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Country Report Slovenia

Habitus Sensitive Guidance for Underprivi- leged Milieu

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ReachOut to the 'Left-Behind' – Improving guidance for working
persons from the underprivileged milieu
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Imprint



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1. Introduction

1.1. What is at stake?

Recent changes in the labour market pose a lot of challenges with different causes. Common changes are the so-called ‘megatrends’ that fundamentally affect entire economies and, secondarily, labour markets. These megatrends are mainly globalisation, digitalisation, climate change, and demographic and societal changes. Some of these trends result in incremental changes, while others are more disruptive or ‘game-changing’. For instance, they affect the structure of the economy and the labour market, the design of industrial relations, and the proportions of forms of work, besides increasing the precarity of the balance between flexibility and security in the labour market.

All these changes in the labour market have an impact on the workforce. Workers need to respond adequately to remain competitive in the labour market. As widely cited in literature (Bremer, 2017a; Bremer, 2017b; Erler, 2014), education is increasingly becoming an important and strong determinant of employment and career.

With the aforementioned changes in the labour market, including its rising knowledge requirements, the approach to (adult) education and the willingness to be educated are becoming more essential. Through lifelong learning, an employee can be rewarded with a higher status and with more interesting and usually better-rated and better-paying work. However, this learning situation is affected by labour market situations and the status of specific working groups or the specific individual situations of employees and their access to information. Also, while lifelong education as such is becoming more and more a prerequisite for career success, other factors might carry more weight with regard to worker selection and allocation.

To address these concerns, access to continued information and education as well as to educational guidance can be perceived as comparative advantages of workers. Noticeably disadvantaged in this respect, however, are working people who could be described as belonging to underprivileged milieus or lower underprivileged (Bremer, 2017b), where major barriers to lifelong education and training still exist. People from underprivileged groups mostly have lower education and skills levels but also demonstrate lower participation in further education and educational guidance.

1.2. The Erasmus+ project *ReachOut to the “Left Behind” – Improving guidance for working persons from underprivileged milieus*

Responding to the challenges outlined in the previous section, the Erasmus+-funded project *ReachOut* (2022–2024) aims at the improvement of the adult education sector by enhancing the competences of adult educators and other adult education staff in offering and providing guidance to workers in underprivileged milieus for their special needs for orientation and empowerment, as well as creating upskilling pathways for such workers and increasing their adult education access and take-up.

Within the project framework, working persons from the underprivileged milieu are persons in the prime working age who have a less stable form of gainful work (e.g., a fragmented, precarious, low-paid, marginal or partly declared work). They have limited access to formal education and guidance, are low-skilled, may have a very low level of education and are functionally illiterate. They are often unconvinced, based on experience, that formal education and guidance can help improve their employment status, and they assume that the promise of advancement through further education does

not apply to them. Some of these employees may be migrants or refugees, so they may have little knowledge of the national language or the applied systems in their host country.

The Erasmus+ ReachOut project is working under the assumption that education in general and adult education in particular are efficient ways of improving and extending access to adult training and upskilling. At the same time, the project is based on the fact that educational guidance professionals have to tackle the challenge of dealing with people in a changing society with changing needs for guidance and empowerment. Their challenges are not the same; on the contrary, large differences in their backgrounds, milieus and habitus can be assumed.



The general idea of the project is to display adequate guidance to individuals in accessing appropriate education and training opportunities in adult education and to give them a clear picture of the individual skills that they need.

The end-goal of the project is to extend the accessibility of, and increase participation in, adult education. The project intends to achieve it through focused guidance in, and well-designed support for, accession to appropriate education and training opportunities in adult education. Very important is the use of motivation strategies by adapting guidance offers to the target group of working persons from underprivileged milieus. What is essential in this process is that these working persons attain knowledge of the individual skills that they need.

The project works with three main direct and indirect target groups to improve the situation in educational guidance for working persons in underprivileged milieus. Those target groups are as follows:

A. **Guidance practitioners** and their organisations who are confronted with the challenges of working with persons from underprivileged milieus, whose habitus differs greatly from that of general guidance practitioners themselves (e.g., due to their different educational backgrounds).

B. **Working persons from underprivileged milieus** who are of the prime working age and who have a less stable form of gainful work (e.g., a fragmented, precarious, low-paid, marginal or partly declared work). They are low-skilled, may have a very basic level of education, are functionally illiterate and have limited access to formal education and guidance. Some of these working persons may be migrants or refugees and thus may have little knowledge of the national language or systems applied in their host country.

C. **Governing actors** at the regional, national and European levels, such as stakeholders responsible for educational guidance and training as well as policy makers in the field of strategic programme development and funding.

The project is implemented by a European consortium composed of the following institutions with long-standing expertise in the fields of educational guidance, labour, and labour market and education policy, policy analysis, consulting and scientific research:

- ÖSB Social Innovation Gemeinnützige GmbH (AT) – leader of the project;
- bbb Büro für berufliche Bildungsplanung (DE);
- Andragoški Center Republike Slovenije (SI); and
- Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs (CZ).

1.3. About this report

This report mainly describes and critically analyses the systems by which professional educational guidance is delivered to working persons from underprivileged milieus in all countries involved in the project. It also maps the state of the art related to the policy and practice of such guidance, and provides best-practice examples aside from addressing weak points. The analyses will be interpreted in the light of the latest social and political developments and will specifically respond to current events connected to changes in the labour market and additional requirements in the labour market and guidance systems.

After outlining the general situation concerning guidance systems and the situation in each of the participating countries, this report will focus on describing the specific target group hidden behind the term *underprivileged milieus* specific to each partner country. Both the qualifications of the group and its quantification will be described.

Methodologically, this report is based on a comprehensive literature and data analysis, interviews with selected experts from science and practice (see the imprint) and selected good-practice examples.

This report will help to create a solid base for the identification of the status quo, key actors, potentials, and possible bottlenecks and challenges relevant for each country. On the basis of the outcomes of the particular national contribution, a Self-Study Manual ('Experience and Cases from Working with Working People in Underprivileged Milieus') and a Policy Paper ('Habitus Sensitive Guidance – Recommendations for Policy Makers') are compiled.

2. Situation of working people from underprivileged milieu

In the second chapter there are defined the (indirect) target groups of interest. First part is dedicated to comparative analysis based on data from Eurostat and the second part is focused on the situation of working people from unprivileged milieu in Slovenia. Outcomes of the second chapter are essential for proper understanding of the research projects conclusions.

2.1. Defining the object of investigation

One of the main ideas in the field of inequality originates from Pierre Bourdieu, whose work "Distinction" (2018 [1987]) focuses, among other things, on cultural, social, and economic capital and the associated practices of distinction and therefore unequal habitus. It is argued that the conditions for gaining and shaping them can vary according to social class background and the educational path associated with it. Competences can be determined by the consumption of cultural goods, whereby this differs between social groups. Along with this, there is also a milieu-specific habitus. Despite all efforts, this can never be completely discarded, which is why the types of capital learned during socialization (social, cultural, and economic capital) can be described as very deterministic for the life course of individuals (Bourdieu 2018 [1987]). In a more theoretical framing, cultural capital is seen as a reciprocal resource in the academic milieu and as a basis for social selectivity (Lamont and Lareau 1988). Using theoretical approaches of their work on symbolic boundaries, especially class- and milieu-specific inequalities can be considered.

By symbolic boundaries, Lamont et al. (2015) define those boundaries that lead to the inclusion or exclusion of people, groups, or things. Boundary processes, distinctions, and categorizations are created, among other things, by normative imperatives, cultural attitudes, and practices, and hence dis-

likes or preferences (Lamont et al. 2015). With the use of interviews with upper-middle class professionals and managers in France and the United States, Lamont (1992) shows that cultural as well as symbolic boundaries vary, and ascriptions of meaning can be defined differently in the national context as well as by class and milieu (Lamont 1992). Boundaries are drawn along three criteria: moral concepts, socioeconomic success, and cultural capital. Moral boundaries are based on ideas about honesty, one's attitude toward gainful employment, and integrity. Socioeconomic boundaries are drawn along internalized assumptions about the social positioning of individuals along the lines of property, power, or wealth. Likewise, success in one's profession or gainful employment is considered a decisive criterion for the higher ascribed value in that area. Finally, cultural boundaries are defined that focus on education, intelligence, cultural preferences, and taste (Lamont 1992).

