

# TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION - THE SITUATION IN SLOVENIA

Written by  
Tatjana Plevnik

## Index

1. GENERAL INFORMATION.....	2
<i>Characteristics of the current teaching/training/school management staff.....</i>	2
<i>Statistics.....</i>	3
<i>Salary statistics.....</i>	7
<i>Teacher and trainer recruitment .....</i>	7
<i>Human resource management in schools.....</i>	8
2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND TRAINING.....	8
<i>Appropriateness of the current teaching/training staff.....</i>	8
3. ICT AND E-LEARNING .....	9
<i>Policy at the national level .....</i>	9
<i>Main targets and strategies of the policy for 2002-2003.....</i>	9
<i>ICT and e-Learning in the VET system.....</i>	10
<i>Number of computers in VET schools per student.....</i>	11
<i>Internet connections in VET schools .....</i>	11
4. TRAINING POLICY/STRATEGY FOR TEACHERS AND TRAINERS .....	11
<i>Legal framework.....</i>	12
<i>Responsibilities and management of teacher and trainer training, co-ordinating mechanisms, advisory bodies.....</i>	13
<i>Mechanisms for assessing the needs of teacher and trainer training.....</i>	13
5. RESOURCES .....	13
<i>Funding .....</i>	13
<i>Human resources in teacher and trainer training.....</i>	14
6. PROVISION/IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHER AND TRAINER TRAINING .....	14
<i>Structure and organisation.....</i>	15
<i>Assessment of the competencies, technical and pedagogical skills of VET teachers.....</i>	16
<i>Shares of theory and practice.....</i>	17
<i>Co-operation with enterprises.....</i>	17
<i>Continuing teacher and trainer training .....</i>	17
<i>Responsibilities for designing in-service programmes and accreditation mechanisms.....</i>	18
<i>Training for head teachers .....</i>	19
7. REFERENCES: .....	19

## 1. General information

In Slovenia there is no separate VET teacher training system. It is common to teachers at all school pre-university levels. All initial teacher training is part of higher education (except teachers of practical training), comprising 2 state universities (consisting of 28 faculties, 3 art academies, 5 professional colleges) and 9 private free-standing higher education institutions (4 faculties and 5 professional colleges). The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport issues regulations on teacher training. The universities, at which most teachers are educated, are autonomous.

Slovenia's teacher training system is divided into the following parts of an ongoing process:

- **initial** (pre-service) teacher education is mostly university-based;
- **traineeship** is the final "on-the-job" qualifying phase and ends with a **Teaching Certification Examination** before the State Examination Board; and
- **continuing** (in-service) training is organised in accordance with a law covering public institutions involved in developmental and advisory work in the field of general, vocational and adult education.

**Categories of teaching and training staff** in Slovenia's VET system are as follows:

- teachers of general subjects;
- teachers of vocational-theoretical subjects;
- lecturers at vocational colleges;
- teachers of practical training;
- head teachers, assistants of head teachers;
- teachers' support staff for counselling and guidance, librarians, adult education guidance;
- laboratory assistants, instructors, practical training managers; and
- mentors, master craftsmen, foremen, shop managers, instructors who are responsible for training in companies providing apprenticeship training; most trainers devote only part of their work time to training duties, the remainder being spent in their regular jobs.

### **Characteristics of the current teaching/training/school management staff**

**Head teachers** and assistants of head teachers are officials appointed by the councils of public schools. The school council must obtain the Minister's approval of the appointment or removal of the head teacher. Candidates for head teachers must meet the requirements stipulated for teachers in a particular school, have at least five years' work experience in education, possess the title of councillor or adviser or have held the title of mentor for at least five years. Requirements for promotion stipulated in the regulations are the following: a period of employment in education; teaching performance; professional qualifications; in-service training; and extra professional activities (writing textbooks, research etc). In-service training must be accredited by the National Programme Council for In-service Training. Mentorship, in-class observation, teaching by model teachers, supervision of educational workshops, lectures, exhibitions, public events, research colonies, competitions, professional consultation meetings, participation in committees, working groups, societies, professional councils, translations, publication of articles, reviews, papers, manuals, research papers and other similar activities are recognised as extra professional activities that help a teacher's promotion prospects. Promotion titles are evaluated in terms of coefficients, i.e. the teacher's salary is increased according to the relevant coefficient starting from the day of promotion.

They must also complete the School for Head Teachers and pass the requisite examination.

All teaching, training and pedagogical support staff are appointed to the **civil service**. Some may conclude a fixed-term contract (if they do not meet all the required qualifications). They

all have the rights and status of a civil servant for the term of their employment. They must be proficient in the Slovenian language and must pass a teaching certification examination.

**Teachers of general and vocational subjects, lecturers at vocational colleges** and support staff, school counselling staff (education specialists, psychologists, social workers, and/or specialists for children with special needs and/or specialists of social pedagogy can be school counselling staff), school librarians and specialists in adult education arrangements, ICT specialists and others must possess a university-level degree in the appropriate field. Subject-specific and professional knowledge is required. Further, vocational colleges' lecturers must have three years of work experience and proven outstanding results in their previous work.

**Teachers of practical training, laboratory assistants, instructors and practical training managers** must possess at least the qualification of a technician. Trainers in companies must possess the qualification of master craftsman (or foreman or shop manager). The latter also includes proper pedagogical training. They are required to have three years' work experience in the particular branch.

There are no specific systemic arrangements with the only motive of systematically exchanging professionals between companies and public schools, but are made for individual cases only. In the case of private schools run by companies, such exchanges are relatively common. More often teachers are partly employed in the companies and partly in schools. The number of companies that train their own employees is 3,673, and some of them (36) have their own school units (Statistics 1999).

