



Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all.

Slovenia

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Introduction

The template for the Profiles was a survey designed to collect information from countries in order to collect structured information to be used as the basis for the GEM Regional Report analysis work.

The survey respondents were specifically requested to not focus exclusively on children with disabilities, but include information on all of the groups considered to be vulnerable to exclusion or at risk of being marginalised, stereotyped or subject to discrimination, including for reasons such as gender, location, poverty, ethnicity, language, beliefs and religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression.

The overall goal for the Profile was that the information provided in relation to each country identifies:

1. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for the implementation of inclusion in education policies;
2. the ways in which countries monitor inclusion and exclusion in education (at individual and system levels);
3. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for supporting inclusion in education created by sectors other than education and arrangements needed to co-ordinate work among government sectors, tiers of government and with other stakeholders to overcome overlapping dimensions of exclusion;
4. key policy solutions that are being implemented and key drivers of policy change.

The Profile begins with background information on the people completing the template.

The next section provides a short descriptive overview of the country's system of inclusive education.

This is followed by main sections presenting quantitative and qualitative data linked to each of the seven themes for the report:

1. laws and policies;
2. governance and finance;
3. data;
4. curricula, learning materials and assessment;
5. teachers and support personnel;
6. schools;
7. communities, parents and students.

Each section begins with a key guiding question (marked in italic text) that frames the overall information provided. This is followed by the specific questions on the main issues for the topic that should be answered.

Sections 1 and 2 focus on information relating to legislation and policies.

Section 3 focuses upon available data and the aims and procedures for data collection.

Sections 4 to 7 focus on information relating to policies and policy implementation in practice.

The information provided focuses on compulsory education (i.e. potentially -pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, and possibly upper secondary education). Only specific issues related to inclusion in early childhood education and post-compulsory education were considered when necessary.

Survey reply and respondents

The following country representatives have contributed to and validated this profile:

Alen Kofol, school inspector working for the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia; Agency Representative Board member for Slovenia.

The main challenge for the preparation of the profile was:

Certain questions were difficult to answer because of differences in understanding of terminological concepts

The 5 most informative sources on inclusion in education (academic papers, policy reviews, evaluation studies etc.) for the country published since 2015:

1. [Eurydice](#) national system information, Slovenia
2. UNESCO Education for All ([EFA](#)) national report: Slovenia, 2015 Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia
3. [The EDUCATION SYSTEM in the Republic of Slovenia](#) 2018/2019 Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia
4. European Agency Financing Policies for Inclusive Education Systems ([FPIES](#)) [country report, Slovenia](#)
5. OECD Review of Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of Resource Use in Schools. [Country Background Report Slovenia](#). Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, June 2017

Internal, non-public or working documents used:

European Agency project country reports: Organisation of Provision;

Country system overview

(i) Provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative of the country's compulsory educational system.

The education system in Slovenia comprises:

Pre-primary education (predšolska vzgoja) – pre-primary education in Slovenia is not compulsory

This is an integral part of the education system but is not mandatory. It is available to all children from the age of one to the start of compulsory education at age six. Pre-primary programmes in kindergartens are fee-based. The fees owed by parents are calculated based on the cost of the programme in which the child is enrolled. Parents are required to pay up to 80% of the full programme cost, depending on their financial situation. The difference is financed by the municipalities. Fees for parents are determined by the social work centre, based on the national scale which ranks parents by pay grade, according to the family's income and wealth.

Basic school education (obvezno osnovnošolsko izobraževanje)

This is compulsory and consists of a single structure (Integrated Primary and Lower Secondary Education), nine-year system, attended by children aged six to fourteen.

All basic schools provide single structure education at ISCED levels 1 and 2. Out of 455 basic schools, 203 also provide pre-school education (ISCED 0). 21 mainstream basic schools implemented adapted education programme for SEN children.

Basic education is provided by public and private schools. Less than 1% of learners (1,169) were enrolled in six private schools in 2015–2016. In the same period, 1% of learners (1,946) were enrolled in 57 special schools and almost 1% (1,318) in special educational programmes (Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia (SORS)). Basic school is financed by the national budget (everything to do with the educational programme) and the municipality (everything to do with the educational building) (which is a co-founder), as well as from donations, sponsorships and other sources (proximately around 1-2%). Education for children in public and private schools with a concession is free. Public and private schools with a concession cannot charge learners, except for items specified by the relevant law, including the material costs of organising schooling away from home, contributions towards the cost of meals and fees related to other services that are not compulsory or are higher than the prescribed criteria and standards (above-standard programmes). Payments on behalf of learners who are unable to pay due to their social situation are made by the government, in accordance with uniform rules determined by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Private schools receive 85% of finances from the budget. Private schools may charge school fees, but they cannot be higher than 15% of the programme cost.

In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia the basic school is mandatory and financed from public funds. In public schools, it is not permitted to teach religion (or provide confessional religious lessons with an intention to teach religion) and perform religious ceremonies, because the Constitution stipulates separation of religion from the state.

Terms and conditions for the provision of basic school education and the management and funding methods are regulated by the Organisation and financing of education Act.

The primary act for basic schools is the Basic school Act (in SI only). It defines general basic education objectives and gives parents the right to choose the education method for their child. It prescribes components and the scope of compulsory and optional basic school programme. In addition, the Basic school act regulates enrolments, pupils' rights and responsibilities, basic assessment and testing rules, conditions for progression to the next school year and the reporting on the end-of year results.

The act also regulates basic school education for children with special needs, the rights of migrant children, home education and basic school education for adults. The act makes a provision for the Minister to devise detailed rules, instructions, and guidelines for specific areas, as indicated in the subsequent subchapters.

Providers

Pupils can obtain basic education in at public and private schools, but less than 1% of pupils attend private schools. Adapted basic education is also provided by educational institutions specialising in children with special needs. Adult students pursue basic education for adults at adult education institutions.

Basic school objectives

The main basic school education objectives include:

- to provide students with opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills consistent with their abilities and interests;
- to foster personal development;
- to develop the ability for life-long learning and continuous education;
- to foster sense of belonging to one state, national identity and cultural heritage, as well as educate about common cultural values;
- to develop respect for human rights, tolerance and acceptance of diversity;
- to develop communication skills in the Slovenian language and foreign languages;
- educate for sustainable development, for taking responsibility for one's actions, one's health, other people and the environment;
- to develop entrepreneurial skills, innovation and creativity.

Outcomes for specific subjects and knowledge standards are laid down in the subject curricula.

Upper-secondary education (srednješolsko izobraževanje)

This is not compulsory and is provided by public upper-secondary schools that offer one or more programmes, by upper-secondary school centres and gimnazias (high schools). Upper-secondary learners can choose between two education programmes:

- general education (gimnazija programmes and matura examination course) and - vocational-technical education (short upper-secondary vocational education, vocational education or technical education, as well as vocational-technical education and vocational courses). Learners do not pay tuition fees.

Home education

Parents have the right to decide to educate their child at home during compulsory education, namely at ISCED levels 1 and 2. If parents decide to educate their child at home they just notify in writing the basic school in their school catchment area about their decision (at least 3 months before the beginning of the school year). The notice must include the name of the child and of the person who will provide instruction (no specific qualification needed), and place of instruction. The knowledge of the pupil is assessed and examined at the end of each school year. If the assessment committee ascertains that the pupil does not meet the required knowledge standards, he/she must continue education in school from the next school year. In Slovenia, in 2019/20, 392 pupils are home-educated, up from 163 pupils in 2013/14.

(Source Eurydice)

Specifically, provide information about:

a. the different types of schools, institutions and educational provision within the system and the age range / ISCED levels of learners they cater for

There were 455 basic schools in the school year 2019/20:

- 449 public schools (legal entities)
- 314 public school branches
- 6 private schools (legal entities)
- 3 private school branches

Private basic schools include the Waldorf basic schools, the Catholic basic school (since 2008) and, since 2010 the Montessori basic school and since 2015 also Lila Basic school.

In the school year 2018/2019, there were 27 special schools with adapted and special programmes, 21 units with adapted and special programmes within basic schools and 16 special institutions for all eight recognised groups of learners with special educational needs (SEN).

b. the different authorities responsible for different types of provision etc.

At the beginning of 2012, the former Ministry of Education and Sport was merged with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and with the Ministry of Culture. The new ministry was named the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. It is responsible for the development of pre-higher education policies, inspection procedures, the allocation of funds, the implementation of laws and administrative decisions relating to pre-primary, compulsory and upper-secondary education institutions. This was only till the end of 2013. After that year the Ministry of Culture became independent again. From year 2013 we have Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

Administration responsibilities are distributed among the national authorities, local authorities and schools (mainstream schools and special schools with adopted and special programmes). All adapted and special programmes regardless of the special institutions for learners with SEN are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport).