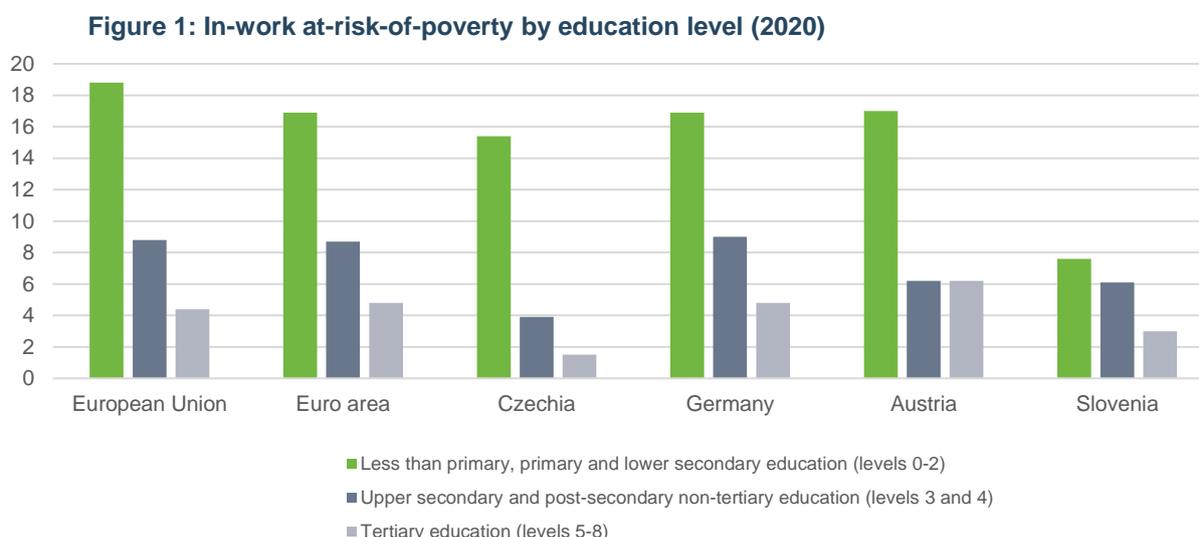
Bourdieu (2018 [1987]) argues that one cannot dismiss the habitus. Even after completing formal education, the habitus from one's milieu or origin always remains. Because of that, habitus is a very structurally deterministic concept.

During socialization, the primary habitus is formed in the family. Because of this, the social position of the family is crucial: the way of thinking, speaking, and behaving is inherited. A secondary habitus is formed through socialization at school. Thereby the primary habitus can be reinforced. Habitus does not simply bring different ways of thinking and behaving, but different classification schemes. In conclusion, one's habitus is strongly shaped of the milieu of origin (Bourdieu 2018 [1987]).

Persons from this underprivileged milieu are characterized by a certain habitus (Bourdieu 1993), which differs greatly from that of the guidance practitioners themselves. Guidance practitioners have diverse educational backgrounds and belong typically to the post-material milieu (about 12 % of population in Germany and 10 % in Austria) or the adaptive, pragmatic middle-class milieu (about 12 % of population in DE and AT) (SINUS-Institut 2021). Persons from the underprivileged group belong to the precarious milieu (about 9 % in DE) and consumer-oriented basis (about 9 % in AT). They are characterized by lower educational and skill level and lower participation in educational guidance (Bremer 2017). And a high percentage has migration background. People in a certain social milieu are among other things similar in their preferences and attitudes to work and education (Vester et al. 2001).

2.2. Working people from the underprivileged milieu in European Union

To illustrate the situation in the EU and selected countries, we can use data from the EU-SILC. These data allow us to picture the portion of in-work at-risk-of-poverty depending on an educational level.



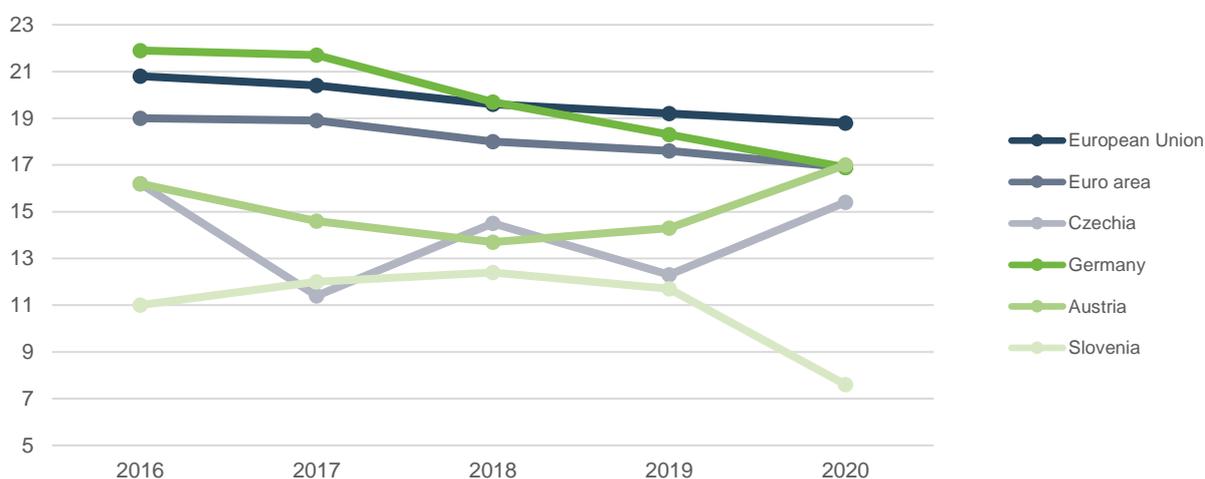
Source: Eurostat, 2022

In Figure 1 we may recognize the distinct effect of low education. Persons with less than primary, primary, and lower secondary education are most often at risk of in-work poverty. In 2020 the lowest rate of 7,6% was in Slovenia. Other selected countries were close to the union average. In Czech it was 15,4 %, in Germany 16,9 % and in Austria 17 %.

As could be expected, with higher levels of attained education the portion of persons at risk of poverty declines. On the other hand, it does not decline linearly. We may observe a gap between the category of lowest education and the two other categories for higher education levels (in 2020, only Slovenia represented an exemption from the pattern). This observation highlights the importance of qualification and competencies for people from underprivileged milieu.

If preceding years were considered, we could notice that the relevant ratios for persons with upper secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education (two higher categories) are quite stable. Within the category for lowest attained education (most relevant in this project), more volatility can be observed. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: In-work poverty of lowest educational category (2016-2020)



Source: Eurostat, 2022

In the period from 2016 to 2020 there was a slow decline recorded in Germany, similarly as on the level of the EU and Eurozone. In contrast, Czech, Austria, and Slovenia experienced more dynamics, mostly in 2020, which was the first year of the pandemic of COVID-19. Recorded changes were undoubtedly affected by applied social and anti-pandemic (compensation) policies.

While comparing and interpreting these data we should keep a sceptical view and consider the national specifics in all selected countries. To allow deeper analysis, we investigate the situation in Slovenia in detail in the next subchapter.

2.3. National situation of working people from underprivileged milieu

Statistical data on working people

National data on work and employment in Slovenia is monitored by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) and include both data on work activity and data on types of employment.

The most up-to-date data available on their website show that in the first quarter of 2022 there were **980,000 working people** in Slovenia, of which:

- 82% were employees in an employment relationship,
- 12% were self-employed,
- 3% did student work,
- 2% helped on the family farm or in the family business,
- 1% did other forms of work.

About **44,000** people were **unemployed**; the unemployment rate among men was 3.9% and among women 4.7%.

The current unemployment rate is quite low for Slovenia; however, that has not always been the case in the past. Furthermore, according to the (national and global) economic and social situation the unemployment rate will most probably rise in the near future.