## Statistics

The structure of Slovenian upper secondary school institutions is somewhat unique. According to the law, there should be the following types of schools: general schools (*gimnazije*), technical schools, vocational schools and vocational colleges. However, the structure of the Slovenian education system is traditionally characterised **by education programmes and not by institutions**. In principle, *Gimnazije* provide general 4-year courses and *matura* courses. Technical schools provide 4-year technical programmes and vocational courses. Vocational schools provide 2.5- and 3-year vocational education programmes. But the majority of schools in Slovenia are multi-level institutions composed of two or more »departments« for general (3A, 4A), technical (3B, 4B), vocational (3C), vocational-technical (3B = 3 + 2-year) and/or tertiary vocational levels (5B, short programme). All these "sub-structures" or at least some can be joined under one roof named *Solski center* (school centre). Therefore, such multi-level schools in Slovenia employ management, teaching and other staff for common needs. Since teachers often teach their speciality within various curricula, the strict division of teachers according to the type of education (general, VET) is not easily applicable. The data on teachers thus cover different categories of the entire pedagogical staff in all upper secondary schools.

*Table: Pedagogical staff in upper secondary schools in 1999/2000 (Youth education only; data for the end of the school year. Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia)*

TEACHERS	Total (2+4)	Full-time employees (permanent and fixed-term)	Fixed-term contractors only	Part-time employees (permanent and fixed-term)	Fixed-term contractors only
A	1	2	3	4	5
	35	39	43	47	51
<b>Total</b>	9351	8129	282	1194	587

- of whom women	5947	5267	166	740	314
<b>Subject teachers – total</b>	8332	7241	234	1077	560
- of whom women	5273	4660	137	666	300
<b>Subject teachers in gimnasia programmes</b>	2485	2065	29	420	180
- of whom women	1736	1453	20	283	86
<b>Subject teachers in technical programmes</b>	3397	3077	125	320	162
- of whom women	2211	2019	64	192	91
<b>- of whom practical-subject teachers</b>	287	268	14	19	11
<b>Subject teachers in 3-year vocational programmes</b>	2052	1842	37	210	111
- of whom women	1133	1030	23	103	50
<b>- of whom practical-subject teachers</b>	733	679	20	54	41
<b>Subject teachers in short vocational education programmes</b>	372	276	14	96	77
- of whom women	185	124	5	61	49
<b>- of whom practical-subject teachers</b>	154	146	2	8	3
<b>Other teachers</b>	26	13	12	13	11
- of whom women	8	4	4	4	4
<b>Head teachers, assistants of head teachers - total</b>	351	333	20	18	12
- of whom women	168	157	12	11	8
<b>Counselling and guidance service staff- total</b>	234	198	12	36	6
- of whom women	198	173	7	25	3
<b>Other pedagogical staff - total</b>	434	368	16	66	9
- of whom women	308	267	10	41	3

Statistics for the 2000/2001 school year show 159 **college lecturers** in vocational colleges, 20 teachers of practical training and 32 head teachers, assistants and heads of units (FTE). The average age of management staff was 45 years (data on the ages of teaching staff are not available). The gender situation was 54% in favour of women. All head teachers of vocational colleges have a first or second university-level degree.

*Table: Pedagogical staff in post-secondary vocational education, 2001 - Instructional and professional support staff in vocational colleges by working place, sex and working time, 2001*

	Total in FTE		Full-time		Part-time		FTE
	total	women	total	women	total	women	
TOTAL	190	87	47	27	513	242	143
Lecturers in vocational college	159	71	31	15	432	214	128
Instructors	4	2	-	-	46	19	4
Laboratory assistants	14	3	5	1	26	8	9
Physical education teachers	2	-	-	-	9	1	2
Librarians	11	11	11	11	-	-	-

*Table: Instructional and professional support staff in vocational colleges by age, 2001*

Age groups (years)	Total	vocational college	professional support staff	Share ( %)		
				total	Lecturer in vocational college	Other professional support staff
TOTAL	560	463	97	100	100	100
Under 25 years	2	-	2	-	-	2
25-29	24	10	14	4	2	14
30-34	81	58	23	14	13	24
35-39	86	71	15	15	15	15
40-44	110	93	17	20	20	18
45-49	110	97	13	20	21	13
50-54	80	73	7	14	16	7
55-59	44	40	4	8	9	4
60-64	17	16	1	3	3	1
65 +	6	5	1	1	1	1

Note: Data include full- and part-time people in paid employment.

*Table: Other people in paid employment in vocational colleges, 2001*

	Total		Full-time		Part-time	
	total	women	total	women	total	women
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>
Higher management personnel	32	17	23	12	9	5
Administrative personnel	36	33	26	25	10	8
Maintenance	5	2	2	1	3	1

In Slovenia, two-thirds of **graduates** starting a teaching/training job complete pedagogical courses concurrently with the subject-specific discipline at faculties of education (arts, sports). The total number of tertiary education graduates is 9,300, of whom 1700 graduate from the field of teacher education (estimate based on Statistics 2000). The share of graduates from the teacher education institution is therefore 18%. The majority teaches general subjects. Not all are employed in the education sector. Graduates who are qualified to teach may turn to professional sectors other than teaching. They are attracted by better opportunities and by the higher income. For example, graduates of foreign-language teaching turn to the more highly paid jobs of translators/interpreters, while graduates of science, maths, or computer science teaching turn to research and business sectors etc). The other half of first-time teachers in schools (vocational-theoretical-subject teachers in particular) graduate from various non-pedagogical institutions. They come to schools directly or after spending some years in companies. They usually complete the professional part of their training on the job. Statistics for the latter are unavailable.

The **teacher/student ratio** at the upper secondary level is continuously improving. This is due to the demographic decline. The ratio fell from 14.2 at the beginning of the 1990s to 12.1 at the end of decade. No subdivision into technical, vocational or general secondary schools is available.

The sharp increase in the number of post-secondary vocational college students has not yet been matched by an equivalent increase in teaching staff. Hence, the ratio has deteriorated from 15.5 (1996/97) to 20.3 in the last five years that vocational colleges have existed.