Local authorities are responsible for establishment pre-primary institutions and basic schools; in pre-primary institutions they take part in their administration and finance the salaries of employees in the basic schools they finance operating/maintenance costs of the school. School councils (**sveti šol**), composed of representatives of the founder (municipalities)- 3, employees – 5 and parents - 3, are the central governing bodies, with considerable responsibilities regarding management, finances and the teaching process.

The majority (99%) of basic and upper-secondary school pupils attend public schools, which are set up and funded entirely by the state and municipalities.

Private schools, which are set up by private entities and provide education according to state-approved programmes, are subsidised by the state (the grant rate is approximately 85%). Less than 1% of learners were enrolled in six private schools in 2015/2016.

Upper-secondary education is not compulsory and is provided by public upper-secondary schools. Learners can choose between two education programmes: general education and vocational-technical education.

(Source: FPIES – Slovenia Country Report, pp. 5–6).

c. any major external support programmes provided in the past 5 years e.g. bilateral - GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) and USAID; or multi-lateral e.g. UNICEF, European Union, ADB (Asian Development Bank).

Promoting social inclusion of children and young people with disabilities in the local environment 2 (2017 – 2022)

The objective of this operation was to develop modular and other forms of education or training to promote social inclusion of children and young people with special needs in the local environment through

the implementation of activities aimed at children and adolescents with special needs, especially those who are completing or leaving formal forms of education or training. , because they face several barriers to entry into the labor market or to independent living and are therefore socially excluded. These activities increased their social inclusion and further empower them.

Two programmes from this programme were developed:

- Transition Model - Adult Advanced Training Program in Center for Education, Rehabilitation and Training Vipava (CIRIUS Vipava) and in Centre for Education and Rehabilitation of Physically Handicapped Children and Adolescents (CIRIUS Kamnik)
- Hand in Hand HELP project - Strengthening the Competences of Professionals in the Education of Children with Special Needs (2017 – 2018) has successfully completed the professional training of 10. 407 professional and managerial staff in the field of pre-school education, elementary education, basic music education, vocational and technical education, general secondary education, education of children and adolescents with special needs and education in boarding schools

The project follows the key principles and recommendations of promoting inclusion in education, which are an important basis for ensuring equal opportunities for students with different types of special needs in all aspects of their lives.

With the support of European Structural Funds, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport implemented several programmes to support low-performing students and schools. The measures mainly target students from disadvantaged socio-economic, immigrant or Roma backgrounds. Some examples:

- The Project for the Successful Integration of Roma Students in Schools (2008-15) aimed to share national best practices of inclusive teaching among kindergartens and schools and teachers in areas with little or no such experience. One of the most important measures was providing a Roma assistant in Roma settlements and schools attended by Roma pupils.
- Based on the Strategy for Integration of Immigrant Children, Pupils and Students in the Education System in the Republic of Slovenia (2007), the Guidelines for the Integration of Immigrant Children in Kindergartens and Schools (2009, amended in 2012) define strategies, adjustments and methods to help integrate immigrant children in education, including co-operation with their parents. Schools support children before they start school and throughout their education. Parents are also encouraged to participate in work and activities of schools and kindergartens (such as learning Slovene along with their children). The guidelines also aim to support schools in planning education with a view to the specific needs of immigrant students.

- Successful Integration of Immigrant Children Programme (2013-15) provides educational activities for immigrant students and training for teaching staff to promote interculturalism in schools.
- Other measures to help integrate immigrant children in kindergartens and schools (2012) include professional support in learning of Slovene, adapted assessment in the first and second year of schooling in Slovenia and access to lessons in the student's mother tongue. The state also funds supplementary Slovene language lessons for immigrant students at upper secondary level.

(ii) Are there specific features of the compulsory education system that impact on inclusion that should be kept in mind when reading the country response?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the feature
Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway	No	
Late Tracking	Yes	Tracking of students then proceeds in upper secondary education, typically at the age of 15. Students may choose freely among general and vocational programmes. If the number of candidates exceed the number of places, schools may limit enrolment in the first year.
'Double-shift' patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend for either a morning or afternoon session)	No	In Slovenia we don't have double-shift patterns to the school day.
Grade retention	Yes	No grade retention is envisaged for the learners for 1st till 6th grade. Notwithstanding the provision of the above paragraph, a pupil of grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 may, on the basis of a written reasoned proposal from the class teacher, repeat the class without the parent's consent. The student may repeat the class when, at the end of the school year, he or she is assessed negatively by one or

		<p>more subjects, although the school has allowed him / her to take additional classes and other forms of individual and group assistance.</p> <p>Students from 7th – 9th grade progress to the next grade if they are positively assessed in all subjects at the end of the school year.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the provisions of the above paragraph, a student may, due to poor grades resulting from longer absences from classes, illness, relocation or for other reasons, repeat the class if his parents so request or repeat the class on the basis of a written reasoned proposal from the class teacher in consent with parents.</p> <p>(Basic School Act, article 69)</p>
Multiple languages of instruction	Yes	<p>Minority provision - The language of instruction is Slovenian. Members of the Italian and Hungarian national communities in ethnically mixed areas have the right to education in their respective language. The Constitution also protects the status and gives <u>special rights to members of the Roma community</u>.</p>
Policies on access to compulsory education in local schools	Yes	<p>All children residing in the Republic of Slovenia have the right to basic education under the same conditions. This is specified by the Basic school Act (<u>sl</u>) and the Organization and financing of education Act (<u>en</u>).</p> <p>Public schools form a public basic school network specified by the relevant decree on criteria to set up public network of basic schools and music schools (<u>sl</u>), so all children can enrol in the relevant school catchment area. The criteria for setting up a public network is centrally specified. The application SOKOL (<u>sl</u>) provides demographic information by school catchment areas. Local communities set the boundaries of the school catchment area.</p>

	<p>Parents enrol their child in the basic school in the school catchment area where the child resides.</p> <p>However, they may decide to enrol the child in another school instead. Basic schools have to provide enough places for all children residing in the catchment area but are not obliged to enrol children residing outside the catchment area.</p>
(others ...)	<p>Out of school classes</p> <p>The school may deliver some classes out of school. Pupils spend several days studying in the natural environment. Schools organize out-of-school weeks in the residential halls of the <u>Centre for Curricular and Extracurricular Activities</u> or other alpine, vacation and similar accommodation facilities.</p> <p>Extended school stay</p> <p>Grade 1 pupils may attend morning care.</p> <p>Pupils of grades 1 to 5 may attend after-school classes. They use them to study, do their homework, play, as well as pursue extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Pupils in higher grades spend one hour per week in a form class before or after regular hours.</p> <p>All schools organise non-compulsory remedial and supplementary lessons as well as special interest activities as a part of the extended basic school programme. All after school classes are provided by qualified teachers and are guided by <u>the educational concept for after school classes (Eurydice)</u></p>
	<p>Slovenia has a well-developed system of non-compulsory basic music and ballet education. It is provided outside mainstream formal education and, students may attend school simultaneously. The education is uniform in terms of organisation but is internally differentiated in terms of content in order to</p>

		<p>enable students finish their education at the basic level and allow talented students to continue their music and dance education.</p> <p>It is provided by public and private music and ballet schools; they may also organise other music and dance activities. They cater for preschool children, basic school students, upper secondary school students, tertiary students and adults, as well. Candidates are required to pass an entrance aptitude test.</p> <p>the 2018/2019 school year, there were close to 26 000 students enrolled on the basic music and ballet education programmes, of which some 1 300 on the dance programmes. Basic school students make up for 92% of all music school students. 13% of basic school students attended music schools simultaneously</p> <p>(Source: <u>The EDUCATION SYSTEM in the Republic of Slovenia 2018/2019</u>)</p>
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(iii) In the country's system which groups are considered to be vulnerable to exclusion from education?

Who has identified these groups as being vulnerable to exclusion?

The common laws in education lay down the rights of disadvantaged or vulnerable children and students, as well. Rules and other instruments consider talented children or students, migrant students whose mother tongue is not Slovenian, and students with learning difficulties.

As specified by the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act **children which special needs** are children with intellectual disabilities, blind and partially sighted children or children with functional visual disturbance, deaf children and children hard of hearing, children with speech and language impairment, physical impairment, children with chronic diseases, children with specific learning difficulties in individual fields of education, children with autistic spectrum disorder, and children with emotional and behavioral disorders.

The Act on special rights of **members of the Italian and Hungarian national communities** in education provides additionally for special rights of those two groups. **Members of the Roma community** have their special rights specified with the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia Act.