In light of this forecast it might be important to keep in mind the “lesson learnt” as described in one of good practice examples in this report (“Management and development of employees whose employment is at risk in the Podravje region – START YOUR CAREER WITH POTENTIAL!” in chapter 4), when working with people on the verge of losing their employment. They stress the importance of a holistic approach, including motivation for life-long learning and life-long career guidance, adaptation of educational and training programmes and individual/group support through guidance.

Data on working people with less stable forms of gainful work (e.g. fragmented, precarious, low-paid, marginalized, partially registered work), which are the focus of the ReachOut project, were collected and published by the Statistical Office on World Day of Decent Work 2020 in publication *Svetovni dan dostojnega dela 2020*. These show that in 2019, 56,000¹ working residents of Slovenia were engaged in **precarious forms of work** (defined as non-standard forms of work that are considered an unstable, insecure form of employment):

- 48% of students who worked through the student service,
 - 23% of people, who worked through an employment agency,
 - 22% of the self-employed, who did not hire and worked mainly for one client,
 - 7% of persons who had involuntary employment with working hours shorter than full time.
- (Svetovni dan dostojnega dela 2020, p. 4)

Working people are a very heterogeneous group, which we have to be aware of, when we want to reach them, which has to be done through different channels. As it is described in one of good practice examples (Regional Centre for Decent Work Ljubljana in chapter 4), where the information about decent work and work related rights was conveyed live (through employee representatives, in workshops) and via e-mails, e-counsellors, anonymous chat, on websites and events.

The form of work is however only one aspect of decent work, say the authors of the document *Dostojno delo, Analiza stanja, institucionalnega okvirja ter pregled dobrih praks* from 2018: “Decent work is not tied only to certain forms of work, although it is undeniable that certain forms of work lead to worse position on the labour market. However, the key distinguishing feature is work in an agreed and legally appropriate manner. Because decent work, which is supposed to be guaranteed by an employment contract for an indefinite period of time, can quickly turn into indecent work with inadequate working conditions, for example with such an arrangement of working hours that does not allow for quality rest or the organization of private life. Therefore, it is not possible to rule out any form

¹ According to SURS (<https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatData/pxweb/sl/Data/-/0700915S.px/table/tableViewLayout2>), 894,229 people were in employment in the average month of 2019.

of work in advance, i.e., when determining whether a job is decent or not, it is necessary to start from practice, i.e. from the realization of the relationship between the worker and the employer.” (Dostojno delo, Analiza stanja, institucionalnega okvirja ter pregled dobrih praks, p. 3-4).

That is why some other data from the publication Svetovni dan dostojnega dela 2020 are also interesting, for example on **distribution of working hours**. Data shows that in 2019 there were approximately:

- 30% of those who usually worked in shifts;
- 6% of those who sometimes worked in shifts and
- 64% of those who never of those who.

In 2019, approximately 38% of employed Slovenians worked in the evening (from 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.), and 19% at night (from 12:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.). 55% of them worked on Saturdays, and about 28% on Sundays. (World Precarious Work Day 2020, p. 5)

Despite of being employed, **46,000 working people lived below the poverty line in Slovenia in 2021**. According to SURS data², the poverty risk rate in 2021 was 11.7%, and the poverty risk threshold was EUR 771 per month. Among the 243,000 people living with income below the poverty line were:

- 85,000 pensioners,
- 46,000 working people,
- 40,000 minors,
- 38,000 unemployed and
- 34,000 other persons (unable to work, housewives, students, other inactive and unclassified persons).

Life of working people is also affected by **labour migration**. According to SURS data³, at the end of 2020, **every second working person in Slovenia worked in another municipality**. The data also show that in 2020, slightly more than 10,800 foreigners from neighbouring countries (Austria, Italy, Croatia, Hungary) were employed in Slovenia; of which slightly more than **42.6% were daily cross-border labour migrants**.

According to the data of the Employment Service of Slovenia, 45,654 working permits were valid in 2021 (22,564 of which were issued in that year). The trend of issuing work permits is shown in the figure below.

Figure 1: Working permits per year (2016-2022)

Year	Working permits - ISSUED	Working permits - VALID
2016	7.033	16.993
2017	12.546	19.838
2018	18.049	27.881
2019	17.030	36.620
2020	15.636	38.444
2021	22.561	45.654
I-VII 2022	12.894	50.171

Source: ZRSZ, 2022

² SURS, <https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/News/Index/10400>

³ SURS, <https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/news/Index/9458>

Data on levels of education and participation of working people in adult education

The data in figure 2 shows, that 64.2% of working people in Slovenia have obtained secondary level education or less (ISCED 3 or less) and 35.8% have obtained higher levels of education.

Looking closer into the data on education on levels ISCED 3 or less, we find that:

- 0.8% are without education or have unfinished primary education (ISCED 1),
- 8% have finished primary education (ISCED 2),
- 22.1% have finished short upper secondary vocational and upper secondary vocational education (ISCED 3) and
- 33.3% have finished secondary technical and upper secondary general education (ISCED 3).

Figure 2: Working people in Slovenia by level of education in 2021

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	%
ISCED 1	0,8
ISCED 2	8
ISCED 3	55,4
ISCED 5 and 6	16
ISCED 7	16,5
ISCED 8	3,3

Source: SURS, 2021

Participation rate in education and training has been dropping since 2015 to 2020, however a sudden increase has been detected in 2021 (from 8.4 to 18.9%). The analysis of this phenomenon is still to be concluded, however initial findings show that the increase has been due to a greater number of participation in various on-line educational and training programmes during Covid-19 pandemic by higher educated adults, while participation of less educated has decreased even more.

Figure 3: Participation rate in education and training (between 25 and 64 years) in LLL in 2015–2021

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU (27 countries)	10,1	10,3	10,4	10,6	10,8	9,1	10,8
Slovenia	11,9	11,6	12,0	11,4	11,2	8,4	18,9

Source: Eurostat, 2021

Data on participation in education and training by level of education, shown in Figure 4, supports those findings. We can see that the participation level increases with the level of obtained education, therefore it is the highest among those with education level ICSED 5 or more (14.8% in 2020 and 31.6% in 2021) and lowest among those with education levels ICSED 0-2 (1.7% in 2020 and 3.4% in 2021).

Figure4: Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks) in 2020 and 2021 (Slovenia)

Level	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-8
Year			
2020	1,7	5,3	14,8
2021	3,4	11,5	31,6

Source: Eurostat, 2021

Figure 5: Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks) in 2020 and 2021 by age (Slovenia)

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74
Year						
2020	67,6	16,4	8,5	6,4	3,9	1,9
2021	74,4	28,2	21,5	18,0	10,3	4,7

Source: Eurostat, 2021

Participation in education and training is also decreasing with age, being the lowest in age group 65-74) as shown in figure 5. From the viewpoint of working people, low rates of age groups 55-64 (3.9%) and 45-54 (6.4%) are the one we need to pay attention to.

According to the results of PIAAC survey on the development of skills of adults from 2016 ((PIAAC, 2016),) approximately one in four adults in Slovenia has low-level skills. That means that 476,000 (40%) adults are poorly trained in the area of problem solving in a technologically rich environment and 400,000 (33%) are poorly trained in the field of textual and mathematical skills (Javrh, 2016).

Considering data on participation in education and training and the results of PIAAC survey in 2016, we can conclude that the following groups of employees are particularly vulnerable:

- less educated (with less than 4 years of secondary education),
- older than 45 years and
- those with poorly developed (basic) skills.

In the four interviews conducted, the two counsellors in adult education and the two experts in the field of work with vulnerable groups of adults added the following groups that become more vulnerable in recent years and should be given more attention in providing access to guidance and education and training. These are:

- employees with a migrant background,
- employees with disability,
- employees who return to work after a long sick leave and have certain medical conditions/obstacles,
- employees in less demanding jobs, whose work does not allow further development of skills (stagnation occurs),
- employees with less stable forms of employment (fixed-term, precarious workers, workers in fields where the employer does not respect their rights, etc.; these groups of employees are generally not included in trade unions, so their rights are often overlooked).

3. Resulting challenges for the Guidance System

3.1. Structure of the Guidance System

Two public systems for guidance on education and career development are in place in Slovenia, which provide support for young people and adults:

- guidance as public service under the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport: as school (educational and vocational) guidance service in primary and secondary schools and as guidance in adult education (hereafter AE), which is carried out as a public service in a network of 35 public adult education centres and
- guidance as public service under the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and equal opportunities, which is carried out by the Employment Service of Slovenia (central office, 12 regional offices and local offices).