#### **Attractiveness of the teaching profession**

**Motivation** for entering the teaching profession is relatively low in salary terms (salaries in education are lower than in the business sector = 113.2, November 2001). The starting salary

of a teacher as a percentage of per capita GDP (an index of the general standard of living in Slovenia) is 116 (2001), but the job security, professional autonomy and non-specified workload are attractive to graduates and employees from other sectors. The lack of desirable positions in more prestigious fields also turns new graduates to the teaching profession.

Part of the **national policy** to ensure inflows of young people to schools is the **traineeship arrangement**. The traineeship obligation is defined as the right of all candidate teachers and as a duty of the state which is obliged to provide it for all, regardless of whether they can be later employed in the education system. This method of employment of at least one year as a trainee in a school has proved a very successful strategy for attracting young people to the teaching profession.

**The salary policy** in the last decade has been extremely fragmented and therefore non-transparent. General laws prescribe a uniform salary structure. The regulations governing the salaries of workers in education are uniform for all levels of education. As a result, upper-secondary-school teachers with the same level of education have the same **basic** salary as specialist-subject teachers in elementary schools. There are, however, **differences** in the norms for weekly teaching duties. Upper-secondary-school teachers have two less hours of teaching duties. Instruction in an upper secondary school is also otherwise more valued than instruction in an elementary school. Teachers of general education subjects with a university education thus tend to be employed in upper secondary schools. In upper secondary schools there are significantly more teachers with the highest title of councillor (*svetnik*), also resulting in significantly higher pay, than there are in elementary schools. Upper-secondary-school teachers, due to the many programmes at this education level, have considerably greater opportunities to participate in various professional working bodies at the national level and to participate in the preparation of new programmes, textbooks etc., representing the most highly valued professional work, thereby enabling promotion within the context of a professional career. This is another reason why teaching in secondary schools is more attractive and enjoys a better social reputation than teaching in elementary schools.

In addition, education and other public sectors increased salaries primarily through a range of supplements based on their particular regulations and through amendments to collective contracts for specific activities. For this reason, the salary system nearly collapsed. The initial relations among comparable professions were destroyed and the system became uncontrollable. Twenty-three types of possible supplements were introduced in the education system, and the proportion of salary formed by supplements has exceeded the basic salary. These supplements are as follows: for a level of education higher than required; for additional managerial tasks; for promotion to the title of mentor/advisors/councillors; for special working conditions in a mixed class consisting of pupils from two classes (of different age); in a mixed class consisting of three or more classes; for teaching in remote and inaccessible places; for teaching in a school where the language of instruction is the language of a national community; for teaching in a bilingual school in a nationally-mixed area; for work in less favourable working hours; for years of work experience; for extended teaching hours (and deductions for reduced teaching hours); for home class teaching; and the tutorship of trainees. On the basis of the law on salary ratios, teachers were once again entitled to a monthly supplement for work performance.

In addition to the statutory arrangements for the salary system for teachers, an agreement between the government and representative trade unions enabled the introduction of a number of additional benefits related to specific features of certain positions in education, as well as the introduction of several new supplements to salaries. In the last few years, these have primarily been used as an instrument for salary increases and are no longer used for valuing specific differences within the school system, which was their original purpose. The group of supplements used for the valuation of differences in the level of difficulty and complexity of

work among teachers contains the following supplements: supplement for teaching *matura* subjects; for teaching three or more subjects; for teaching in two or more institutions; for work in shifts and afternoon work; and a supplement for split shifts etc.

The differences between the salaries of individuals in the teaching profession, due to these supplements, became excessive and unjustifiable. All of this together led to confusion and disproportion in the salary system. Salaries today reflect the power of particular professions and trade unions more than justified differences.

The government has therefore decided to change the system and has already submitted proposed statutory amendments. In its proposals, it is pushing for a uniform system for all parts of the public sector. Very tough negotiations with the trade unions involved are currently underway.

### **Salary statistics**

The gross monthly minimum salary of a teacher at the beginning of their teaching career was EUR 721.50 (January 2002). The maximum salary at the peak of a teaching career, with all possible supplements included, could amount to around EUR 2000 per month. The salary of a school head can vary from EUR 1,200 to EUR 2,200.

### **Teacher and trainer recruitment**

Procedures applying to the recruitment of teachers and trainers are defined by the Organisation and Financing of Education Act.

Several **types of contracts** are possible: a permanent full-time or part-time employment contract; a fixed-term full-time or part-time employment contract; a temporary work contract; or a traineeship employment contract.

All teachers are chiefly recruited through **open advertisements**. Each year, the number of teaching posts is agreed between the school and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The annual and weekly schedule of teaching subjects provides the basis for planning the number of positions. The head teacher of a school determines the number of teaching posts. With the approval of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the head teacher may advertise vacant places. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport keeps records of redundant teachers and must therefore be informed of any vacancies. If the records contain a redundant teacher from another school who meets the qualification requirements for a vacant position, the school must employ that teacher first.

**Recruitment decisions**, selection of a candidate and employment procedures are made by the head teacher. All specific issues important for recruitment (professional standards) and employment are regulated by the law. The systematisation of positions is determined as the key to recruiting and employing teachers and is determined by head teachers on the basis of norms and standards, although they have to obtain the consent of the school's board in the area in which the school is located. As school boards have not yet been established, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport issues its consent for the systematisation of posts. Schools advertise vacant positions and requirements on the basis of regulations, approved systematisation of posts and the consent of the Minister. Within these limits the selection procedure is up to the headmaster. Newly-employed teachers must prove their suitability and aptitude. During the three-month probationary period, a three-member panel appointed by the head teacher monitors their performance.

## Human resource management in schools

**Head teachers** are responsible for organising, planning and managing the activities of a school and the teaching faculty in particular. They also encourage and plan in-service training, organise mentoring for trainees, oversee the educational activities of teachers, monitor their work and provide advice, make proposals for professional promotion, decide on promotion to a higher salary bracket, establish job classifications, employ personnel, and make decisions concerning their liability. Decisions on complaints concerning the rights, duties and responsibilities of staff are made by the **school council** (a body representing the staff of the school, the founder and the parents). **Teachers' assemblies** make proposals for the promotion of individual teachers and give opinions on the head teacher's proposals, and issue opinions on the appointment of their head teacher.