The Constitution also protects the status and gives special rights to members of the Roma community. The **children of migrants** have the right to compulsory basic education under the same conditions as other citizens of the Republic of Slovenia.

According to law, **talented students** are a special category of students. The Basic school Act, **Gimnazija** Act and Upper secondary vocational and technical Act allow for the implementation of education programme to be adapted to talented students.

According to the Basic school Act the talented students are the ones who demonstrate high above average skills of thinking or extraordinary achievement in separate study fields, arts or sports. Basic schools identify talented students, adapts the content, methods and form of education to them, as well as allows them to participate in supplementary lessons, other forms of individual and group support and methods of work. In upper secondary education, too the talented students have a special status. Schools have to adapt the implementation and duration of education programme. The Council of experts for general education of the Republic of education adopted the concept of identifying and working with talented children It includes professional reference and instructions for educational activities for talented children. The concept of educational activities with talented children was developed, as well.

(Source [Eurydice](#))

(iv) Please provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative overview of the historical development of inclusion of vulnerable groups in education in the country.

The approach introduced in Slovenia recognises the needs of children with special educational needs (SEN) as deficiencies, barriers and/or disorders that require changes or adjustments in the child's environment or adaptation of the latter to the needs of the child. The medical approach to the child's disability, in use during the 1970s, has been abolished. The guidance of children with special needs Act (2000, including amendments in 2006 and 2007) while it defines groups of children with SEN, is based on the principle that a child's needs must be recognised as soon as possible and that early childhood intervention is a dynamic process. (European Agency Organisation of Provision project report, unpublished)

Equal rights and opportunities in education or no less favourable treatment of any person on the grounds of race, gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, religion, political and other convictions, education, social status, disability or any other personal circumstances are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. In the [White Paper](#) (1996), "equal opportunities and non-discrimination" is one of the core principles of the public education system. The [White Paper](#) (2011) set out "fairness" under core principles and within it the provision of equal education opportunities. Furthermore, one adopted several relevant regulations on education, healthcare, elimination of barriers and obstacles in the environment,

social and financial aid, employment, and social integration have been adopted. Solutions important for provision of equal opportunities have been integrated into different national and development programmes. The Protection against discrimination Act makes additional provision for equal opportunities. Equal opportunities have been regulated in detail for the educational process of children with special needs.

Education of children and young people with special needs is a public service; in special circumstances, it may also be provided in private kindergartens and schools without concession or private institutions and as home schooling.

The education of children with special needs has been integrated into all sector-specific laws. The Placement of children with special needs Act ([s1](#)) is an important step towards setting up conditions for a successful inclusive paradigm. It provides for continuous support to children with special needs in education. In terms of early childhood intervention, it allows for a counselling service for preschool children even before the placement procedure if so, recommended by a doctor. As specified by the Act, the counselling service is additional professional assistance for children, parents and teachers that may be provided by kindergartens or schools, but also in cooperation with external professional institutions. From 2019, the Act on integrated early treatment of preschool children with special needs ([s1](#)) is enforced. The integrated early treatment of SEN preschool children and preschool children with risk factors include treatment of preschool children and their families to foster the child's development, improve the family's competence, and advance social inclusion of families and a child. The procedure for the placement of children with special needs, where the legal Decision determines the type and the scope of the professional assistance, the method of implementation of the assistance, the professionals who implement this assistance and the educational programme into which each child is placed, shall no longer be required according to this law. Kindergarten (pre-school) children shall receive professional assistance only by way of a multidisciplinary expert judgment.

The state has set up a legislative framework (Act Regulating the Use of Slovene Sign Language, 2002) for equal opportunities of deaf and deaf-blind. Both groups now can use the support of professional staff for communication in the Slovenian sign language or to work with deaf-blind children.

The majority of children with special needs (SEN children) attends mainstream kindergartens and schools. The provision of education is adapted to their needs and they receive additional professional support. The majority of other children from vulnerable groups (Roma community, foreigners, and so forth) too, attend mainstream kindergartens and schools, as well as talented children.

(Source [Eurydice](#))

There are many different forms of education (inclusive, integrated form or separate (special) classes and specialised institutions) which meet different needs. All educational programmes for learners with SEN have to follow the main curricular aims that are established by the Ministry in Article 9 of the Organization and Financing of Education Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 1996).

The education of children with special needs is regulated by the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act – ZOUPP-1 (2011) The Act defines procedures for the placement of children with special needs in all types of education, from pre-school to upper-secondary education. Depending on the children's psychological and physical status, the Act enables their inclusion in education at all levels, from pre-school to secondary education, based on the assumption that additional help from experts and adaptation of the implementation of programmes will help children to achieve a comparable standard of knowledge.

Children with severe disorders still have the opportunity to attend special forms of education in schools for children with special needs and [residential] institutions for the education and training of children with severe developmental difficulties This Act regulates the placement of children, minors and adult persons with special educational needs (hereinafter: children with special needs) and lays down the ways and forms of providing education. Exceptionally, the provisions of this Act shall also apply to the education of adult persons over 21 years of age up to and including 26 years of age, who continuously attend adapted vocational and technical education programmes with equivalent education standards and a special rehabilitation programme. Exceptionally, the provisions of this Act shall also apply to the education of adult persons over 21 years of age up to and including 26 years of age who are included in the adult education and training programme which is part of a special programme for children with moderate, severe and profound intellectual impairment.

According to current legislation, learners with SEN are placed into a continuum of educational programmes, which all are part of the integral school system. The Placement Act defines all the necessary procedures for the placement of learners with SEN in all types of education, from pre-primary to upper-secondary. Depending on the learner's psychological and physical status, the Placement Act enables inclusion in the most appropriate educational programme, based on the assumption that additional professional help and adapted implementation of programmes will help a learner to achieve a comparable standard of knowledge.

If a learner's special needs are severe or complex and it is not possible to provide a suitable environment in a mainstream kindergarten or school, the learner is placed in an adapted programme at a specialised institution. This allows learners to reach a standard of knowledge equal to that of their peers in mainstream schools. Furthermore, some institutions implement an adapted basic school programme with a lower educational standard and a special curriculum for learners with an intellectual disability in addition

to the primary disability. If learners live at a distance and daily commuting to and from an institution is not an option, they may reside in the institution free of charge.

There has been an increasing trend of including learners with SEN in mainstream basic schools – from 3.33% in 2005/2006 to 6.51% in 2012/2013. The total population of learners with SEN has increased over the years, mostly due to an increasing number of official decisions. The percentage of learners with SEN included in specialised forms of education has remained stable, at 1% of the total population of learners in basic school (Source: [FPIES country report](#)).

Section 1: Laws and policies

What is the framework of legislation, policy and guidelines for supporting the development of an inclusive education system?

1.1 Have international/UN conventions/declarations to protect the rights of groups who are potentially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion been integrated into national and/or regional law?

Convention/ declaration on	Law	Comments
Child rights (UNCRC)	SFRY Official Gazette - International Treaties no. 15/90, Act of notification of succession to the conventions of the United Nations in the Convention, adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia - International Treaties no. 9/92 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts (23. 7. 2004) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (23. 7. 2004) Optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (28. 3. 2018)	Ratified 6 Jul 1992
Disability (UNCRPD)	The Constitution complies with the international obligations through the	Convention and Optional Protocol signed 30 Mar 2007.

	<p>provision that the state shall create the opportunities for its citizens to obtain a proper education (Article 57). It further provides that primary education shall be financed from public funds. Under Article 52 of the Constitution, children with special needs have the right to education and training for an active life in society.</p> <p>Act ratifying the Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia - International Treaties, no. 10/08)</p>	<p>Ratified: 24 Apr 2008.</p> <p>The participation of SEN children in the Slovenian school system is based on the concept of inclusive education by the right of all children to develop optimally their potentials, and by their right to nondiscrimination.</p>
<p>Gender (Convention on discrimination against women CEDAW)</p>	<p>The general gender equality and non-discrimination legal framework was adopted during the process of the Slovenian accession to the EU as a part of the transposition of the Community acquis.</p> <p>In this period, the National Assembly adopted the Equal Opportunities for Woman and Men Act and the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act, the former act serving as a basis for the adoption of the principal national policy document in the field of gender equality (The Policy on Gender Equality in Slovenia)</p> <p>https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegDa</p>	<p>Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (2004)</p> <p>According to the EU Gender Equality Index, Slovenia qualifies among the EU Member States with the above-average gender equality rate. Data obtained from SI-STAT (http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index; eige.europa.eu/apps/gei/content/EIGE-Gender-EqualityIndex-2010.xlsx. All hyperlinks were accessed on 9 February 2015.)</p>