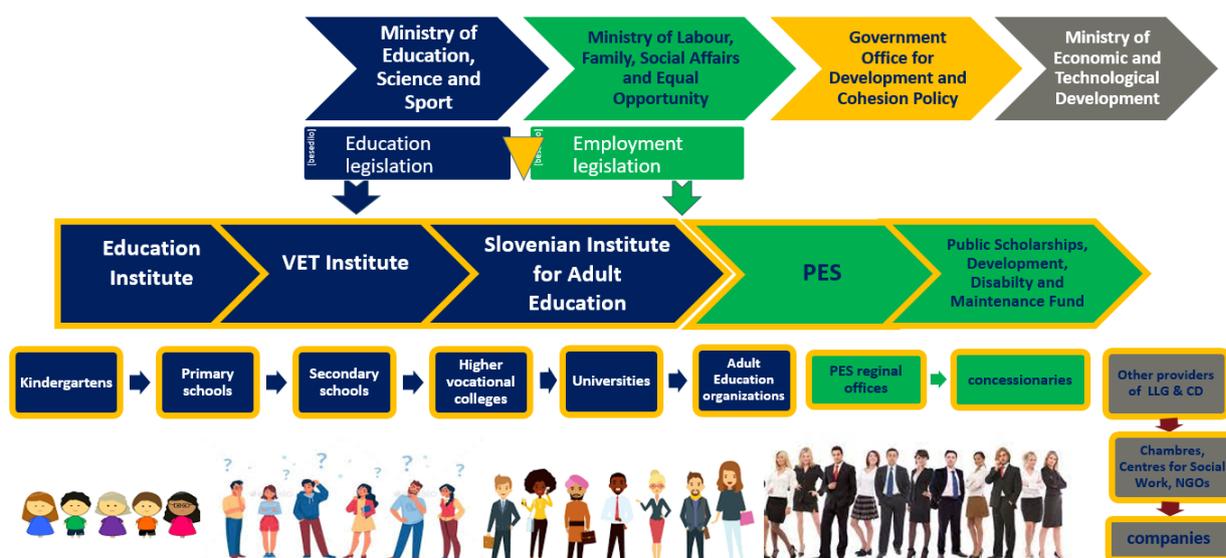
Young people have access to guidance in **schools (primary and secondary)** through school (educational and vocational) guidance services and at **universities** through their career centres (which are, however, not established in all faculties). In the past three years, under the leadership of the Association of Slovene higher vocational colleges, career guidance for students (full-time and part-

time) at higher vocational schools has also been developed. Young people can also have the option of career guidance from career counsellors at employment agencies. However, in recent years, this has been available on a lesser scale, since their activities are primarily aimed at registered unemployed and employed people at risk of job loss (related to the annual current measures of the active employment policy).

Adults have access to free guidance in adult education and career development in 35 public adult education centres⁴ (in accordance with the o Article 52 of the Adult Education Act (AEA-1), guidance in adult education is a public service) and in the Employment Service of Slovenia.

Guidance, especially career guidance, is also available to adults in private employment agencies, in companies with well-developed personnel and training services, and within the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia. From the cooperation with the mentioned organizations, however, **we often find that those guidance activities do not reach working people from underprivileged milieu.**

Governance and legislation framework of LLG & CD in Slovenia



<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/inventory-lifelong-guidance-systems-and-practices-slovenia-si#introduction>

The picture shows that the two key holders of policies and funding in the field of guidance in adult education and career development are the two ministries: the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and equal opportunities. A smaller part is under the domain of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology mainly through the activities of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia.

National funds are provided for those networks in guidance in adult education, as well as a significant share of funds from the European Social Fund.

⁴ Before 2021, 17 regional guidance centres were active (IGAE centres). That year, their activities became a part of the public service.

The national Expert Group for Lifelong Guidance (EGLG)⁵ has been active for over 15 years, **with the purpose of mutual coordination and integration of guidance activities** in Slovenia. The SIAE has a representative in the group. Members of the group mutually share information on their activities and coordinate joint activities, which are also presented on the website of the National coordination point for Lifelong career guidance, which is managed by the Employment Service of Slovenia (more is available in Slovenian: <https://www.vkotocka.si/strokovna-skupina/>, information in English: https://english.ess.gov.si/about_ess/projects/current-projects/project/service-development-of-lifelong-career-guidance). The expert group is responsible for the preparation of **strategic recommendations for development, cooperates with the CareersNet network** (<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/networks/careersnet>) and informs members about European trends in this field.

In accordance with the legislation in their fields, the following national public institutes are responsible for the **development and research of guidance**:

- National Education Institute Slovenia: children and young people,
- Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training: for young people in vocational and professional education,
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education: for all adults,
- Employment Service of Slovenia: mainly for adults (mostly unemployed) and for children and young people when transitioning from primary to secondary school and from secondary school to post-secondary and higher education.

3.2. Description of the situation, challenges and trends of the Guidance System

Guidance in adult education in Slovenia

This chapter focuses on adult education guidance that is provided as a public service from 2021 as we want to implement the findings and results of the ReachOut project primarily in this network.

Adult education guidance as a public service is aimed at all adults, with emphasis on vulnerable groups, vulnerable employed adults among them. Special attention is given to adults without completed primary education vocational or professional education, or adults with lower skill levels.

The Adult Education Act (AEA-1) from 2018 defines guidance in adult education as a public service (Article 52). For the high-quality implementation of guidance in adult education as a public service, **Guidelines for implementing adult education guidance as a public service** were prepared. The document defines **three areas of guidance**:

- **enrolment in education and continuation of education**: guidance on enrolment in the primary school programme for adults and continuing the educational pathway, on enrolment in verified education programmes for adults that lead to officially recognised educational qualifications and on enrolment in non-formal education programmes for adults.
- **identification and documentation of knowledge and skills** and
- **self-directed learning**.

⁵ The term lifelong career orientation is used as an umbrella term in the expert group. In accordance with the Labour Market Regulation Act (2010), career orientation is defined as an activity that includes activities that enable the identification of skills, competences and interests for making decisions in the field of employment, education, training and choosing a profession, as well as managing life paths. All in such a way that individuals learn those skills, develop their competences, and use them.

When defining the content of guidance in adult education as a public service, previous professional approaches and experiences in the development and implementation of guidance for adults in Slovenia were also taken into account. Especially the experience of providers of guidance in Centres for Information and Guidance in AE – IGAE⁶ and centres and Self-Directed Learning Centres⁷ as well as (SDLC) as well as experience in developing and implementing the identification and documentation of knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and informal learning⁸. Current European and national strategic and professional guidelines for guidance in adult education were also taken into account - recommendations until 2020.

However, we must emphasize that the importance of guidance in adult education is highlighted in both European (A New European Agenda for Adult Learning, adopted in 2021) and national documents. The key national document defining the national strategic directions for the development of adult education in Slovenia for the period up to 2030 is the new Resolution On the Adult Education Master Plan in the Republic of Slovenia for the 2022–2030 period - ReAEMP22–30) (2022).

The **vision** of the ReAEMP22–30 is that « the adult population of Slovenia has equal opportunities and incentives for quality learning and education at all stages of life for their holistic development and sustainable living. «

There is **six main objectives** in the field of adult education in the Republic of Slovenia, which are being implemented on the basis of the AEMP13–20, are (ibid, p.23):

1. Increase the participation of adults in LLL;
2. Raise the level of basic skills and improve the general educational attainment of adults;
3. Raise the educational attainment of adults;
4. Increase the skills of the population to respond successfully to labour market needs;
5. Strengthen research and development in the field of adult education;
6. Improve and strengthen adult learning activities.

The target group addressed by adult education programs and activities are all adult residents, since, according to the concept of lifelong learning, learning never ends, regardless of age or level of education. ReAEMP22–30 particularly points out following target groups (ibid, p. 45):

1. Adults with low levels of basic skills, regardless of employment status, age or other characteristics;
2. Adults who need to improve their general educational attainment to meet personal needs and community challenges;
3. Adults in need of further vocational or professional education or training in line with labour market;
4. Young adults, early school leavers and school drop-outs;
5. Elderly (65+) and
6. Adults who have limited opportunities to access social, cultural, economic and educational goods.