**The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport** keeps records of the staff employed in public schools only. The data are not publicly announced. The analyses of trends reveal a **surplus** of teachers in the general subject fields of social sciences, geography and history, sports and biology, and in the vocational-subject fields of financial, commercial, sale and textiles. **Shortages** of teachers have been recorded in the fields of mathematics, informatics and foreign languages. Shortages in the field of vocational subjects are quite rare as the number of specific needs is not significant and job-seekers (from insolvent or bankrupt companies, new graduates and/or the unemployed) are usually available.

### 2. Quality of teaching and training

#### Appropriateness of the current teaching/training staff

The qualifications of general-subject teachers are considered mainly appropriate. Their initial education is organised as the concurrent model of professional (10-15%) and subject-specific study (85-90%). The teacher training institutions and the schools co-operate in terms of teaching practice. Further, prospective teachers must undergo an induction period of 10 months, considered as the "final on-the-job qualifying phase".

The qualifications of vocational-theoretical-subject teachers are also considered appropriate where they acquire a proper *diploma*, complete pedagogical courses and pass the TCE (Teachers' Certification Examination). Some vocational-subject teachers and trainers embark on careers in teaching as fully-fledged members of the profession. They would usually possess an appropriate *diploma*, solid ground knowledge of a teaching subject and some years of practical experience (this is seen as an advantage). They must follow **pedagogical courses** at the same time they begin to teach. The induction of these experienced professionals into the teaching profession has not been systematic and is quite a neglected area.

**Pedagogical courses** are offered in a uniform, 390-hour professional training programme. It is organised through in-service training activities and weekend seminars. It consists of five modules: Pedagogy (45 hours); Psychology (90 hours); General Didactics (60 hours); Adult Education Theory (45 hours); and Special Didactics (150 hours). The contents of the respective courses are defined by the curriculum and the scope of examinations is obligatory for all candidates. The first four modules are fixed. The last module 'Special Didactics' remains a problem. There are no special didactics developed in non-pedagogical fields of education. Because of this, candidates have to join one of the related groups of special didactics or they must individually arrange the contents with training providers. No higher education institution has yet developed the methodology for practical training, which could provide the basis for the development of special didactics in particular fields of vocational education and for teaching particular vocational subjects. Several scenarios and concepts for the development of special didactics have been prepared.

Similar problems regarding the pedagogical qualification arise for practical-subject teachers and trainers. They are experts and are up to date with technological developments but they must master the professional knowledge and competencies during their first years of teaching. The formal in-service training in general pedagogy and didactics and the TCE cannot fully compensate this deficiency.

In the process of introducing curricular changes teachers receive the proper in-service training. All curricular changes are implemented by means of in-service teacher training.

**In-service courses** tailored to vocational-subject teachers have increased in number and length and become more experientially based and student-oriented but they are still not enough. Training is still limited to the theoretical level while the area of experiential knowledge is often absent. The training system does not include the direct involvement of teachers in the working environment in order to learn about the latest developments in their fields of technology. The present system of in-service teacher training is still school-based and does not reflect the specific requirements of VET. The situation is better with teachers who come from companies and in-company mentors. A new concept of in-service training of teachers in work environments was developed as an experimental project by the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (1999 – 2000). It was implemented through study groups, which present the beginning of the bottom-up approach. On the basis of teachers' suggestions, the programme of in-service teacher training was prepared and carried out in enterprises.

One of the findings of the empirical evaluation of the VET system was the relatively high dropout rate of students due to the unsuitable teaching methods which were not adjusted to students' abilities. A lack of consistency between subjects (technology and practical training, vocational theory and general subjects) was also discovered. It was found difficult to overcome the discrepancy between the university-level education of theoretical-subject teachers and the lower level of practical-training teachers. A future task will be to find a form of formalised abridgement for different categories of teachers. The PHARE MOCCA project team has already elaborated a few solutions to improve the quality of training of VET teachers. Further development of initial VET teacher training has to focus on a strong link between work and learning, especially between universities carrying out teacher training and VET schools. They proposed education modules of special didactics for different categories of teachers which should enable links between them and readies them for mutual co-operation. The same team proposed a separate system of in-service training of VET teachers based on principles of social partnership and combined sources of funds.

**Professional training of mentors in enterprises** is the right and obligation of the Chambers to take care of the training of mentors and foremen in companies within the dual VET system. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry provides the training of mentors and external examiners involved in the practical examinations.

The appropriate teacher/trainer training programmes were prepared so that candidates receive basic pedagogical knowledge before they sit for a master craftsman's or foreman's examination.

### **3. ICT and e-Learning**

#### **Policy at the national level**

##### **Main targets and strategies of the policy for 2002-2003**

The draft project has been under discussion at the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and at the Ministry for the Information Society. The Council for Information Literacy Education (a governmental body which should be established soon) will discuss and adopt the Programme *Phase II of the Computer Literacy Education Programme; Information Literacy Education* and conduct the activities later on.

In Slovenia, the policy is shifting from computer literacy to information literacy; this will cover three areas: training, informatisation of schools and research and development.

The first goal is to train teachers and pupils in the use of modern information and communications technology, providing new quality in teaching and learning. In the area of the informatisation of schools, the goal is to informatise teaching contents and working methods, install computer networks in schools, standardise computer software, ensure the adequate provision of modern computer and information technology equipment and to provide an appropriate overall organisational structure of the system for the informatisation of schools. The third goal is to provide opportunities for research and development work regarding the introduction of new information technologies in education.

The overall strategy is based on maintaining and upgrading the levels of computer and information equipment and literacy achieved. All levels of the education system, from pre-school to higher education, and all relevant institutions are involved in all activities from pre-school education to university. Initiatives are co-ordinated with the e-Europe initiative, as well as with the initiative of the G8 countries.