	ta/etudes/STUD/2015/510010/IPOL_STU(2015)510010_EN.pdf	
Ethnicity or language (UN Declaration on Rights of persons belonging to National, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities)	Act Regulating Special Rights of Members of the Italian and Hungarian Ethnic Communities in the Field of Education (Official Gazette of RS, no. 35/01, 102/07 - ZOsn-F and 11/18) Protection from Discrimination Act (2016)	Special Rights of the Italian and Hungarian Ethnic Communities are detailed in the Education Act (1996) specifying the implementation of special rights of the indigenous Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities; Article 64 of the Constitution and other legislative measures guarantee them extensive rights within specific territories in the form of self-government which include the right to education in their own languages, to establish autonomous organizations, and to be directly represented at the local level and in the National Assembly. The specific rights of the Hungarian and Italian communities also require the consent of the minorities involved and an effective veto to be exercised by the representatives of both minorities by their respective deputies in the Slovene parliament and municipal council members.
Other (e.g. Rights of indigenous people)	Roma Community in the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of RS, no. 33/07)	This law regulates the situation and defines the areas of special rights of the Roma community in the Republic of Slovenia, the competence of state bodies and bodies of self-governing local communities for their implementation and the participation of

		representatives in the exercise of their rights and obligations.
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1.2 Provide an overview of general education legislation impacting on the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
<p>The <u>Constitution</u> of the Republic of Slovenia Official Gazette RS Nos. 33/91-I, 42/97, 66/2000, 24/03, 69/04, 68/06, 47/13, and 75/16</p>	<p>1991</p>	<p>Laid down the fundamental principles governing education in Slovenia. Those principles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic school education is compulsory and financed from public revenues. - The state must provide opportunities for citizens to acquire adequate educational qualification. - Physically or mentally disabled children and other severely disabled persons have the right to education and training for an active life in society. This education and training is financed from public funds. - There is freedom of scientific and artistic creativity. - State universities and higher education institutions have an autonomous status.
<p>White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia - 1995</p>	<p>Superseded (see below)</p>	<p>The blueprint for the comprehensive reform of educational system was formulated in 1995 as the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter: the 1995 White Paper). The 1995 White Paper was based on human and children's rights standards, and it defined the fundamental cornerstones, principles and objectives of education in Slovenia.</p> <p>These are some of the main points laid down in the 1995 White Paper:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public schools were to remain secular, as they had been before independence. - School was to be autonomous in relation to the authorities as well as in relation to the out of school ideologies. - Education was to open up to and connect with the rest of Europe, for example in terms of language learning, comparability with international knowledge standards and intercultural education. <p>In 2007 and 2008, a new round of revisions of legislation took place.</p>
<p><u>Organization and Financing of Education Act</u></p>	<p>1996</p>	<p>Key principles of the Act include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing the optimal development of the individual, irrespective of gender, social background or cultural identity, religion, racial, ethnic or national origin, and regardless of their physical and mental constitution or disability - educating for mutual tolerance; developing awareness of gender equality, respect for human diversity and mutual cooperation, respect for children's and human rights and fundamental freedoms; developing equal opportunities for both sexes; and, thereby, developing the competences needed to live in a democratic society - developing linguistic competences and raising awareness of the Slovenian language as the official language of the Republic of Slovenia; in ethnically mixed areas, fostering and developing Italian and Hungarian in addition to the Slovenian language <p>Education for children and young people with special needs is provided as a public service, but may also be provided in private kindergartens and schools without concessions or in private</p>

		<p>institutions or as home education. There are many parallel forms (inclusive, integrated form or separate classes and specialised institutions) which meet different needs. All educational programmes for learners with SEN have to follow the main curricular aims that are established by the Ministry in Article 9 of the Organization and Financing of Education Act</p>
<p>White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia - <u>2011</u></p>	<p>2011</p>	<p>In 2011, the expert group that had been appointed two years earlier by the Minister of Education presented the new White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia (<u>sl</u>). Following the implementation of the initial, comprehensive, reform of the educational system in the 1990's and the adoption of subsequent legislative changes, the 2011 White Paper aimed at providing a systematic review of the structure and the functioning of the education system. An additional aim was to propose reforms that would ensure the provision of quality education in the future. The 2011 White Paper defined four general principles of education in Slovenia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights and responsibilities – referring to the common European heritage of political, cultural and moral values that are brought together in human rights and concomitant responsibilities, as well as the principles of plural democracy, tolerance, solidarity and the rule of law. - Autonomy – including the professional autonomy of education professionals and of educational institutions, which is related to the key goal of education: to form an independent, thoughtful and

		<p>responsible individual who relies on the acquired knowledge, social and other skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Justice – closely related to ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunities to succeed in life, which requires equal opportunities to acquire education, along with equal and impartial assessments of pupils' knowledge and equal, impartial and proportionate positive and negative sanctioning. - Quality – reflected in basing education on common values such as human rights, as well as in the educational process itself, which must be in line with the broadest possible consensus about what constitutes a good school, a good kindergarten, etc.
Basic School Act	<p>Official Gazette of RS, no. 81/06, 102/07, 107/10, 87/11, 40/12-ZUJF, 63/13, 46/16-ZOFVI-L</p> <p>Effective from March 14, 1996</p>	<p>The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia in Article 57 provides for compulsory basic education. Article 10 of the Basic School Act states that children who are foreign citizens or stateless persons residing in the Republic of Slovenia, have the right to compulsory basic education under the same conditions as nationals of the Republic of Slovenia.</p> <p>Article 12 defines pupils with special needs are students who need adapted educational programme with additional professional assistance or adapted school programs or a special education program. These students are defined by the law governing the guidance of children with special needs, according to the type and level of the special needs of the children.</p> <p>In accordance with Article 48 of the Act parents have the right to enrol a child in basic school in the school district in which the child permanently or</p>

		<p>temporarily resides. The legal regime provides all school-age children with the possibility of inclusion in the basic-school system. School-age children in Slovenia visit school even if their family's residential status is not settled (i.e., they do not have a permanent or temporary residence yet), which is in line with the principle of the best interests of the child. In this case, children visit the school nearest to where their parents live.</p> <p>In accordance with Article 49 of the Act parents have the right to enroll the child with special needs referred to in the first paragraph of Article 12 of Basic Scholl Act in a primary school in a school district in which the child permanently or temporarily resides, unless a suitable primary school has been designated by the legal decision.</p> <p>As a rule, the child with special needs is determined by the legal decision the closest suitable school.</p> <p>From the year 2013 pupils with learning disabilities and gifted pupils are no longer counted among children with special needs - basic school provide adequate conditions for these pupils by adapting methods and forms of work and including them in additional/remedial classes and other types of assistance or work, whereby it also adapts the subject contents for gifted pupils. Foreigners may enrol into Slovenian upper-secondary schools under the same conditions as Slovenian citizens.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport annually issues vacancies in individual educational programs in upper- secondary schools. Foreigners may enter any upper-secondary school if they meet entry requirements. The condition for enrolment in</p>
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		<p>upper-secondary school is the completed basic school, except in certain educational programs, where, in addition to this condition, a successfully completed test of talent is required.]</p>
<p>Additional regulations</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Policy and systems conditions for more equal opportunities for learners with SEN in mainstream education are still building up gradually. Along with the primary legislative acts, the secondary regulations that govern the field of education at the operative level, which are issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, are also significant. The most important are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulations for the organisation and work of the commissions (Official Gazette No. 88/13). These regulations lay down the Criteria for the assessment of the type and degree of disadvantage, impairments and disabilities of learners with SEN (NEIS, 2015a), as well as the guidelines for operation of the Commissions for Guidance of Children with SEN (NEIS, 2015b); - Regulations on additional professional and physical assistance for learners with SEN (Official Gazette No. 88/13). These regulations lay down the scope, form and requirements for the provision of additional professional assistance; - Regulations on basic school education for learners with SEN provided at home, laying down the requirements for education at home and the criteria for funding (Official Gazette No. 22/16); - Regulations on the norms and standards for the provision of education programmes for learners with SEN (Official Gazette No. 47/17);