⁶ The first IGAE centres were established in 2001, by the year 2020 there were 17 regional IGAE centres established throughout Slovenia that became a part of public network in 2021.

⁷ The first Self-Directed Learning Centres were established in 1995, by the year 2020 there were 38 centres throughout Slovenia, most became a part of public network in 2021.

⁸ In the years 2009–2019, several projects funded by the European Social Fund took place in Slovenia, within which approaches and tools were developed for the evaluation and recognition of the knowledge, skills and competences of adults acquired in formal and informal education and in informal learning.

For adult education guidance services is in ReAEMP22–30 special emphasizes that “Particular attention is paid to vulnerable adults: adults without a completed primary education, vocational or professional training or with lower levels of skills.” (ibid, p. 45).

ReAEMP22–30 sets out a number of indicators to deliver and measure impacts. Three overarching ones are taken from the European Union targets (hereafter referred to as: EU). The first two ensure comparability at the national level for the past periods of implementation of national adult education programmes and international comparability.

Umbrella indicators:

1. From the Active and Non-active Population Survey (LFS4t)

In Slovenia, the participation of the population aged 25 to 64 in LLL will increase from 8.4 % in 2020 to 19 % in 2030.

2. From the Adult Education Survey (AES)

In Slovenia, the participation of the population aged 25 to 64 in LLL will increase from 46 % in 2016 to 66 % in 2030.

Responsibility for achieving the objectives and the ReAEMP22–30 headline indicators lies with the relevant ministries and professional bodies and providers that will plan, develop and implement adult education programmes and activities.

Guidance in adult education is among supportive activities in the field of adult education and one of the key contributors to the realization of the ReAEMP22–30 goals 22-30. An indicator has also been defined for guidance in adult education as public service, which is that the proportion of adults involved in guidance activities provided as a public service will increase by at least 20 % by 2030 compared to 2020.

Guidance approaches and outreach

Guidance approaches are particularly important when providing counselling for vulnerable groups of adults. In Slovenia in adult education guidance as a public service, is particular attention given to the inclusion of adults from vulnerable groups, including working people from underprivileged milieu.

Guidelines for implementing adult education guidance as a public service state that »*Vulnerable adults are:*

- *adults without completed primary education;*
- *the unemployed, in particular older people and the long-term unemployed without vocational or professional education and those with underdeveloped key or occupational competences;*
- *the employed without vocational or professional education and the employed with underdeveloped basic or occupational competences as well as the employed who are no longer able to practice a profession due to its specific psychophysical requirements, their age or restructuring of the work process;*
- *adults with underdeveloped basic or occupational competences, regardless of their employment status or other characteristics;*
- *young adults leaving school early and dropouts;*
- *other vulnerable adults with limited access to social, cultural, financial and educational goods, such as adults from less developed regions and the rural population, older adults,*

Roma, minorities, migrants, the homeless, people with disabilities,⁹ adults with special needs¹⁰ and convicts.« (ibid., p. 21, 22).

We have been developing outreach in guidance activities in adult education in Slovenia since 2004, with the aim to reach a greater number of adults from vulnerable groups to rise the participation rate in guidance and education. Good practices from 15-years of outreach activities were also transferred into professional recommendations for the implementation of guidance activities in adult education as a public service (2020).

Guidelines for implementing adult education guidance as a public service emphasize that “*for greater accessibility of guidance services for adults, guidance in AE should be developed and implemented as close as possible to where the adults live and work, throughout their lives and in a manner that reflects the needs of different groups of adults in the local or regional environment. It should be especially accessible to vulnerable adults whose access to education or learning is hindered due to various barriers, forms of deprivation and deficits and who participate in continuing education and learning only rarely or not at all.*” (ibid., p. 21)

That is why the Guidelines stresses **that it should also be carried out outside the office, as outreach**, depending on appropriate conditions (ibid., p. 37-38):

- “**at an outside location:** guidance is carried out outside the AE public service provider’ offices, in a different organisation (these can be other educational organisations, libraries, social work centres and others) etc.;
- **through mobile service:** this is organised in cases of occasional needs for guidance in chosen organisations or in public spaces (at the library, shopping centre, public event in the local/regional environment outdoors and other suitable venues)...;
- **with an information (info) point:** informing adults is the main purpose of an info point. There can either be an AE counsellor present who will personally provide information from the prepared materials or this can simply be a place that offers information materials without an AE counsellor present. The info point can be provided at various locations ranging from public spaces (library, primary care centre, social work centre and others) to various organisations that get many adult visitors (educational organisations for adults, companies and others). ”

Through the years of experience of conducting outreach in guidance in adult education, it has been shown that appropriate conditions must be provided for this, in particular (Vilič Klenovšek, 2018):

- a systematic and integrated approach, which includes advance planning of outreach, it’s implementation and evaluation; and before all that, a good analysis of the needs of the target group or groups we want to reach must be done,
- an appropriate number of consultants and financial conditions,
- professionalization, which includes adequate qualification of counsellors for outreach (they must have appropriate competences for planning and carrying out the outreach activities).

In the past, in Slovenia, outreach in guidance was also developed within an international Erasmus + project GOAL – Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners (2015-2018), in which SIAE was one of the partners. In this project, special attention was given to the development of the counsellor’s competences for outreach. We found that: “*The continuous professional development of consultants should include content such as:*

- *different methods of outreach adapted to different groups of people and situations;*

⁹ The status of people with disabilities in Slovenia is, among others, regulated by the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act (VREPD, 2014).

¹⁰ Slovenia has a valid Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (PCSNA-1, 2017), which has not been “transposed” into the field of AE. However, the definition of children with special needs can also be applied mutatis mutandis to adults in AE.

- *how to prepare, what to pay attention to when carrying out outreach activities; professional and organizational-technical aspects;*
- *knowledge of the needs and characteristics of vulnerable groups, which we reach through outreach activities;*
- *how to carry out effective promotional activities, how to include the media, modern social networks, etc.” (ibid., p.9)*

In addition, it is pointed out that *"In outreach, the personal qualities of the counsellor are also important, he/she must be able to listen to different groups of adults, be respectful of differences and empathetic."* (ibid., p.9).

Counsellors that participated in interviews, conducted for this report (interviews are archived in SIAE's documentation), also stressed the importance of counsellor's personality traits and competences that express¹¹:

- openness to diversity and awareness of differences in the habitus of counsellors and adults,
- flexibility for the counsellor to get to know the client (his habitus), understand his needs and help him define goals and steps to achieve these goals,
- empathy,
- developed emotional intelligence,
- acceptance (verbal and non-verbal language, respectful, equal attitude, etc.).

They emphasized the importance of constantly improving their competences for this work. One of the counsellors said: *"As counsellors we need to empower ourselves: we need to be open, understanding, well-supported in communication (additional training in NLP helps me to calibrate, mirror, connect and maintain good contact), have high digital skills. Knowledge of foreign languages is also important to establish authentic contact with migrants."*

Example of outreach approach for employees

In the following, we present an example of outreach activities for greater participation of employees from vulnerable groups in guidance with the aim of increasing their participation in education (encouraging and motivating employees to participate in education and training and thinking about possible paths for further career development - supported by the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and competences).

Within the framework of the ESF project **Guidance for employees 2016–2022**, which is also described as an example of good practice (in chapter 4) we have developed a special outreach approach to reach employees who are less educated and older than 45 years (and thus less often involved in further education and training, according to the data for Slovenia). We named the approach **"guidance at the workplace"**, since the counsellors provided guidance for employees in companies, either in cooperation with the management and HR department or in cooperation with the trade union.