The specific division of responsibility has yet to be defined. Responsibility will be shared by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Ministry for the Information Society, municipalities and schools. Once the Programme is adopted, partnership agreements will be concluded for equipment and the granting of concessions for carrying out activities. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry for the Information Society will be jointly responsible for implementing the programme.

### **ICT and e-Learning in the VET system**

ICT has been included in all curricula at the level of a technician (ISCED 5B and ISCED 5A) as a separate compulsory subject called 'computer science and informatics'. Frequently, ICT appears as an elective subject in curricula at the vocational level (ISCED 3C). It is also used as a tool for other subjects. All technical subjects include the use of computers for drawing, constructing, simulating the functioning of engines etc. Some curricula include the use of computer in a simulated workplace (controlling financial operations, managing processes, keeping of accounts, hotel operations, graphic and printing business etc). Innovations from industry are constantly incorporated into curricula. The Internet is used for publishing certain teaching materials (such as electronic transparencies) and limited edition textbooks and student competitions. An image lexicon for the timber branch is currently underway.

The curricula defines objectives like developing programming skills, learning how to correctly use a word processor, spreadsheets etc., learning to search for information on a CD-ROM, a network etc., communicating via a network. The results of students in this subject are taken into account for progression to the next year.

Teachers of the ICT subject are trained as specialists in ICT and their training is provided at university level. For teachers in other subjects, training in ICT is either optional or compulsory during their initial training. It depends on the specialisation they choose. Normally, the university or faculty decides whether the ICT course is compulsory or optional for initial teacher training. The National ICT Programme Council (RO) defines the policy on

the in-service training of teachers of the ICT subject, while the Centre for Vocational Education and Training is responsible for defining policies on the in-service training of teachers of other vocational subjects.

### **Number of computers in VET schools per student**

Data are only available for the average of all upper secondary schools in 2000-2001: one computer was available for 27 students (Source: RIS - Use of the Internet in Slovenia; Project Report, 2001). According to fragmentary data of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the situation is much better in VET schools for these schools use ICT equipment as a tool in most vocational subjects, particularly in the field of technologies. The information sources here are very detailed and dispersed at the moment. The figures will not be known until the project comes to an end. For the moment, only general estimations of vocational education equipment experts are possible.

### **Internet connections in VET schools**

All schools (vocational, technical and general) have at least one properly equipped ICT classroom. All have Internet connections; teachers and students can use the Internet without charge. Each year the National ICT Programme Council invites tenders for further informatisation of schools (establishing new connections to the Internet, establishing a school intranet). Some schools have established a school intranet upon the recommendations and financial aid of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (89 upper secondary schools or 70%). School intranets connect ICT classrooms with all general classrooms, laboratories, cabinets, library, administration premises and generally also to the Internet.

All schools and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are interconnected within a network that also serves the management and financing process and statistics.

## **4. Training policy/strategy for teachers and trainers**

The fundamental document called the “*White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia*” (English version 1996) established a policy framework for the general renewal of Slovenia’s education system. According to the overall philosophy of this document, teacher training should offer:

- core professional knowledge and at the same time various theoretical orientations in the field of education;
- practical approaches and innovations and their advantages and disadvantages; and
- the range of individual areas of knowledge within the field of education system as a whole and their wider social importance.

The autonomy of teachers in relation to the state should be guaranteed by the managing and financing system. The most important criteria of their professionalism are thorough knowledge of one or two subjects and knowledge of psychological and pedagogical principles.

Teachers should be properly trained for the new challenges of pedagogical practice, such as the following:

- increasing the participation of youth in secondary and post-secondary education;
- allowing for differences relative to the culture, interests and abilities of students;
- integrating ever more students with special needs;
- following technological development and the need for more and more occupations;
- using new information technologies; and
- opening schools up to the environment etc.

Novelties in teacher-training courses were necessary due to overall reform, changes in the social set-up and changes and innovations in the concept of vocational education. In view of the changes in teacher training, the model of “open professionalism” was chosen. It was presupposed that the vocational teacher training programmes carried out by various higher education institutions should change towards greater flexibility, the possibility of choice, transfers, additional qualifications, postgraduate opportunities etc. The White Paper envisaged common criteria and regulations as to who may teach a particular subject in vocational schools.

## **Legal framework**

The *White Paper* led to the establishment of a legislative framework for change. The new legislation (1996 – 2000) includes:

*The Organisation and Financing of Education Act* (1991, 1996, 2000, 2001), which also prescribes the general qualifications for teachers and trainers in vocational education, the procedures to determine teachers’ subject-specialisation requirements, transition from study to work through the traineeship period, the teaching certification examination, recruitment and employment procedures, continuing education, in-service training, promotion, teaching positions, workload, time off, and the like.

- *The Vocational and Technical Education Act* (1996) also determines the aims and objectives of this type of education, which (indirectly) also affect the content of teacher training programmes.
- *The Higher Education Act* (1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001) granted higher education institutions autonomy in all academic matters, including the preparation and adoption of teacher training programmes; the law also stipulates the structure of higher education, types of higher education study programmes, their duration, entrance requirements, transfer and other elements.
- *The Professional and Academic Titles Act* (1998)
- *Criteria and Procedures on Accreditation of Study Programmes and Higher Education Institutions* (1994) the Measures for the Accreditation of Teacher Training Study Programmes (1995), which states that the drafters of study programmes must take into consideration the staffing requirements for teachers and the importance of specific professional components in addition to one or two disciplines.
- *Ministerial Order on Financial Assistance for Teachers - Part-time Students* (1994, 1996, 2000)
- *Ministerial Order on Traineeship Service and Teaching Certification Examination of Professional Staff in Public Service* (1996, 1997, 1998)
- *Ministerial Order on In-service Training of Teachers and other Professionals and on the Accreditation Procedure for In-service Training Programmes* (1998).
- *Ruling of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for Education on the Specification of Staffing Requirements for Teachers and Laboratory Assistants in the Programmes of Secondary and Elementary Schools* (1995), which prescribes the appropriate teacher training programmes and professional titles of teachers of general subjects.
- *Ministerial Orders on Qualifications of Teachers and Trainers in the Vocational Educational Programmes* (1995-2002), which identify the appropriate teacher training programmes and professional titles.

