



# spotlight on VET SLOVENIA

## VET in Slovenia

Formal vocational education and training (VET) in Slovenia starts at upper secondary level and is provided mainly by public schools that are founded and financed by the State. The education and labour ministries share responsibility for preparing legislation, financing, and adopting VET programmes and qualifications. While the education ministry governs VET at upper secondary and tertiary levels, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (CPI) is responsible for research and development; it monitors and guides the development of VET and provides in-service teacher training and VET curricula. The CPI also acts as a link between ministries, schools and social partners.

### VET programmes

After completing compulsory basic education, VET students have a choice of upper secondary programmes.

Technical upper secondary programmes (ISCED 354) are four-year programmes that lead to vocational *matura* (with two general and two vocational – theoretical and practical – exams, partly external). These programmes consist of 40% general subjects and at least eight weeks of in-company work-based learning.

Vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353) are three-year labour-market-oriented programmes and offer two paths:

- school-based path: approximately 20% (at least 24 weeks) of the programme is undertaken at an employer and the rest at the school (consisting of general subjects and VET modules);
- apprenticeship path: a minimum 50% of the programme is undertaken at an employer, while at least 40% – general subjects and VET modules – is delivered in school.

Changing paths midway is possible. After final exams, students from both school and apprenticeship paths can enter the labour market or enrol in two-year vocational technical education programmes at ISCED 354 that lead to vocational *matura*.

There are also short vocational upper secondary programmes (ISCED 353). These are two-year programmes that qualify learners for less demanding occupations (at assistant level) or continuing education in vocational programmes.

In the school year 2019/20, 35% of young learners were enrolled in general upper secondary programmes and 65% in upper secondary VET programmes: 41.8% were in technical programmes, 16.8% in vocational programmes, 1.5% in short VET programmes and 4.9% in vocational-technical education.

Graduates with a vocational *matura* can enrol in two-year higher vocational programmes (ISCED 554) or first-cycle professional education (ISCED 655) and, under special conditions, also in first-cycle academic education (ISCED 645).

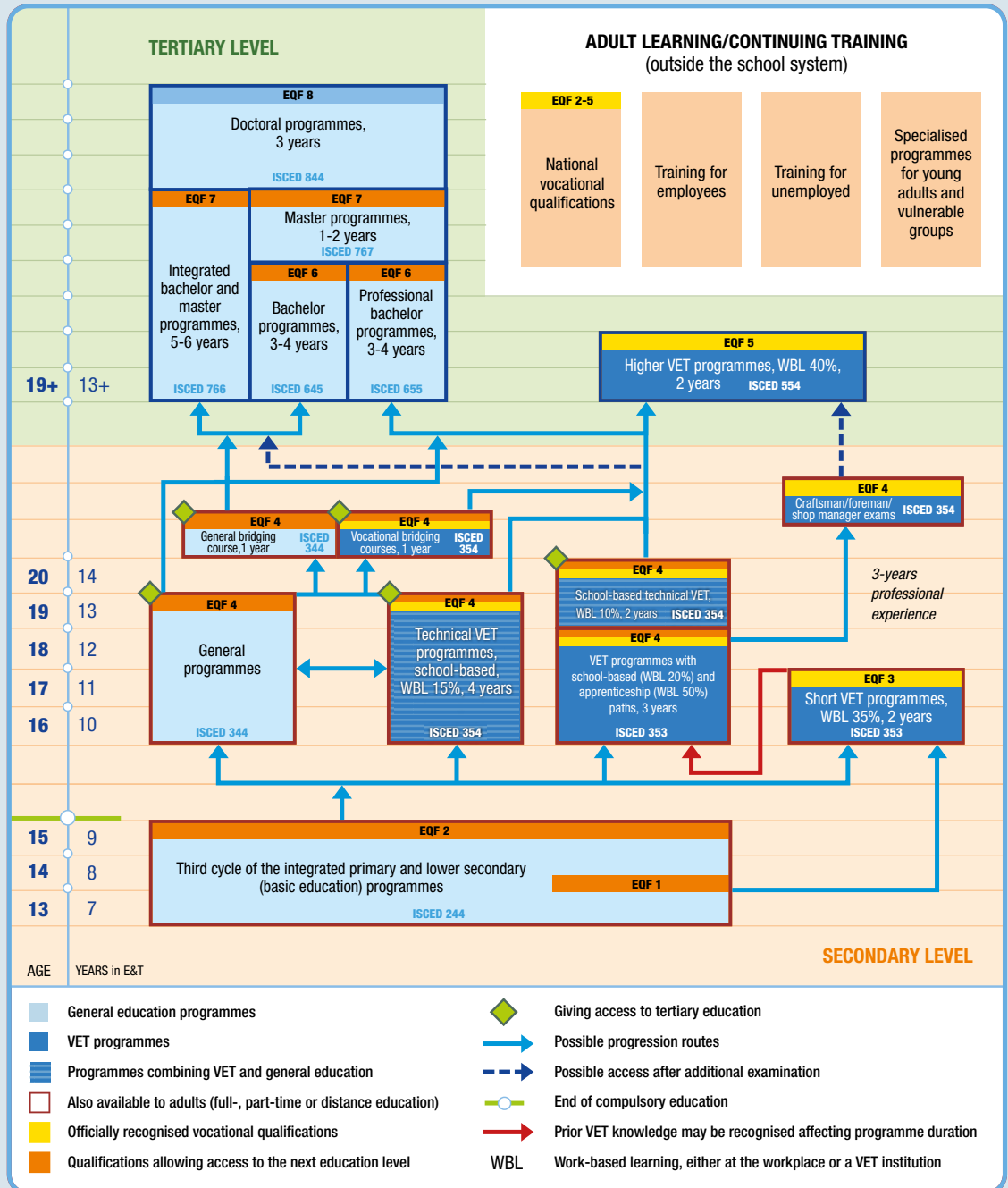
Higher vocational programmes are practice-oriented and include 40% of work-based learning in companies. These were developed to meet the needs of the economy, as they train graduates for management, planning and controlling work processes. In 2019/20, 14% of all tertiary students enrolled into higher VET schools.