Three key steps in planning and implementation of "guidance at the workplace" approach were recommended (Vilič Klenovšek, Dobrovoljc, Pavlič, 2016, p.36):

1. Preparation of the plan for guidance in the company,
2. Carrying out guidance at the workplace and documenting the course of guidance in the company,

¹¹ One of the counsellors said that all that also confirmed by the adults' statements at the end of the guidance session, such as: *"I felt accepted by you"* and *"I liked the positive atmosphere you created in the group when you presented information to us and the possibilities of guidance and education."*

3. Evaluation of the results and effects of guidance in the company.

In this context, it was particularly pointed out that decision of the company and the employee to participate in the guidance process must be a voluntary one. It is therefore important that *".../ the counsellor, upon first contact or invitation to participate, is able to clearly present what the benefits will be for the company and what for employees. Therefore, the counsellor needs to get to know the company in advance regarding its key goals and methods of operation. And later in the process, when preparing the guidance plan, the counsellor must gain detailed knowledge on which training needs are the most current in the company and what can be offered in response to these needs. Good advance preparation of the counsellor, from planning to the execution and evaluation of the results and effects of the guidance process (accompanying documentation, use of tools, monitoring, evaluation, partnership cooperation, etc. is also important), is one of the key factors in the quality and effectiveness of guidance at the workplace."* (ibid., p. 36).

In the research and development of outreach so far, we have not yet studied specifically how the differences in the habitus of the counsellor and the adult affect the quality and efficiency of the guidance process. When this is carried out as outreach, these differences can become even more pronounced, since the counsellor goes out of his institutional framework, which in some aspects determines his or hers habitus, and enters the environment, the space where habitus of the adult is expressed.

One of the two experts, who participated in interviews, conducted for this report (interviews are archived in SIAE's documentation), said that today's social conditions create new forms of vulnerability to which we must appropriately respond in guidance and education. Other factors of exclusion, hidden vulnerable groups or vulnerable subgroups in certain groups appear. Therefore, it is important to research this topic and respond professionally to these changes with appropriate guidance (a holistic and at the same time individualized approach) and education adapted to those group.

She thinks it is important for the counsellor to get to know the habitus of the client well. It also seems to her that the most authentic way to do that is in the environment where the client lives and works. She believes that this could be a part of the training: that the counsellor gets to know the habitus of the adult "in person" (by socialising with them in their environment). Then, based on their own reflection of what they had observed, they consider that knowledge in the guidance and/educational process. She also sees this as a good example of how to prepare training sessions for consultants (and/or educators) in a different way, as experiential learning.

She emphasized that it is necessary to *"... systematically build on the experience of the habitus of the vulnerable."* (ibid, 2022). And as dialogic learning (see also Flecha, 2014), where the counsellor's habitus is different from the client's, usually less vulnerable, but where the counsellor does not place himself above the client, but establishes an equal dialogue with them and builds a relationship by learning from each other as well. She also stressed the importance of building a professional identity as a counsellor working with vulnerable adults, which is linked to (ibid, 2022):

- working with vulnerable groups,
- the mission of the counsellor's organisation,
- quality of tools that support them in doing so,
- training needed to do so.

In this context, she also highlighted the following values of the counsellor that are important in habitus sensitive guidance: respectfulness, tolerance, openness, fairness (ibid, 2022).

In terms of upgrading and developing new approaches to reach and motivate vulnerable adults, both the counsellors and the two experts recommended that representatives of vulnerable groups be encouraged and motivated to engage in guidance and training by presenting their success stories. Adults who have overcome barriers and successfully achieved their goals or have taken at least one step forward in their work and/or life by engaging in education to acquire the knowledge and skills they needed. They pointed out that different media should be used, presentations of success stories in person (e.g. in group information and guidance), on TV or radio, in local newsletters and on social media (we need to think about which media will be more effective in reaching various vulnerable groups of adults), etc.

4. Good Practice Examples

Project ReachOut aims to increase demand and take-up of adult education through effective outreach (reach-out), guidance, and motivation strategies. It focuses on the needs of working persons from the prime working age with less stable forms of gainful work (e.g. fragmented, precarious, low paid, marginal, partly declared) and a certain distance to formal education and guidance and some of which have migration background.

With that in mind, we have selected the following projects as examples of good practice from our previous activities in the field of greater inclusion of working people from underprivileged milieu in Slovenia:

1. ESF Project “Guidance for employees” (2016-2022),
2. Project “Regional Centre for Decent Work Ljubljana” (2017-2022),
3. Project “START YOUR CAREER WITH POTENTIAL!”(2017-2022).

Guidance for employees 2016–2022 (Public tender for financing information and guidance, and identification and validation of non-formal knowledge and skills of adults from 2016 to 2022)

Country	Slovenia
Main goals and objectives	To develop or improve competences that employees need with respect to labour market demands (to reduce the discrepancy between their qualifications and the demands of the labour market), for their better employability and mobility, their personal growth and social participation. Target groups: Employed adults who need further training, qualification or retraining, due to labour market or workplace needs. Indirect target group are employers, since the activities are aimed at their employees.
Size of the programme (local/regional/federal) + number of users if data available	European Social Found project on a national level, 40 organisations in 15 consortiums throughout Slovenia, 100 guidance counsellors, 22.102 involved adults. As part of its project, the Slovenian Adult Education Centre provided professional support to guidance providers, developed suitable approaches and professional materials, and was active in networking with stakeholders and promotion at the national level.
Duration of implementation (start – end of the intervention)	1. 6. 2016–31. 3. 2022
Short description of the example, containing:	Guidance and identification and validation of non-formal knowledge for employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to acquire education at a higher level, - to acquire National Vocational Qualification,

Guidance for employees 2016–2022 (Public tender for financing information and guidance, and identification and validation of non-formal knowledge and skills of adults from 2016 to 2022)

<p>(Service offered) (Instruments involved, case management methodology, upskilling, ...) (Implementation actions – what measure have been taken to ensure implementation of the initiative)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acquisition or development of general and vocational qualifications, - acquisition of various certificates (such as language certificates for example). <p>Free services were available to employees, who needed help planning their personal or their career path by choosing a suitable educational or training programme, by validation of prior knowledge, by offering support during and at the end of educational process.</p> <p>Employees became aware of their own skills and competences and were able to present them in an appropriate way (by preparing a portfolio or an e-portfolio for example). Doing that, they became more sensitive and motivated to continue their education or training or to change or further their career (retraining, further training). Consequently, better social integration, personal growth and improved financial situation were expected.</p> <p>32,899 guidance sessions were carried out for 22,201 adults (of which 10.1% were sessions in the field of validation of non-formal knowledge and skills), which means an average of 1.5 sessions per individual.</p>
<p>Challenges encountered and how they were addressed</p>	<p>We came across two major challenges in this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a lack of interest of employees (and employers) in guidance and education, and - poor recognition of the value and benefits of guidance for employees. <p>We tried to increase the interest of employees (and employers) in guidance and education by connecting and cooperating with the human resources departments in companies, employers and trade unions with the goal to raise awareness of the importance of developing adult competencies and investing in skills and knowledge of employees. We also addressed employees directly and encouraged them to share their success stories and good experiences.</p> <p>We responded to poor recognition of the value and benefits of guidance for employees with outreach and promotional activities, through which we addressed both employees and employers. We emphasized the results and effects of guidance and validation of non-formal knowledge and skills, and highlighted the results and effects of validation and guidance for career development (not only in the field of education).</p> <p>Throughout the project, we invested in guidance counsellors in the form of their continuous professional development with the aim of ensuring the implementation of a quality guidance process. We also prepared several professional events for them, where we exchanged experiences and searched for concrete answers to the challenges they were facing.</p> <p>We worked with various stakeholders and informed each other of our activities with the aim of reaching as many employees and employers as possible.</p>
<p>Effect and impact (<i>what has been the actual impact, what are the effects</i>)</p>	<p>We monitored the results of the project in the form of enrolment in education programmes or obtainment of various certificates (result indicator) at the end of the guidance process and 4 weeks and 6 months after the end of guidance process.</p> <p>Of the 22,102 employees involved, 21,193 completed the guidance process. Of these, the result indicator (as shown by data on 31. May 2022) was achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18,076 at the end of the guidance process, - 1,195 4 weeks after the end of the guidance process and - 376 6 months after the end of the guidance process. <p>19,647 adults achieved the result indicator; this is 92.7% of those who already completed the guidance process or 88.9% of all involved.</p>
<p>Lessons learnt (<i>What lessons have been learnt from the practice – could other countries learn</i>)</p>	<p>We consider the project very successful; as we have achieved and exceeded the goal, we set at the beginning (to involve at least 20,000 employees in guidance, and 75% of them in training or certification procedures). One of the success factors is certainly the duration of the project, which lasted 6 years. That allowed the development of suitable approaches (e.g. development of guidance counsellors' competencies and tools for the guidance process, investing in promotion, working on greater recognition, establishing partnerships with various stakeholders and so</p>