In 1997, the *Starting Points for the Higher Education Master Plan* were adopted by the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia. The *Higher Education Master Plan* was adopted by the Parliament in 2002.

### **Responsibilities and management of teacher and trainer training, co-ordinating mechanisms, advisory bodies**

VET teachers' education and training is provided by various higher education institutions. Universities (faculties, academies and professional colleges) and free-standing higher education institutions are autonomous in academic matters. Only the rules regulating their funding are passed at the national level. All academic matters are decided on by the respective bodies of higher education institutions in co-operation with the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (a governmental body). Upon the proposal of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the government approves enrolment limitations for public and concessionaire higher education institutions. The Minister of Education, Science and Sport approves the number of teaching posts in the higher education public service. The scope of public service in higher education and its funding framework are determined by the Higher Education Master Plan adopted by the National Assembly.

### **Mechanisms for assessing the needs of teacher and trainer training**

The replacement and expansion demands of general-subject teachers are based on the planning strategies of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and include long-term demographic projections, data on the distribution of different age groups by subjects, the number of teachers expected to retire, the number of graduates of faculties of education and other teacher training higher education institutions, the introduction of education reforms etc. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport keeps the faculties of education informed on the future demand for teachers of general subjects. Anticipated changes in the level of teacher demand are discussed with the faculties and taken into consideration each year when the number of new entrants is determined.

There is no mid-term or long-term planning policy concerning vocational-subject teachers at the national level. The situation with vocational-subject teachers and trainers is quite different in a number of aspects. The proportion of theoretical vocational-subject teachers and practical-subject teachers and trainers relative to general-subject teachers is approximately 1 to 4 (in lower and upper secondary education). The needs for vocational-subject teacher training cannot be determined by the number of enrolments in teacher training institutions. There are no higher education institutions that are specialised only for the training of future vocational teachers. There is no close connection between the initial training system of vocational-subject teachers and their employers. The mechanism of supplying vocational-subject teachers by conforming enrolment decisions is not relevant here. Vocational-subject teachers are recruited from the open market of various unemployed graduates or from employees in a relevant industry or trade branches.

## **5. Resources**

### **Funding**

The government provides funds necessary for implementation of the Higher Education Master Plan, including the funding of teacher and trainer training. The national programme sets higher education standards and a draft budget. Job systemisation is made by the institution's rector and by agreement with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Vacancies are publicly advertised in accordance with the provisions of articles of association of higher education institutions. Criteria of qualification as university teachers are determined and

candidates are selected by higher education institutions themselves according to law. The government provides funds for salaries and indirect labour costs and partly also for the maintenance of buildings and equipment. The necessary funds are calculated according to the norms and standards and depend on the type and extent of higher education programmes and the number of students and graduates. Higher education institutions must employ budget funds according to the law and may use funds obtained from other sources in accordance with their plans. The government provides a major part of funds for investment in new premises, their maintenance and equipment. Students are charged no tuition fee for undergraduate studies in national and concessionaire higher education institutions. On the other hand, a tuition fee is paid by undergraduates enrolled in private institutions, all part-time students, and partly also by post-graduate students. Tuition is charged for according to rules issued by the Minister and is determined by higher education institutions' competent authorities. In fixing the fees, they must take into consideration the Minister's recommendations as to what charges should be imposed and in what manner. If a higher education institution provides above-standard services it may also charge a fee for full-time studies. The government also pays some social charges for unemployed part-time students. Part-time students pay tuition by themselves or their employers pay it. If part-time studies are subsidised by public funds, the tuition fee is correspondingly lower.

**Data** on the amount of funds spent on teacher and trainer training are not calculable. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport provides funds for higher education institutions. All future vocational-subject teachers follow the consecutive model of the training, meaning they are given general courses and the specialisation first. After graduation, they are usually employed in industry/commercial sectors. After obtaining some years of practical experience, they may become interested in employment in a vocational school. The theoretical and practical professional training comes just before they commit themselves to the vocational teaching profession.

### **Human resources in teacher and trainer training**

Higher education institutions determine their own internal regulations regarding their organisation and operation; they also make decisions on awarding titles and on measures regulating such awards, and on the employment policy for higher education teachers, researchers and faculty assistants.

The university rector or dean of a particular higher education institution determines the classification of posts following the approval of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport, and makes decisions concerning the labour relations of higher education teachers based on proposals of the university senate and the following working bodies of the senate: job allocation committee, disciplinary committee, committee for career matters and others. In specifying the allocation of posts, the rector or dean takes account of the objectives adopted by the university administrative board. The basis for determining posts is provided by regulations on the scope of research work and teaching loads, standards for performing higher education activities, and norms for funding the Higher Education Master The plan is adopted by the government. Positions are publicly advertised.

Given the regulations, the salaries of higher education teachers and other employees are determined in the same way as the salaries of pre-higher education staff. They consist of a basic salary, a performance-related bonus and supplements. The same rules for secondary education apply to salary compensation (illness, accident, holidays) and other personal remuneration (holiday bonus, anniversary awards, solidarity aid etc.).

## **6. Provision/implementation of teacher and trainer training**

## Structure and organisation

**Pre-service teacher training** is provided in higher education. Slovenia's higher education system displays certain features of a binary structure. Programmes, but not institutions, are divided into academic studies and professionally-oriented studies. The institutional structure includes universities and individual (free-standing) institutions. Members of universities are faculties, art academies and professional colleges. Individual institutions are either faculties or professional colleges and are established as private institutions. Faculties and art academies offer both types of programmes, while professional colleges only provide professionally-oriented programmes. Study is organised at two levels. At the undergraduate level, students obtain a *diploma* and the first of the degree titles. At the post-graduate level, students obtain either a second-degree title, the title of *specialist*, or the academic title of either a *magister znanosti* (*magister umetnosti* in artistic fields) – the title is comparable to a Master's degree – or *doktor znanosti* (comparable to a Ph.D.).