### Adult learning and CVET

Adults can enrol in the same formal VET programmes as young people. Adults can also participate in continuing VET, offered by public and private providers; regulation of provision of most of these programmes is not covered by legislation. Many activities to support adult education are organised by adult education centres.

Recognition of non-formal and informal learning is possible within the national vocational qualifications (NVQ) system that has been in place since 2000. In 2021, NVQ certificates can be obtained for 316 qualifications. Candidates must prepare a personal portfolio and take part in a validation procedure.

# VET in Slovenia's education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Slovenia, 2021.

## Distinctive features of VET

Slovenia has the highest share of upper secondary VET learners (including both young people and adults) in the EU-27 (70.8% in 2019) and one of the lowest rates of early leavers from education and training. In 2020 the percentage of people aged 18 to 24 with, at most, lower secondary education was 4.1%. The reasons are the traditionally high value of education in society, progression opportunities with no dead ends, availability of State scholarships, and a well-developed guidance system in schools provided by the school counsellors, as well as a well-developed network of formal adult education providers.

VET in Slovenia is also characterised by the following features:

- occupational standards form the basis for competence-based VET programmes and for the NVQ;
- vocational and technical programmes are offered in all professional fields, all VET programmes combine general subjects with vocational modules that integrate theoretical and practical learning; permeability between education levels and programme types is high;
- work-based learning represents an integral part of all types of VET programme. Students are trained in modern intercompany training centres and companies, in selected vocational programmes, as well as in apprenticeship;
- upper secondary school autonomy: framework curricula are set at national level, while VET schools are responsible for designing curricula. They adapt 20% of the curricula (open curricula) to the local companies' needs.

## Challenges and policy responses

The quality of work-based learning (WBL) remains a challenge. Significant efforts were made through investing in new training facilities (intercompany training centres) and reinforcing in-company WBL. With the adoption of the new Apprenticeship Act in 2017, implementation of the apprenticeship path in three-year VET programmes has started and is now offered in 14 programmes. There are discussions among social partners about the possibilities to extend apprenticeships to other education levels, to adults and in services sectors.

The importance of raising adults' levels of skills is growing. Slovenia's population is ageing, and about 26% of workers face a high risk of seeing their jobs automated. With a significant fall in adult participation in lifelong learning in the past decade (8.4% in 2020), Slovenia has a challenge to achieve its national target of 19% adult participation in learning by 2030. Although its implementation is still being designed, the introduction of the *New national master plan for adult education 2021–30* aims to provide every adult in Slovenia with equal opportunities for quality education throughout their life by focusing mainly on increasing their participation in lifelong learning.

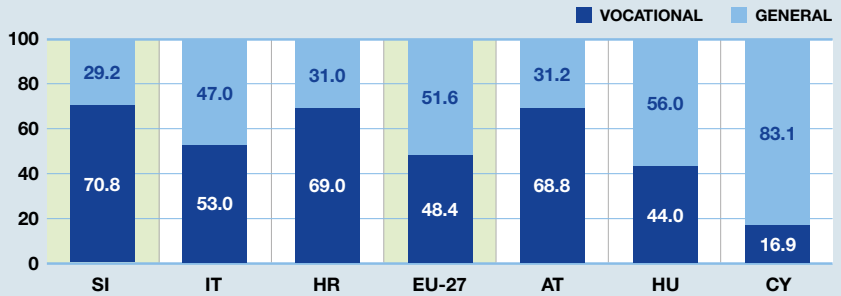
The basic digital skills level of the age group 15 to 64 is 55%, close to the EU average (58%) in 2019. Slovenia has updated the national *Digital Slovenia development strategy* and adopted the *Digital education action plan 2027*.