		- Regulations on the implementation of the Matura examinations for candidates with SEN (Official Gazette No. 82/14).
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1.3 Provide an overview of education policy or guidelines impacting on inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (2011)	(Official Gazette of RS, no. 58/11, 40/12 - ZUJF, 90/12 and 41/17 - ZOPOPP In force since 2013	<p>The education of children with special needs was regulated by the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act - ZOUPP (2000, 2006, 2007) from 2011 the education of children with special needs is regulated by the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act – ZOUPP-1 (2011)</p> <p>The Act defines procedures for the placement of children with special needs in all types of education, from pre-school to upper-secondary education.</p> <p>The Act Identifies 10 categories of learners with SEN. In the ZOUPP-1 children with autistic disorders are now classified as SEN children;</p> <p>The principles: (there are 12 principles, here are only mentioned 3-why?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provide maximal advantages for a child; – establish Integrity and complexity of education; – give equal opportunities and at the same time recognise different needs of children; <p>- the involvement of parents, adoptive parents, foster parents and guardians (hereinafter: parents) in the guidance process and forms of assistance,</p> <p>- an individualized approach,</p> <p>- interdisciplinarity,</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintaining a balance between different areas of the child's physical and mental development, - directing as soon as possible in the appropriate education program, - immediate and continuous support and professional assistance in education programs, - vertical transition and coherence of programs, - organization of education as close as possible to the place of residence, - providing adequate conditions for the optimal development of each child <p>The focus is on maximizing the inclusion of children in regular forms of education. The law redefines the process of placement, which will enable the placement of children more in accordance with their specific/special educational needs. It gives the possibility of extending the education of persons with moderate, severe and profound intellectual disabilities up to 26 years. The Act also provides for the formation of counselling/support centres across regions, which should provide a more effective professional treatment, support and professional development for teachers in mainstream schools and preschools.</p> <p>The Act also provides exact form and content for Individual educational plans.</p>
Slovenian Sign Language Act	2002	<p>The State has placed conditions on ensuring equal opportunities of deaf children and children hard of hearing. It specifies that the deaf and hard of hearing have the right to use the Slovenian sign language and to request an interpreter. The measures adopted on the basis of the National</p>

		guidelines to improve accessibility of built environment, information and communications for people with disabilities (2005) facilitate easier inclusion of persons with disabilities and other functional impairments.
Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men	Adopted 2012	The objectives and measures of education for gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men in education were set out: among other things, the integration of the gender-equality perspective in the designed and implemented curricula, in learning materials and in the programs of the continuing professional development of teachers; the promotion of scholarship of female pupils and students in educational programs dominated by men, and vice versa.

1.4 Please describe any specific plans and strategies designed to support inclusion in education (e.g. national strategy on migrant learners):

Name and link	Year and status (approved, under preparation etc.)	Description of the focus
The Strategy of Roma Education in the Republic of Slovenia (Council of experts)	2004 and 2011	<p>Key objectives of the measure:</p> <p>The strategy was put forward in 2004 and revised in 2011. It was prepared in close collaboration with the Roma Union of Slovenia. It includes the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure education and training that enable Roma children to achieve goals and standards defined in the National Curriculum for Preschool Institutions and in the elementary school syllabi, • To exercise the right to maintain and respect Roma language and culture in the education and

		<p>training system,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote inclusion in society through education and training enabling Roma children to assume the functional requisites of society, while respecting their differences and identity, • To promote inclusion in society through a curriculum which ensures the principles and moral values of equality within the scope of social equity. <p>https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/strategy-education-roma-republic</p>
<p>The <u>Strategy of the Inclusion of Migrant Children, Pupils and Students</u> into the Education System in the Republic of Slovenia</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Key objectives of the measure:</p> <p>According to the Strategy of the Inclusion of Migrant Children, Pupils and Students into the Education System in the Republic of Slovenia (2007), the following measures, apart from the supplementary lessons of mother tongue, are being carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional expert help in learning Slovenian, financed by government; • Adaptation of the implemented curriculum (a sort of individual programme with more Slovenian language at the beginning of schooling); • Preparation of strategies for working with parents of migrant children; • New practice-oriented strategies, especially how to work with parents, developing new multilingual materials, available on websites and distributed to teachers free of charge, • A special module is being prepared for educating teachers to work with migrant children;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert conferences are being organised to train principals, counselling and other professional workers; • Encouraging intercultural learning and positive attitudes towards understanding and accepting difference (an ESF project). <p>https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/strategy-inclusion-migrant</p>
Guidelines for <u>the integration of immigrant children in kindergartens and schools</u>	2012	<p>Basic goals</p> <p>a) ensuring the optimal development of the individual, irrespective of gender, social and cultural background, religion, national origin, and physical and mental constitution</p> <p>b) Education in tolerance</p> <p>c) Development of awareness of gender equality, respect for diversity and cooperation with others, respect for children's and human rights and fundamental freedoms</p> <p>d) Development of equal opportunities for both sexes and thereby develop the ability to live in a democratic society.</p>

1.5 Is there a definition of inclusion in education?

No

If no, please give further information:

There is no legal definition of Inclusion in Slovenian legislation.

1.6 Is there a definition of vulnerable groups?

The Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 ranks among the most vulnerable groups of the population at increased risk of social exclusion and inequalities:

- low-income people whose livelihoods are often dependent on social transfers (unemployed, single-parent families, older single people, older single women)

- disabled persons (disabled persons without status, severely impaired, unemployed)
- homeless (health and housing problems)
- Roma (unemployment, low educational attainment, poor housing conditions);
- migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (lack of language, employment, housing);
- children and adolescents with difficulties growing up
- other vulnerable groups (victims of violence, addicts, people with mental health problems, etc.)

Government of the Republic of Slovenia (2008). Operational Program for Human Resources

Development 2007-2013, Ljubljana: Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy.

1.7 Is there a definition of special educational needs?

Yes

Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2011 “Children with special needs are defined as children with mental development disorders, blind and partially sighted children respectively children with impaired visual function, deaf and hard-of-hearing children, children with speech impairments, children with physical disabilities, chronically ill children, children with autistic disorders and children with behavioural disorders and personalities who need special educational programmes with additional professional assistance or special educational programmes and/or a special education programme.”

Paragraph 154, pages 40/41

The classification of learners based solely on specific disabilities was suspended. The emphasis was placed rather on the learners’ needs and this formed the concept of the inclusion model of education. It redefined learners who need adaptations and/or assistance in the education process.

If the assistance and adaptations cannot be provided by mainstream kindergartens or schools, the learner’s needs are identified in the placement procedure and the learner is placed into a suitably adapted programme. These programmes are in special schools or institutions for the education of learners with special needs, or in classes or groups established for this purpose within mainstream kindergartens and schools.

Nine groups of learners with SEN who need more provisions and resources to support their learning are defined as follows:

- Learners with intellectual disabilities;
- Blind learners and learners with visual impairments and Learners with impaired visual function;
- Deaf learners and learners with hearing impairments;
- Learners with speech problems;

- Learners with physical disabilities;
- Learners with long-term illnesses;
- Learners with specific learning disabilities;
- Learners with emotional and behavioural disorders;
- Learners with autistic disorders.

Learners are recognised as having SEN when they get an official decision by the National Education Institute Slovenia (NEIS). Parents usually request the introduction of official guidance procedures for learners with SEN, but schools or learners themselves (from 15 years old) can also request it.

1.8 Please provide information on any future developments planned for inclusion in education.

On the national level there are few project about :

Establishing a Network of Support Centers, Improving Early Intervention for children with special needs and their parents, Encouraging social inclusion of children and youth with special needs into local environment, Employment of assistants for work with children with special needs in the educational institutions, Encouraging cooperation between educational institutions and non-governmental organizations in the field of work with children with special needs.

1.9 Please provide information on any reports, evaluations and/or reviews of legislation and/or policy relating to inclusion in education, since 2015. This could include official and parallel reports on UNCRPD etc.

1. European Union guidance on Council Conclusions on accelerating the process of Roma integration (Council of the European Union, 2016): reaffirms the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 but notes “with regret the fact, clearly highlighted in the Communication, that despite the measures taken by the Member States, only limited progress has been made in advancing Roma integration, in particular at the local level. Reasons for this include insufficient cooperation between stakeholders, a lack of commitment by local authorities, and the ineffective use of available funds and continued discrimination against Roma.” It also urges member countries among other issues to “evaluate the effectiveness of their National Roma Integration Strategies and update them regularly, define clear actions, and set measurable goals and milestones, with a view to accelerating the process of Roma integration, taking into account the recommendations made in these Conclusions.”

2. The UNCRPD Slovenian report was submitted on 18 July 2014 and it was published by the UN Committee on 30 October 2015.

“Article 11 of the ZIMI provides that inclusion in education at all levels and participation in lifelong learning in their living environment shall be provided to persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. Inclusion in various programmes, such as programmes offering special and adapted curricula, and adaptation of regular programmes to the abilities of persons with disabilities shall not be deemed as discriminatory. Persons with disabilities shall be entitled to appropriate adaptations when included in educational or study processes and to the right to have educational or study process appropriately adapted to their individual needs”.