So far, the main admission requirement for the academic study programme has been a *matura* or, before that, a final examination. In the future, applicants who have passed a vocational *matura* after successfully completing a technical upper secondary school programme and a *matura* examination in an additional subject will also be admitted to academic studies. Academic study programmes last between four and six years, ending with the *diploma* examination (degree dissertation and its defence).

A successful student receives a *diploma* with a professional title including the field of study. Future teachers receive the title of *profesor* (abbreviated as *prof.*).

Professionally-oriented study programmes are somewhat shorter. Officially they last three to four years. The entrance requirement is either a *matura* examination or the former final examination (vocational *matura* in the new system) after the completion of a four-year secondary technical education programme. Programmes include practical training and end with the *diploma* examination. In certain circumstances, transfers between professionally-oriented and academic studies are possible in both directions.

Vocational education teachers come from all kinds of tertiary education institutions, mainly from faculties of education, art and sport, but also from the faculties, academies and professional colleges of various specialities. They may receive pedagogical professional training through the initial education (concurrent model). Future vocational-theoretical-subject teachers will mostly receive courses of a subject speciality first and theoretical and practical professional training after their diploma. Theoretical professional training is offered by faculties of education and the faculty of art. Practical professional training is offered on the job (traineeship).

Teacher training courses for future teachers of practical instruction are provided by specialised upper secondary schools. The preparation for a master craftsman's examination includes professional training.

**In-service training programmes** are provided at various institutions registered for educational and research activities. These are teacher training higher education institutions and other higher education institutions, public institutes responsible for the development of education (National Education Institute, Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, School for Head Teachers, National Examination Centre, Centre for School and Extracurricular Activities), research institutions, schools and private organisations, societies and associations.

## **Assessment of the competencies, technical and pedagogical skills of VET teachers**

Prospective (vocational) teachers must complete a traineeship period which lasts 6 to 10 months depending on the level of qualifications of the trainee, and pass a TCE. Experienced vocational-subject teachers are excluded from traineeship. They complete their probationary period in their first working post (in a company) and are not obliged to undergo a traineeship period again unless it is their first employment. The tasks of the trainee are set out, ranging from observation, participation in excursions and helping students and pupils, replacement of other teachers on leave, and supervised teaching through to independent work by the end of probationary period. The trainee gradually gains professional independence. During their traineeship service, trainees also have the option of receiving training, education, advice and independent study outside the school. The trainee's tutor is appointed by the head teacher of the school. The tutor is required to monitor the trainee's activities, **assess the trainee's performance** and at the end of the training period report to the State Teaching Examination Board.

The TCE is taken before the State Teaching Examination Board appointed by the Minister and includes: an oral examination to assess the candidate's knowledge of the constitutional order and legislation regulating human and children's rights and fundamental freedoms, legislation on education and the candidate's knowledge of the official language of instruction, and a written examination to assess the teacher's aptitude for independent professional work.

**Responsibility for designing TT programmes** lies with tertiary education institutions.

The Minister of Education, Science and Sport is responsible for determining the appropriate fields of study for future teachers who will teach specific subjects. The Minister makes a decision after obtaining the opinion of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education (for general education subjects) or of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational and Technical Education (for subjects of specialisation and practical instruction). The Council of Experts submits for the Minister's adoption an education programme incorporating the knowledge requirements for teachers of specific subjects. The Council of Experts determines the type of knowledge which teachers of individual subjects must possess. On the basis of the opinion of experts, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport determines which study programmes will provide future teachers with the requisite knowledge. The Minister's decision is supported by the opinion of the Council of Experts and is based on the courses offered by higher education institutions, which decide on the study programmes to be provided.

**Academic validation** of study programmes is the exclusive responsibility of the higher education institutions. Higher education study programmes are drawn up and adopted by the higher education institutions in accordance with their academic standards. The senates of higher education institutions - with the approval of the senate of the university of which they are members - adopt the programmes providing university-level education and pedagogical courses.

**The accreditation procedure** and the determination of whether the study programme guarantees good quality teaching staff is the responsibility of the government and its Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education. The government exercises its responsibility in this area through funding mechanisms. Assisted by the Commission of Education, the Council for Higher Education: issues opinions on the fulfilment of conditions for the introduction of new study programmes, adopts measures for the accreditation of teacher training programmes and issues opinions on the professional suitability of programmes in light of the adopted measures.

## **Shares of theory and practice**

The curriculum for prospective subject teachers comprises up to 90% of a specific academic discipline or subject-specific knowledge and 10-15% of time distributed among the remaining areas of the professional component (developmental and educational psychology, pedagogy, in some cases also sociology and philosophy, adult education or andragogy, didactics; general and subject-specific (*Fachdidaktik* according to the German tradition, which has had an important influence on our university studies). “Curricular knowledge” is sometimes (but not always) included in didactics. Practical training is given less weight, universities do not consider it part of academic knowledge. The amount and organisation of practical training varies widely among departments and usually consists of:

- in-class observations of teaching given by a model teacher (called *Hospitation* in German) – 10-20 lessons altogether;
- teaching attempts (in many cases just 1-2 attempts per student); and
- supervised school practice - 1-2 weeks only.

Vocational and practical-subject teachers acquire teaching experience by undertaking teaching tasks.

## **Co-operation with enterprises**

Social partners participate in curriculum planning and in working groups for the preparation of knowledge catalogues for vocational subjects. Prior to the adoption of vocational curricula, discussion with the social partners is organised. Examination catalogues for master craftsman, foreman, and managerial staff are normally prepared by competent chambers. Employers provide the practical training component of vocational education and training programmes within the apprenticeship scheme. The knowledge and competencies that teachers should have is the prescribed component of each educational programme. Thus, the discussion on the curriculum normally includes teacher training matters.

The evaluation studies ascertain that links between schools and enterprises as regards teachers and trainers are not adequate. Proposed changes should lead to closer co-operation and more active social partnership.