Guidance for employees 2016–2022 (Public tender for financing information and guidance, and identification and validation of non-formal knowledge and skills of adults from 2016 to 2022)

<p><i>anything from this case? (Has the practice been changed since it was initiated?)</i></p>	<p>cial partners, building mutual trust), their implementation and achieving effects. It is the systematization and consistency in the development and implementation of these approaches, adaptability to the needs of different stakeholders and this specific target group (employees, employers, guidance counsellors) in finding answers to challenges that we have learned in the project. As of 2021, guidance in adult education in Slovenia is a public service and is provided by guidance counsellors in 35 organizations for adult education-people's universities throughout Slovenia. With the end of the presented project in March 2022, providing guidance to employees also became part of the public service.</p>
<p>Links</p>	<p>The public tender activities were guided and supported by the expertise of SIAE, project description is available in English: https://www.acs.si/en/projects/esf-projects/guidance-for-employees-2016-2021/ Project web page (in Slovenian): https://zaznanje.si/ Guidance in adult education in Slovenia: https://www.acs.si/en/fields-of-work/guidance/</p>

"Management and development of employees whose employment is at risk in the Podravje region – START YOUR CAREER WITH POTENTIAL!"

<p>Country</p>	<p>Slovenia</p>
<p>Main goals and objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevention of the transition of persons from the target group whose employment is at risk to registered unemployment; - empowering people from the target group, whose employment is at risk, by informing and motivating them, thereby strengthening a proactive approach to planning and developing a further career in line with employment needs; - creation of individual career plans (ISP) of persons from the target group by creating activity plans for acquiring additional competences in accordance with employment needs; - developing skills and techniques for effective management of changes in the labour market in order to maintain and/or find a new job; - improvement of general and work-specific (professional) competences of persons from the target group and thereby increasing their adaptability and efficiency with the aim of securing new employment, re-employment in new jobs or maintaining employment in the same job with a changed job description; - strengthening of employability and connecting/networking of persons from the target group with employers in the field of career development during the introduction of changes.
<p>Size of the programme (local/regional/federal) + number of users if data available</p>	<p>Podravje region 2017 - September 2022 965 persons were participated in the project.</p>
<p>Duration of implementation (start – end of the intervention)</p>	<p>Od 1.1.2017 do 30.9.2022</p>
<p>Short description of the example, containing: (Service offered)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informative meetings involving the target group in the project; - Implementation of a motivational career orientation program for mobility and employability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational workshop and preparation of individual career plan (ISP);

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<p>(Instruments involved, case management methodology, up-skilling, ...) (Implementation actions – what measure have been taken to ensure implementation of the initiative)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modular workshops for the development of job search skills, career planning and social skills; • Employment HUB with career guidance. <p>Implementation of training programmes for strengthening competences, mobility and work ability.</p>
<p>Challenges encountered and how they were addressed</p>	<p>During the implementation of the project activities, due to the measures of COVID-19, it was challenging to include participants from the project's target group in additional external education/training programmes.</p>
<p>Effect and impact (<i>what has been the actual impact, what are the effects</i>)</p>	<p>The effects of project activities are manifested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limiting the transition of employees to unemployment, - preventive measures for career development of employees when the changed employers, - maintaining the employability, - raising the level of knowledge and competences for work and employability, - mastering the management of one's own career, - 80% employability of individuals within 1 year, ...
<p>Lessons learnt (<i>What lessons have been learnt from the practice – could other countries learn anything from this case? (Has the practice been changed since it was initiated?)</i>)</p>	<p>Holistic support is needed, including motivation for LLL (life-long learning) and life-long career guidance, adaptation of educational and training programmes according to the needs of labour market and individual/group support through guidance.</p> <p>The practice did not change, but due to the COVID 19 measures, it has even more adapted to the individual.</p>
<p>Links</p>	<p>https://www.fundacija-prizma.si/startaj-kariero-s-potencialom/</p>

Regional Centre for Decent Work Ljubljana

<p>Country</p>	<p>Slovenia</p>
<p>Main goals and objectives</p>	<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An established and functioning regional central space for decent work with the aim of increasing the mutual cooperation of key stakeholders in the labour market. - Development and implementation of at least 3 innovative services in the field of (e-)guidance, education and information (e-counsellor, anonymous virtual chat, information via social networks). - Establishing a model of decent work ambassadors with the aim of increasing social responsibility on the labour market and raising the organizational culture in the field of decent work.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising information and awareness of key stakeholders about the concept of decent work, with which the project will contribute to reducing the share of atypical forms of work. <p>Expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of Regional Centre for Decent Work Ljubljana - Provision of 11,000 guidance and information services - Active cooperation established with three (3) ambassadors of decent work - 61 workshops - 20 networking events/conferences
<p>Size of the programme (local/regional/federal) + number of users if data available</p>	<p>Western Cohesion Region (a related project for the Eastern Cohesion Region also exists)</p> <p>Workshops participants: 1,298</p> <p>Networking events participants: 553</p> <p>Anonymous virtual chat: 3,910 views</p> <p>E-counsellor: 282 users/visits and 4.392 views</p> <p>Webpage/web platform: 6,765 users and 18,158 views</p> <p>Number of individual information and guidance services provided: 21,293</p>
<p>Duration of implementation (start – end of the intervention)</p>	<p>21. 8. 2017–30. 9. 2022</p>
<p>Short description of the example, containing: (Service offered) (Instruments involved, case management methodology, up-skilling, ...) (Implementation actions – what measure have been taken to ensure implementation of the initiative)</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <p>Three partners participated in the project, each covering a certain target group: employers (coordinator Association of Employers of Slovenia), employed and unemployed (Council of Syndicates in Gorenjska Region, Svet gorenjskih sindikatov), young people (jobseekers) (Student Service, ŠS storitveno podjetje d.o.o.). Employees also participated in events primarily aimed at other target groups (e.g. employers).</p> <p>For the target group of employees and trade union representatives, 18 short educational events were held, which dealt with the following topics and were attended by 153 employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rights under the Labour Relations Act (ZDR-1): Employment as a fundamental form of decent work; My work - decent work; Protection of personal data in employment; Working from home; Calculation of wages; working hours; - health and safety at work; - digitization and older workers; - 5G in the work environment; - the impact of (post)crisis conditions on work processes. <p>Employees also received guidance: directly or through employee representatives (in person, by phone, e-mail). 1,681 guidance services were provided for the target group of employees.</p> <p>It was also possible to ask questions via an anonymous chat on the website.</p> <p>At the events, we also presented the participants with video contents that we prepared as part of the project (what is decent work, working hours as the basis of decent work, what you need to pay attention to when arranging student work).</p> <p>The service of virtual or e-counsellor (access through the website) was established, which offered answers to frequently asked questions of the three key target groups of the project.</p> <p>At the same time, several networking events were held. They were aimed at raising public awareness about various aspects of atypical forms of work (e.g. platform work) and discussing various trends in the labour market (e.g. personnel shortage, deficit professions, employment of foreigners, foreign students work, work from home, reduced working hours, minimum wage, employment contract as a trade secrets, discrimination in the work place, Anti-coronavirus packages and their impact on the working environment).</p>