“Principles, procedures and conditions of including children with special needs in the education process are laid down in the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (ZOUPP), which complements all the previously mentioned acts. The ZUOPP primarily governs guidance to a variety of educational programmes and the possibility of switching between programmes; it stipulates the preparation of an individualised programme for each child in accordance with the programme in which the child is placed; it regulates adjustments regarding organisation, methods of verification and assessment of knowledge, progress and timing of lessons, and provides for additional professional assistance; it introduces development process guidance, and facilitates a more active role of parents and educational institutions in the process of guidance; and it opens up the possibility for primary education of children with special needs to be held at home and for its inclusion in the private institutions on the basis of a decision on guidance bringing the organisation of education of children with special needs closer to the solutions known in the developed European countries; it does not, however, provide for full integration, since such a solution has proved inadequate also elsewhere. In addition, the Act also provides for some support measures, such as free transportation to and from school and an attendant to provide physical assistance during classes”.

3. The recent National Evaluation Study looked at different forms of additional professional support assigned to learners with special needs, according to the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (Vršnik Perše et al., 2016).

Some concrete proposals for changes that are the subject of on-going discussions are:

Existing description	Suggestion	Note
Placement of Children with Special Needs Act	The Guiding of Learners who Need Additional Support in Learning and/or Social Participation Act	The broader concept should cover all learners with SEN

Commission for Guidance of Children with SEN	The Professional Team to Establish the Special Educational Needs of Learners	The structure of the professional team is flexible and a teacher is actively involved
Criteria for identifying deficits, obstacles or disruptions of children with SEN	The criteria for determining a learner's educational needs, depending on the type and level of their disabilities	From the deficit in identifying educational needs (from the medical to pedagogical discourse)
Expert Opinion	Opinion about a learner's educational needs	From the deficit, obstacles or disruptions in identifying educational needs (from the medical to pedagogical discourse)

Source: [\(FPIES\) country report, Slovenia](#)

4. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities- CRPD/C/SVN/CO/1 from 16. 4.. 2018

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The lack of an explicit and comprehensive prohibition of corporal punishment of children in all settings in the State party and the absence of specific measures to address violence against children with disabilities;
- (b) The insufficient coordination of the provision of the necessary services for children with disabilities, among all persons in positions of responsibility;
- (c) The lack of early assistance and the placement of children with disabilities in residential treatment institutions;
- (d) The absence of mechanisms to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting their lives, in particular the lack of mechanisms to ensure the right of children with disabilities to have their views taken into account on matters pertaining to them and their families, including their participation in all protection mechanisms.

Education (art. 24)

39. The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The existing parallel education systems, special and mainstream, for children with disabilities;
- (b) The lack of concrete targets and provisions for implementing inclusive education in existing policies and legislation providing for inclusive education;

- (c) The insufficient capacity of regular schools to provide for curriculum accommodation and inclusive learning environments and, in particular, the lack of skills and knowledge among teachers about inclusive teaching methodologies and the low expectations of the capacities of children with disabilities;
- (d) The lack of accessibility and reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in tertiary education, including higher education institutions and vocational schools;
- (e) Physical barriers to transport students with disabilities from their place of residence to school facilities.

40. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Recognize the right of all children with disabilities to inclusive education and abandon segregated education schemes;
- (b) Adopt a strategy and action plan with a clear time frame for the implementation of inclusive education at all levels for all children with disabilities and, further, establish a comprehensive monitoring system to assess the progress of inclusive education;
- (c) Strengthen the capacity of inclusive schools to train teachers in inclusive education, curriculum accommodation and teaching methods. The State party should enhance the quality of educational support by adopting an individualized approach to children with disabilities and their capacity-building;
- (d) Provide lifelong learning for persons with disabilities and ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation in all tertiary education institutions, including vocational and higher education schools;
- (e) Provide transport services for students with disabilities from their place of residence to their education facilities.

1.10 What are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to laws and policies in the country?

Challenges

Eurydice 2016:

One of the main challenges in education is keeping track of different legal background documents for pursuing educational activity. Several acts amending laws and other instruments were enacted aiming to rationalise, increase efficiency and eliminate deficiencies.

- Low literacy scores (24.9%) of adults in PIAAC are well below the sought after level of literacy. The younger generations scored relatively better.
- Tertiary attainment among 30 to 34 year olds has risen considerably in the last decade, from 31,6% in 2009 to 42.7% in 2018. However the difference between young males and females in tertiary educational attainment is striking, namely only 31.6% of males in this age group have graduated from tertiary education as opposed to 56.3% of females

OECD Resources Report, 2017:

- From the systemic point of view, the accessibility of education is an important issue and it is currently regulated adequately, in terms of inclusion of children claiming international protection as well. Possible increase in the number of these children applicants would be a challenge for the educational system.
- One of crucial challenges in connection with the inclusion of SEN children in kindergartens and schools is providing adequate support to schools (an overall support to institutions in terms of inclusion of SEN children is planned).
- Generally speaking, it is necessary to highlight the challenges brought by a greater complexity of society. On the one hand, teachers are no longer merely professionals of a specific content field, but they also need vast knowledge on interactions and relations to be able to adapt in a flexible manner the teaching process to abilities, needs and interests of students. On the other hand, we strive for a more active role of students; we want them to have the opportunity for a well-balanced physical, mental, emotional and social development and for developing creative and critical thinking skills.
- Students are not just listeners, but also young people with an increasingly large spectrum of needs that are also being addressed in the educational context. At the same time, school as a system needs to adapt to the increasing complexity, which is a great responsibility for school management and calls for further professionalization. In such circumstances there is a fear that the consequences will be visible primarily in the field of system quality and efficiency. That is why continual funding is all the more important.
- As an already high-performing education system, Slovenia sees the need to address achievement gaps between specific student-population groups (particularly Roma students) and to make the education system more responsive to the changing skills requirements of the labour market, the economy and society. Evidence from the European Commission (2011) shows that educational attainment of Roma in Slovenia is low compared to their peers. Fewer Roma are enrolled in pre-school education.

They often are not proficient in Slovene, leave education early (after basic education) and have lower educational support at home.

Opportunities

European Union monitor:

- ESL is a strength - Early leavers from education and training (% of population aged 18-24) - best performer score
- Risk of poverty or social exclusion (% - better than average)

UNESCO EFA Report:

Some important progress has been made in legislation and in building new educational concepts.

Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and universalizing basic education are noted.

OECD Resources Report, 2017:

Several system-level policies in Slovenia promote equity in education. Compulsory education in Slovenia is organised in a comprehensive structure called basic school that caters to students between age 6 and age 15. Tracking (sorting students into different education pathways) begins at age 15, the same as the OECD average. Grade repetition is low, with 3.4% of 15-year-old students reporting in PISA 2012 that they repeated a grade at least once in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school (compared to 12.4% of students in other OECD countries). Slovenia has one of the lowest rates of early school leavers across all EU countries (4.4% in 2014, compared to the EU average of 11.1%). School choice is possible: parents have the option to enrol their children in a school outside their immediate locality, if the school consents. There are few private schools in Slovenia, and most students are enrolled in public schools (97.6%, compared to the OECD average of 81.7%), while 1.9% are enrolled in government-dependent private schools (compared to the OECD average of 14.2%). All kindergartens and basic schools are required to provide pedagogical, psychological and social counselling and career guidance, as well as non-compulsory extended educational programmes of supplementary classes, morning care (for pupils in Grade 1), after-school classes (for pupils in Grades 1-5), non-compulsory optional subjects, and other extra-curricular activities.

Section 2: Governance and finance

How far are inclusive principles underpinning policies at national and local levels effectively supported by governance and financing mechanisms?

2.1 Is there formal collaboration across ministries on inclusion in education?

Yes

Area	Yes/No	Description: what mechanism, who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	<p>At the beginning of 2012, the former Ministry of Education and Sport was united with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and with the Ministry of Culture. The new ministry was named the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. The new Ministry was responsible for the development of pre-higher education policies, inspection procedures, the allocation of funds, the implementation of laws and administrative decisions relating to pre-primary, compulsory and upper-secondary education institutions.</p> <p>The Ministry carries out most of the financial, administrative and expert tasks. It prepares concepts and strategies, legislation and regulations on the basis of experts' opinions. Its responsibilities also include the creation of policies for the admission of students and students into schools and colleges, financing schools and colleges, and supervising staffing and employment procedures. Feedback on the work of the education system is collected through statistics, targeted evaluation and research studies, state-wide examinations, and international research.</p> <p>From 2013 Slovenia has the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport</p>
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	<p>The inclusion of pupils and youths with emotional and behavioural problems requires co-operation between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the</p>

		Ministry of Health in order to provide them with the most appropriate education.
Data sharing	Yes	Data sharing takes place in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act and Rules on the collection and protection of personal data in elementary education
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	<p>In conjunction with the Ministry of Education, there are three national agencies supporting its work: the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia [Zavod RS za šolstvo, www.zrss.si], the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training [Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje in usposabljanje, www.cpi.si], and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education [Andragoški center Slovenije, www.acs.si].</p> <p>They draw up national curricula for basic, upper secondary and short higher vocational education which are discussed and adopted by the National Councils of Experts and the Minister. They assist in the evaluation and monitoring of schools and contribute to the preparation of state-wide examinations. They promote and encourage the further development of schools, offer expert advice to teachers and initiate education-related projects. External assessment of students, students, apprentices, and adult participants in education is managed by way of organisation and expertise by the National Examinations Centre (www.ric.si).</p>
Quality assurance and accountability	Yes	The National Examination Centre and the Evaluation Board at the national level are the chief evaluation institutions within the state that are responsible for the evaluation of knowledge outcomes. The Board evaluates all innovative education and pilot projects that receive consensus from the most important scientific authorities in the state.