When the Council of Experts determines changes in curricula it also determines the necessary in-service training of teachers and trainers.

## **Continuing teacher and trainer training**

Various types of continuing teacher and trainer training courses exist, such as pedagogical courses (professional training of teachers), commissioned programmes, priority courses, subject-specific courses, and other topics of interest.

Pedagogical courses and other programmes commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are not subject to public competition. Examples of commissioned programmes are the following: programmes of curricular renewal; pedagogical courses (professional training of teachers' candidates), programmes for trainees and their trainee tutors. Pedagogical courses and subject-specific courses which qualify candidates as teachers and train teachers for teaching another subject are prescribed and are therefore **compulsory**.

Programmes, for example, teaching very young learners of foreign languages, general training and subject-specific didactics, teaching nationalities (Italian- and Slovenian-language teaching and bilingual teaching of Hungarian/Slovenian) in minority areas. In the Hungarian-speaking area, instruction in Hungarian and Slovenian is compulsory in all schools. A typical

lesson may consist of the teacher presenting the lesson in one of the two languages, summarising the content in the other, repeating basic concepts, and asking and answering questions in both languages. The Italian-speaking area, in contrast, host Italian-medium schools where Slovenian is a compulsory subject and Slovenian-medium schools where Italian is a compulsory subject. These schools are open to all students regardless of their mother tongue, cross-border Slovenians and the children of Slovenians working abroad. Preparation for *matura* and *vocational matura*, teaching special-needs children, prevention and problems in education (drug addiction, violence, suicidal tendencies), computer science and computer use are **priority** programmes and are thus financed entirely or largely by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

Other programmes are designed for specialist teachers and various aspects of the teaching profession and teachers' support services.

### **Responsibilities for designing in-service programmes and accreditation mechanisms**

The main responsibilities in the system of in-service training lie with the In-service Training Programme Council appointed by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport. The Council consults with the councils of experts for general and vocational education and adult education regarding in-service training needs, proposes priority areas to the Minister, accredits and selects the programmes of in-service training leading to promotion, and submits them to the Minister for approval, publishes the catalogue of in-service training programmes for the school year, and appoints the joint councils for various fields of training.

The Minister decides on the structure of in-service training programmes, the manner of financing and co-financing and the level of enrolment fees.

Public institutes responsible for the development of education organise in-service training. The Department of the National Education Institute for In-service Training of Professional Staff in Education is responsible for professional, technical, administrative and other duties intended for the In-service Training Programme Council, programme co-councils and permanent working bodies. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport commissions specific programmes of professional training and selects priority programmes. It conducts a public competition for training programmes and also funds them. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport also provides funding for schools to cover costs and salaries for participants of in-service training.

- Head teachers promote the in-service training and education of teachers, plan in-service training of the teaching staff, and propose the awarding of titles. The rules on promotion enable teachers to be promoted to the titles: mentor (*mentor*), advisor (*svetovalec*), councillor (*svetnik*) The requirements for promotion are 3-5 completed years of work in education for each title. It is also possible to be directly promoted to a higher title, by-passing intermediate title(s), although in this case, a minimum 10 years of work in education is required for the title of advisor, and a minimum 15 years for the title of councillor. Recently, teachers were given the opportunity for horizontal promotion or promotion to a higher payment class in the same post. Initially, promotion to payment classes was not possible for teachers, who already had their own system of vertical promotion to titles. In 1996, rules on the promotion to payment classes of employees in schools, which previously applied only to non-education workers, was therefore amended so as to enable promotion to payment classes for teachers as well. Teachers can be promoted up to a maximum of 5 payment classes on the basis of their performance. A teacher's performance in education work is assessed each month and justified by the head teacher of a school.

Programmes last one day (8 periods), two days (16 periods), three days (24 periods), or more. One point for professional promotion is awarded for each 16-period programme attended. Three-quarters of all programmes last three days or longer.

Pedagogical courses last one semester. Therefore, they are offered as evening and Saturday courses.

In-service training is both a right and obligation of teachers. They are guaranteed at least 5 days per year or 15 days in 3 years of paid leave.

### **Training for head teachers**

According to the Organisation and Financing of Education Act, all prospective managing staff must pass the Examination for Head Teacher (EH). To fulfil this legal requirement, the National School for Head Teacher Training was established in 1995. The school carries out the training programme, organises examinations, grants the Head Teacher licences, and provides in-service training for managerial and teaching staff in education. The programme includes courses on organisational theory and management, planning and decision-making, head teachers' skills, human resources and legislation.

The training programme is officially published each year. The head teachers (who have not yet passed the head teachers' examination) and the candidates for head teacher may register on the condition that they fulfil the requirements for the appointment as stipulated by law. Head teachers are appointed for a period of 4 years and may be re-appointed.

The Professional College for Management offers postgraduate specialisation courses in Management in Education. The programme lasts 3 semesters and includes 8 subject courses, a seminar on research methods, and preparation of the specialist dissertation.

### **7. References:**

- National Information Dossier on Education in Slovenia 2000/2001, Ministry of Education and Sport, Eurydice Unit (<http://www.mss.edus.si/eurydice>)
- Future developments of Teacher Training in VET Slovenia, 2000 (Final Report: Dr. Janko Muršak, Dr. Janko Muršak, Anica Justinek, Davorin Majkus, Irena Kuntarič, Jette B. Harrebye, Søren P. Nielsen), Mocca Programme, Ljubljana, December 2000
- Provision of Programmes of In-service Teacher Training in Slovenia – The 2000/2001 Analyses (National Education Institute: Internal Report);
- Attractiveness, profile and occupational content of the Teaching Profession; Eurydice comparative study 2002-2003 (Contributions on various aspects of the Eurydice Unit Slovenia, 2002)
- The Education System in Slovenia 2001 (Brochure 2001-2002; first draft; Eurydice Unit Slovenia)
- Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia: First Data ...(unrevised data for the UOE Collection)
- Proposal for Phase II of the Computer Literacy Education Programme; Information Literacy Education; (RO Programme Council, 2001).