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	<p>We tried to reach the target groups of the project through our website, social networks, our own databases and communication channels of partners/coordinators (mailings, newsletters, SMS messages, etc.). On the website and social networks of the project, we informed the target groups about changes and novelties in the field of legislation, events and materials related to the topic of the project.</p> <p>We also tackled the topic of atypical and precarious forms of work in the context of individual guidance and educational events for other target groups.</p> <p>In the context of individual guidance for young people, we tackled the topic of atypical forms of work mainly in cases where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - young people were trained to work in areas where those forms of work were more common, - they were thinking about working as independent entrepreneurs or - about working under other contracts (e.g. copyright contract). <p>Young people especially used the possibility of career guidance and profiling, where we emphasized the importance of decent work for a decent life and informed them about their rights when doing student work or being employed. For this purpose, workshops were held in cooperation with the Mladi plus Trade Union entitled "What I must know before signing an employment contract". As part of the workshop, the negative consequences of precarious forms of work were also presented.</p> <p>We also raised awareness of the importance of decent work among employers with various contents in the field of labour legislation, employee management, and health and safety at work, thereby indirectly contributing to the improvement of the working conditions of employees.</p>
<p>Challenges encountered and how they were addressed</p>	<p>Challenges:</p> <p>The challenge for the target group of employees was absenteeism due to participation in training during the working day, which became especially evident in the last year (2022), when a general lack of employees appeared on the market. We did not collect demographic data, but we can estimate that the majority of the participants were qualified or highly educated workers and workers' representatives (trade unions). It was also possible to notice a larger offer of related content on the market and dropouts at events due to the free nature of the services.</p> <p>We also note that individuals still prefer to use classic channels (telephone, in person, e-mail) to obtain information and advice in the field of labour relations, decent work, etc., so the virtual chat service did not take off.</p>
<p>Effect and impact <i>(what has been the actual impact, what are the effects)</i></p>	<p>Effect and impact:</p> <p>The greatest effect of the project has to be greater and better information and awareness of population about the meaning of decent work, about the forms of work that enable and bring greater dignity and safety of work and, consequently, life in general. The project certainly contributed to a better and faster recognition of possible violations of rights of employees and the appropriate action of individuals in such cases. It strengthened awareness and knowledge about employment rights and obligations and, last but not least, contributed to the understanding and recognition of new forms of work (remote work, work from home...), including atypical ones, and to the recognition of their shortcomings and advantages.</p>
<p>Lessons learnt <i>(What lessons have been learnt from the practice – could other countries learn anything from this case? (Has the practice been changed since it was initiated?))</i></p>	<p>When we talk about working with employees, it is first necessary to convince the management of the usefulness of the services offered. Those who would need education and guidance services the most usually do not take advantage of these opportunities.</p> <p>Live trainings were more effective (due to the epidemic we were forced to conduct certain trainings online), as there was more interaction between participants, more exchange of experiences and good practices, easier implementation and monitoring of participants' response, and better participation of participants in general than in online trainings.</p> <p>We find that examples of good practices and experiences are a very useful "tool" for introducing innovations, on the assumption that the area in which this innovation is located is properly regulated / determined (e.g. working from home).</p>

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Links	<p>Web page of the project: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/</p> <p>Video: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/knjiznica/videoteka</p> <p>For employers: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/knjiznica/delodajalci</p> <p>Frequently asked questions – employees / workers: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/knjiznica/delavci</p> <p>For young people /highschool and student: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/knjiznica/dijaki-in-studenti</p> <p>Analysis: Work from home and platform work (dr. Valentina Franca in dr. Polona Domadenik): https://www.dostojodelo.eu/images/knjiznica/PDF/Skupno_porocilo_o_razi-skavi_Delo_na_domu_in_platf_delo_F.pdf</p> <p>Preventing mobbing: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/images/knjiznica/delodajaci/Mobbing_2020_F.pdf</p> <p>Permissible forms of work: https://www.dostojodelo.eu/images/knjiznica/delodajaci/RCDDL_Dopustne_oblike_opravljanja_dela_prirocnik_2021.pdf</p> <p>A document with recommendations for decision-makers is also being prepared.</p>
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5. Conclusions and Main Recommendations

The situation and good practice examples from Slovenia show that progress has been made in recent years in terms of ensuring greater access to guidance, education and support for career development, through the development and funding of specific measures. New approaches have been developed, such as workplace guidance (the first good practice example described), guidance given to employees before job loss (the second good practice example described), increased awareness raising on decent work (the third good practice example described), etc. The different actors involved in guidance and educational activities, as well as policy makers in the field of adult education and the labour market, have started to work more closely and more effectively together. New professional materials and training for practitioners have been developed, including a focus on acquiring competences for more effective guidance for employees from underprivileged milieu.

On the other hand, the data show that the groups of employees not participating in education are still large, and that among the employed, the share of those participating in education is lowest among the less educated and those aged over 45. In addition, according to the PIAAC survey on the development of skills of adults from 2016 (PIAAC, 2016), about one in four adults in Slovenia had skills at lower levels, which translates into 476,000 (40%) low skilled in problem-solving in technology-rich environments and 400,000 (33%) low-skilled in text and maths skills (Javrh, 2018). In this context, it should be stressed that, in particular, literacy and numeracy skills have an important impact on labour market participation and, as a consequence, on labour market outcomes.

According to experts in the field of working with vulnerable adults, new groups of underprivileged workers are emerging (in terms of their position in the labour market and their access to skills for the changes that are taking place as a result of rapid economic and social change - automation and digitalisation, sustainable development and green transformation, climate change and migration, ageing populations and other global and national trends).

This is why in Slovenia we need to pay special attention to vulnerable adults, including those from underprivileged milieu, in developing appropriate measures and activities to improve their situation. We must strive to ensure that the gap between those employees who are involved in LLL and those who are not does not widen, but narrows. This must take into account their characteristics and habitus, which reflect the different needs, goals, aspirations and motivations for change that they already face in their work and life.

The answers to the questions in the interviews with two counsellors in adult education and two experts working in the field of inclusion of vulnerable adults also show that those activities of recent years need to be further strengthened and built upon. In particular, the need for further understanding of vulnerable (sub)groups of adults, their habitus and their needs and goals was highlighted. This should include both an 'individualised' approach (starting from each individual) and a 'group' approach (starting also from the common characteristics of certain (sub)groups of vulnerable employees). The approach to guidance should also be adapted to this, where outreach can be an effective approach. Outreach reaches vulnerable groups where they work and/or live. However, counsellors must have the appropriate competences and training to do this work. Training for such guidance work should include new approaches such as learning about the characteristics and needs of vulnerable adults in their authentic environment (experiential and dialogic learning), learning by reflecting on what has been observed and translating what has been learned into guidance practice, learning from examples of good practice and from the experience of good counsellors (peer learning).

This is not a "concept of equality", where the counsellor manages the process in a way that "brushes aside" the differences, as if there were no differences in habitus. It is a concept of awareness of the differences in the habitus of both and taking this into account in the management of the guidance process. It is a "concept of respectful and equal treatment" from preparation, through implementation, to evaluation of results and effects. Or, as one expert interviewee put it, "It's not just education that matters, but also sensibilisation to work with vulnerable adults. It is necessary to build on the experience of the 'habitus of the vulnerable' in a planned way. The counsellor gets to know the vulnerable groups in their environment and raises awareness of the differences between their own habitus and that of the vulnerable. It is important that the counsellor himself come to realise that he needs to work with the vulnerable in a different way. And that each group of vulnerable people is different." (ibid, 2022).

Further development activities in this area also need to be supported by policy makers, both to prepare appropriate measures and to provide the conditions for their implementation, financial and otherwise (systemic and institutional framework, human and material conditions). In the past 10 years, many good measures have been developed in the context of project funding, without ensuring the sustainability of the results by integrating them into systemic measures.

All that with the aim of increasing the inclusion of working people from underprivileged milieu in guidance and afterwards in education and training. Therefore, we see both the preparation of a professional handbook for counsellors to develop effective guidance approaches for working people from underprivileged milieu to participate in further education and training (as well as career development), and the preparation of recommendations for policy makers (both planned outputs of the ReachOut project), as important contributions to increasing the accessibility of guidance and education for working people from underprivileged milieu in the Slovenian context. This will also be a proper response of the adult education guidance sector in Slovenia to the coming rapid changes in work environments, with predictions of a new economic crisis, intensive digitalisation and the urgently needed sustainable and green transformation of society¹².

¹² See more: Strategija razvoja Slovenije 2030 - Development Strategy of Slovenia 2030 (2020) and Zakon o spodbujanju digitalne vključenosti – v pripravi - Act on Promotion of Digital Inclusion - under preparation (2022).

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