakeholders' representatives of the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia are included into Expert Council for VET. The Chambers also have important role in implementation of apprenticeship (training of mentors, verification of learning places in the industry).<br><br>Eight government public institutions are responsible for the implementation of the ministry's regulations and supporting VET implementation and/or development (more at Cedefop, 2021, p.46).[7]<br><br>The government appoints the members of the Institute's governing bodies. These institutions are also subject to public funding, and to common rules, guidelines and salary system with the rest of the public sector. A school inspectorate operates within the education ministry, monitoring providers of accredited education programmes in their compliance with regulations. |

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[6] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/205aa0ac-460d-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en
[7] Vocational education and training in Slovenia: short description (europa.eu)

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| **Recent policy developments** (in the last 12 months) | Recently, different initiatives have been introduced: apprenticeship in upper secondary EQF level 4 (ISCED 353), three-year VET programmes (SPI) and the strategy for higher vocational education development 2020-30 should be emphasised.

The apprenticeship path of vocational education was introduced by the Apprenticeship Act (2017), which was prepared in a social dialogue between various ministries and chambers. (more at Cedefop, 2021, p. 51).[8] |
| **Priority areas for QA in your country** | Teaching and learning are an obligatory area for regular self-evaluation according to National Framework for Education. The area is divided into three sub areas: student achievements, professional learning and performing of teachers (and other pedagogical professionals) and a safe and facilitating learning environment.

According to the Council of Experts 11 national indicators (10 EQAVET included) need to be integrated into QA frameworks and self-evaluation of VET providers. A manual is prepared to support VET providers and system level representatives in implementation of EQAVET framework.[9]

According to common guidelines[10] of four national institutes beside teaching and learning also leadership and the process of QA (PDCA cycle) are defined as priority quality areas. The following aspects are identified and described in the guidelines: roles; needed knowledge, skills and competences of the quality team; and collaboration of organisational staff and documentation supporting the PDCA process.

The EQAVET NRP also uses the European Peer Review Quality Areas and Criteria for Vocational Education and Training (VET)[11] to support VET providers in QA. |
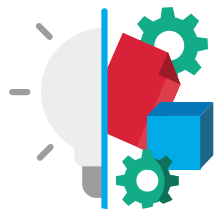
## Specific projects in the country (optional)

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[8] Vocational education and training in Slovenia: short description (europa.eu)
[9] Prirocnik_EQAVET_2017.pdf (eqavet-nrp-slo.si)
[10] Zbirka Kakovost v vrtcih in šolah – Šola za ravnatelje (solazaravnatelje.si)
[11] European Peer Review Quality Areas and Criteria for Vocational Education and Training (VET) (eqavet-nrp-slo.si)

**Please provide a short description of recent projects or initiatives in the field of QA in VET that you would like to highlight for your country**

Due to the economic crisis, SMEs capacity to provide work-based learning had been very limited in previous years while enrolment in vocational upper secondary education decreased in the period 2005-2013. In the reporting period, Slovenia assigned a high priority on the work related to work-based learning and apprenticeship. Reintroducing an apprenticeship system (including by adapting the legislation and related programmes) alongside the work-based learning system already in place was considered.

A five-year project reform of upper-secondary vocational education, funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), started in November 2016. The main objectives were twofold:
- To reintroduce apprenticeships.
- To reform school-based VET i.e. develop and test the individualisation model of pedagogical processes.

The project included the following activities:
- Test and identify the tools and methods to create a sustainable system to match the needs of the labour market.
- Develop flexible and individualised teaching methods and learning pathways.
- Support companies to engage in work-based learning.
- Test and evaluate the apprenticeship system.
- Define learning outcomes for work-based learning.
- Improve the training of mentors in companies.
- Develop individual learning plan and flexible; and individualised learning environment to support students' needs.

A new apprenticeship system started as a pilot implementation in the school year 2017/18 in four available apprenticeship programmes. The programmes were added in the subsequent years amounting to 12 programmes in 2020/2021 school year.

The individualisation model yielded the following results:
- Five videos were prepared on different learning topics.[12]
- Video guides for preparing video content for distance or blended learning were prepared.
- In total, 28 training sessions for the school development teams and 8 counselling visits to schools were conducted.
- A guide for implementation of individualised learning for schools was prepared.
- Two evaluation reports were published on web page.
- A web page was established, supporting individualisation with many links on publications and didactic materials prepared within the project.

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[12] https://cpi.si/aktualno/novice/individualizacija-ucenja-video-predstavitve/

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|  **Which organisation(s) are responsible for the project / initiative** | The project was managed by Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET in following phases:<br><br>• First cycle evaluation[13] – external analysis of initial practice: In the evaluation phase the Department for Pedagogy at University in Ljubljana was included.<br>• Planning: CPI advisors, in cooperation with external experts, prepared implementation plans based on workshops, pilot-testing and school reports.<br>• Implementation and improvement: CPI advisors and external experts prepared workshops, reviewed reports from pilot schools and provided feedback for pilot schools to improve their practice. Additional workshops/school visits were planned to be implemented, when needed.<br>• Second cycle evaluation: An analysis, after two years of piloting, with one classroom of students in five schools was prepared with Department for Pedagogy at University in Ljubljana (external).<br>• Development of supporting materials (CPI advisors, external experts and school staff).<br>• Further development: In the next project we would like to focus on preparing professional development plan and test it in the practice. |

## Use of EQAVET labels

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| **Do you use an EQAVET label or seal to certify VET providers in your country?** | No ☒ |
| | Yes ☐ |

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[13] https://cpi.si/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CPI_porocilo_mind.pdf