Projects supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) will primarily focus on the modernisation of vocational education. Its basic goal is adapting education to digital, sustainable transition, and increasing the resilience of the education system. Digital, green and entrepreneurial competences will be introduced to education programmes; computer science and informatics will be strengthened.



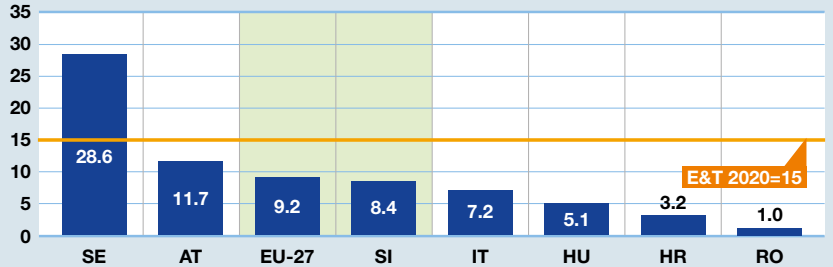
## Education and training in figures

**Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes**  
% of all students in upper secondary education, 2019



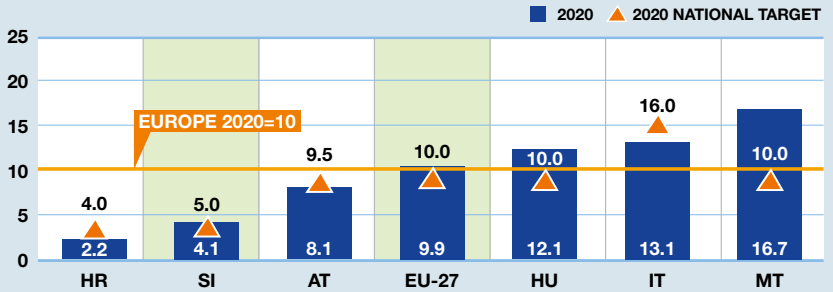
Source: Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 30.6.2021.

**Lifelong learning**  
% of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2020



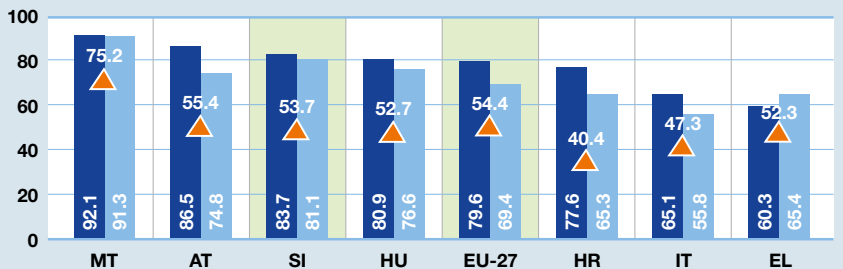
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 30.6.2021.

**Early leavers from education and training**  
% of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks prior to the survey, 2020



Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey, date of extraction 30.6.2021.

**Employment rates of young graduates**  
% of 20 to 34 years old no longer in education and training, 2020



■ Upper vocational secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)  
 ■ Upper general secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)  
 ▲ Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey, date of extraction 30.6.2021.



## Further information

- Cedefop (2021). *Vocational education and training in Slovenia: short description*. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4204>
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- Cedefop; Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET (2019). *Vocational education and training in Europe: Slovenia*. Cedefop; ReferNet. Vocational education and training in Europe database. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia>

<a href="http://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/">www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-education-science-and-sport/</a>	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
<a href="https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-labour-family-social-affairs-and-equal-opportunities/">https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-labour-family-social-affairs-and-equal-opportunities/</a>	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
<a href="https://cpi.si/en/">https://cpi.si/en/</a>	Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for VET
<a href="https://www.zrss.si/en/">https://www.zrss.si/en/</a>	National Education Institute
<a href="https://www.acs.si/en/">https://www.acs.si/en/</a>	Slovenian Institute for Adult Education
<a href="http://www.ric.si/?lng=eng">www.ric.si/?lng=eng</a>	National Examinations Centre
<a href="http://www.pei.si/en/educational-research-institute/">www.pei.si/en/educational-research-institute/</a>	Educational Research Institute
<a href="http://www.cmepius.si/english/">www.cmepius.si/english/</a>	Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for mobility and European educational and training programmes
<a href="http://en.solazaravnatelje.si/">http://en.solazaravnatelje.si/</a>	National School for Leadership in Education
<a href="http://www.nakvis.si/?lang=en">www.nakvis.si/?lang=en</a>	Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
<a href="https://eng.gzs.si/">https://eng.gzs.si/</a>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
<a href="http://www.ozs.si/english">www.ozs.si/english</a>	Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia
<a href="http://www.tzslo.si/en">www.tzslo.si/en</a>	Slovenian Chamber of Commerce

This Spotlight is based on input from the CPI (ReferNet partner in 2021).



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