		In special institutions for children with special needs, periodic supervision is carried out, primarily concerning the more challenging population of children with special needs. School inspection is the responsibility of the National Inspectorate for Education and Sport (Inšpektorat Republike Slovenije za šolstvo in šport), which falls under the authority of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. The National Inspectorate is also responsible for inspecting the education of children with SEN.
(others ...)		There are also supporting public institutions in education, set up by the state that pursue, primarily, activities in the scope of development, professional support and supervision, as well as quality monitoring, counselling and so forth. These institutions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia - Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training National Examinations Centre - Educational Research Institute - Institute for Adult Education - Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes - Centre for School and Outdoor Education - National School of Leadership in Education - Slovenian School Museum.

2.2 Are there shared responsibilities between central and local governments on inclusion in education?

Yes

Area	Yes/No	Description: who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	Local authorities are responsible for setting up pre-school institutions and basic schools; they take part in their administration and co-finance their operation and in the pre-school institution finance the salaries of employees.

		School councils (sveti šol) composed of representatives of the founder, employees and parents, are the central governing bodies, with considerable responsibilities regarding management, finances and the teaching process.
Identification of needs / referral for services	No	
Data sharing	Yes	Data sharing take place in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act and Rules on the collection and protection of personal data in elementary education
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	Every year schools must report their evaluations (substantive and financial) about the school year to the municipal Council and Mayor.
Quality assurance and accountability	Yes	According to Article 48 of the Organisation and Financing of Education Act the school council approves school annual plan and the report about its realisation. As a consequence, the head teachers are accountable to the school council. They are also accountable to the school councils for developing and reporting about financial operations in schools. In practice, some schools must present school plans and reports to local communities and to regional units of National Education Institute. Different evidence is provided, such as: students' academic achievement, number of rewards and sanctions, students' presence rate, number of in-service deputy training for teaching staff, etc. Financial report is provided in accordance with national regulations.
(others ...)		

2.3 Are non-governmental organisations and/or associations involved in governance processes?

No

If no, please give further information:

NGOs do not cooperate in the school boards, or are members of Expert Councils in the Ministry of Education.

2.4 Are there any accountability mechanisms to promote the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

Yes

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport transfers the funds for salaries to the public institutions within its scope based on information provided by the 'Human resources – wage information system' application (hereinafter referred to as KPIS). The information is entered by authorised people within the institutions (e.g. headmasters, accountants, etc.). The data includes information on employees, contracts and allocation of job roles, as well as information associated with a specific workplace (systematisation of jobs). The calculation for normative systematisation is entered in the Organisational Report (OR), produced by schools based on the number of learners and the standards for implementation of the primary school programme.

In accordance with national regulations, the kindergarten or school council independently decides on its development program and annual work plan, and on the introduction of above-standard and other programs. The headmaster, within the limits set by the regulations, shall draw up the program and financial plans. The headmaster plans, organizes and manages the work of the kindergarten or school. He/She is responsible for spending money according to purpose and regulations that are very detailed.

Area	Yes/No	Description of the focus/actors involved (e.g. state/non state)
Appeal process for rights violations	Yes	Appeal process for rights violations is conducting by The Inspectorate for Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia through School Inspection Act.
School inspection	Yes	School inspection entails evaluating the administrative aspects of educational institutions; the institution in charge is the The Inspectorate for Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia [Inšpektorat Republike Slovenije za šolstvo in šport]. School inspection includes monitoring the compliance of the implementation of acts and other regulations, and also ensuring the documents regulating organisation, spending of public funds and provision of educational activities are carried out

Other quality assurance processes (e.g. standards for teaching, support services etc)	Yes	<p>OECD 2011: Procedures used in system evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The first instrument for system evaluation of the Slovene school system are the national assessment of students' knowledge. - The second instrument for system evaluation of the school system include international comparative studies in the field of education - The third instrument for system evaluation of the Slovene system are national evaluation studies.
Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data collection on attendance, participation, achievement, funding)	Yes	<p>According to Article 48 of the Organisation and Financing of Education Act the school council approves school annual plan and the report about its realisation. As a consequence, the head teachers are accountable to the school council. They are also accountable to the school councils for developing and reporting about financial operations in schools. In practice, some schools must present school plans and reports to local communities and to regional units of National Education Institute. Different evidence is provided, such as: students' academic achievement, number of rewards and sanctions, students' presence rate, number of in-service deputy training for teaching staff, etc. Financial report is provided in accordance with national regulations.</p>
(others ...)		

2.5 Please describe the general mechanisms for funding schools.

Background

Education spending as a share of GDP decreased during the financial crisis, but it remains above the EU average. Between 2010 and 2015, expenditure per student in primary and secondary education fell by 13%, one of the highest decreases among OECD countries. Expenditure per student in tertiary education only increased by 1 %, compared to an average increase of 11 % across OECD countries (OECD, 2018). The government aims to keep the share of education financing at a stable 6 % of GDP in the future, 0.5pps below the share of 2013. Reforms on higher education financing continue, but a more substantial legislative overhaul has been postponed.

In 2015, EUR 2.114 billion was spent on educational institutions. The share of public expenditure for formal education is 4.9% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is the lowest for eight years (in 2014 it was 5.3% and in 2012, 5.7%) (SORS, no date).

Public expenditure accounted for 86% of expenditure for educational institutions, 13% was private expenditure and almost 1% was funds from international sources.

In the structure of total expenditure for educational institutions, expenditure on pre-primary education (1st and 2nd age period in kindergarten) represents 21%, basic education is 43%, upper-secondary education is 17%, and tertiary education is 19% (of which 1% is for higher vocational education and 18% for professional higher education).

One of the characteristics of the Slovenian system of financing inclusive education and the inclusive system is centralisation. The education system is mainly organised as a public service rendered by public and private institutions. Basic school education (from age 6 to 15) is compulsory, schools are founded by municipalities and financed by the state. The financing system is prescribed in detail at the national level. The mechanisms for monitoring of spending are set in accordance with criteria and standards issued by the Ministry. Schools must report data on organisation and human resources and this data has an impact on salary calculation for all teachers.

Taking into account national regulations, the School Council decides its development plans, annual work plan and/or the introduction of above-standard and other programmes autonomously. Programme and financial plans are produced by the head teacher in compliance with relevant laws and regulations. The head teacher is responsible for school planning, management and leadership and must ensure that allocated funds are spent according to the detailed plans. Head teachers in basic schools must draft school financial plans in accordance with the Ministry's criteria, standards and methodology for determining costing per learner.

Head teachers make decisions with financial consequences, such as on the categorisation of jobs, promotions and ranking of staff by pay classes. The criteria for the categorisation of jobs and the rules for promotion are prescribed by law.

The school founder manages buildings and grounds, with the support of school bodies. A school starts its own trust, which provides finances for above-standard programme activities that are not funded by public sources. The trust provides for purchases of above-standard equipment, above-standard lessons and other similar things. Finances in the trust come from kindergarten fees paid by parents, donations, inheritances and other sources. The trust management committee, which includes school and parent representatives, manages the finances.

Potential surpluses in schools may be offset or spent in accordance with decisions made by the funding body. The municipality and the government share the responsibility of settlements for damages arising from educational activities in basic school

The quality control mechanisms that inform financing decisions and monitoring of effectiveness are:

- an internal audit of the school by the municipality;
- an external audit of the school by the Ministry of Education;
- a variety inspections (school, finance, work, etc.).

Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of who, what, to whom and how
<p>Basic education is mainly financed by national budget and municipality , the above standard programs also from donations, sponsorships and other sources.</p>	<p>Funding for basic education is based on the programme type and in accordance with criteria and standards issued by the Ministry. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport transfers the funds for salaries to the public institutions within its scope based on information provided by the ‘Human resources – wage information system’ application (hereinafter referred to as KPIS). The information is entered by authorised people within the institutions (e.g. headmasters, accountants, etc.). The data includes information on employees, contracts and allocation of job roles, as well as information associated with a specific workplace (systematisation of jobs). The calculation for normative systematisation is entered in the Organisational Report (OR), produced by schools based on the number of learners and the standards for implementation of the primary school programme.</p>

<p>Funding of basic education - Ministry</p>	<p>The government provides funds for the provision of the compulsory programme (lessons and classroom housekeeping lessons) and the after-hours programme (supplementary and remedial lessons, individual and group support for learners, extra-curricular activities, outdoor learning away from home in the natural environment, after-school classes and morning care).</p> <p>Salaries for staff in basic education are financed by the national budget. The level of funding for salaries is determined by job classifications and the number of occupied positions in a school; they must comply with relevant regulations, such as laws, criteria and standards and collective agreements.</p> <p>The level of funding allocated to a basic school is calculated according to the Rules on the criteria and standards for the implementation of the basic school programme. The Rules are issued by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, based on prior consultations with the Council of Experts for General Education and unions. The criteria and standards cover the responsibilities of teaching staff, the criteria for the provision of the counselling service, libraries, administrative, account-keeping and technical services and the classroom and grouping criteria.</p>
<p>Funding of basic education - Municipalities</p>	<p>Municipalities provide basic schools with funding for capital investments, to pay maintenance and material costs for buildings and equipment, for the so-called above-standard programme, and transportation and care for children who need it. The above-standard programme may include the presence of a second teacher in all lessons, additional sports classes, a foreign language from year one, among other things. Kindergartens and schools can apply for funding for above-standard programmes at national competitions and by participating in national projects.</p>
<p>Additional government funding</p>	<p>The government provides funding for the material costs of the programme, namely for teaching aids, trips, and the care and education of learners with special needs.</p>

	<p>The government also funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developmental and supporting activities, such as research, development, information and experimental activities in schools; - in-service teacher training; - ICT and other means of instruction; - international activities; - the running of school libraries; - textbook and literature subsidies; - meals subsidies; - competitions and work with talented learners; - out-of-school activities; - the education of Roma learners; - Slovenian language lessons and mother-tongue lessons for foreigners in basic schools; - research and innovative learner activities; - transportation of learners, etc.
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2.6 Do schools have flexibility to use funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

No

Funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups are set by the different laws and regulations such as: Placement of Children with Special Needs Act, Rules on norms and standards for the implementation of the primary school programme, Rules on the criteria and methods for the valuation of the material expenses of primary school programmes and primary schools with special curricula, Rules on additional professional and physical assistance for children with special needs.

2.7 Please describe the specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of vulnerable learners and their families in education (e.g. benefits, cash transfers, scholarships). Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of the who, what, to whom and how
Basic School Act	Children and youths with special needs must be offered free transportation to and from school, regardless of the distance between

	<p>their place of residence and the basic school, if the latter is stated in their guidance order. The refund of relevant costs are the responsibility of the local community.</p>
Basic School Act	<p>Pupils and students with SEN attending short-cycle education programmes are entitled to free school transportation and transportation during weekends.</p>
Basic School Act	<p>The provision of medical-technical aids to children with SEN is ensured by the Health Insurance Institute. Technical aids are prescribed by an authorised medical doctor. The regulations of the insurance company specify which aids are provided to children, as well as support tool standards. When adjusting to more complex medical-technical tools that require an inter-disciplinary approach and parents' and children's familiarisation with the use of such tools, they are supported by the Institute of Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia (e.g. complex wheelchairs, communicators, etc.).</p>
Financial support for families of learners with special educational needs	<p>Families and learners with SEN are entitled to special financial support from the government. The government provides funding for the placement of learners with SEN for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aids, equipment and adjustments to classrooms to accommodate learners' needs; - carers who accompany learners with physical disabilities; - boarding fees in dormitories; - specialised textbooks; - transportation of parents and their children during holidays; - a higher proportion of partial funding for after-hours programmes and for an improved learner to teacher ratio.
Health Insurance	<p>The Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia ensures the provision of medical- technical aids to learners with SEN. Technical aids are prescribed by an authorised medical doctor. The insurance company regulations specify which aids and standard support tools are provided to learners. The Institute of Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia supports the adjustment to more complex medical- technical tools that require an inter-disciplinary approach and the parents and learners to familiarise</p>

	themselves with their use (e.g. complex wheelchairs, communicators, etc.).
Free school transport	Learners with special needs must be offered free transportation to and from school, if this is stated in their guidance order (Basic School Act). The refund of relevant costs is the responsibility of the local community

2.8 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of funding and resourcing relating to inclusive education.

Evaluation of various forms of additional professional assistance granted to children in accordance with the Law on the guidance of children with special needs - National evaluation study (2016)

Main conclusions:

- design additional professional assistance more flexibly and geared to meet the individual needs of children with special needs, in accordance with professional guidelines. It would make sense that the support offered in the form of additional professional assistance would be adaptable to each individual child as well as to his or her development.
- interconnecting different sectors (education, social, economy, health) to provide lifelong support to those who need it. the basic premise must be to empower a child with special needs with this support as much as possible in the following he needed this support less and less.
- development of planning, records and content guidelines for individualized educational programs
- setting guidelines for better quality of the evaluations of the additional professional assistance

2.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to governance and finance issues in the country?

Challenges

FPIES country report, Slovenia:

Governance and monitoring mechanisms that reinforce co-operation between all stakeholders and increase the accountability of stakeholders at territorial and school level should be developed. One of challenges that was suggested for improving the system was to give the school administration more autonomy to manoeuvre within their budget.

Regarding the implementation of inclusion, the high level of centralisation allows a clear definition of responsibilities, roles and procedures that may support changes within the system. The RTI model is very

well incorporated in the educational system as the five-step model. It is well-known and used by professionals and may therefore support a whole school approach.

There is already a good expenditure tracking system that may enable stakeholders to analyse trends and progress and support further development of a more inclusive education system.

Discussions showed that head teachers can use the existing financing system in as flexible way as possible at school level. They also showed a possible solution to the gap between the theory and system in financing.

It was also suggested that empowering schools and teachers in their teaching capacity should be a dynamic process, allowing them to decide which learners need support and how. The decentralisation of the system through an increased commitment from teachers and schools could mean fewer costs for assessment.

OECD Policy Outlook 2016: Using resources efficiently, allocating them where they will have the greatest impact on equity and quality in education.

OECD resources report, 2017:

- There are no specific programmes or processes that would provide expertise and capacity for the management of resources in the entire education system. In addition, local communities have no specific policies to ensure efficient resource management. Schools ensure employment for accountants. They can also organise or ensure education in this field to their employees and outsource the management of public procurement to external contractors with the funds provided for carrying out of the activities.

- There are also no training conditions as far as the selection of managerial staff is concerned. Candidates are familiarised with the basic legislative framework for financial management of schools during the programme to hold a headship licence which is the requirement for the post of head master (director).

Topical subjects are addressed in advanced programmes of the National School of Leadership in Education, while the Ministry offers support on specific questions. The Ministry of Finance also provides further clarifications.

- Other priorities include improving the efficiency of governance at schools and introducing more flexibility in the organisation of pedagogical work, with support and capacity-building to help teachers succeed.

Achieving greater efficiency in the delivery of education services will require adequate funding for higher education institutions and improved information on the number of students and the real needs of the system.

Opportunities

FPIES country report, Slovenia:

The centralised system was viewed as a strength for monitoring finances. Existing governance and finance system monitoring mechanisms create a huge database, which should be analysed and used for further development and change. Improvements could be made by developing indicators which make the system more transparent regarding learners and the strengths and weaknesses of support systems. Data collection systems which focus on the enabling effect of support as well as on the cost- effectiveness of the allocated means could also be developed.

Since municipalities are the founders of educational institutions, their contribution and understanding of inclusive education are very important. As such, the municipality of Ljubljana presented its local model of financing inclusion. As a principal city and one of the biggest and well-placed municipalities, Ljubljana is a good model of collaboration with different stakeholders from educational and non-educational fields for the implementation of inclusion.

The Municipality of Ljubljana finances the inclusion of children with special needs in society through various methods. These include:

In 2016, the MOL supported the establishment of the PIKA Educational Centre, which operates within the Janez Levec Special Education Centre. This was an inventive response to the needs of schools and families who are facing the new challenges that inclusive education brings. PIKA aims to provide systematic training of teaching staff, following contemporary efforts to qualitatively include more learners with special needs in mainstream schools. The MOL gives strong financial support to this initiative through the remuneration of employees and refunds for material costs (books, teaching aids, stationery, etc.). In 2016, EUR 114,994 was allocated to PIKA.

Municipalities are also founders of Counselling Centres for Children, Adolescents and Parents. There are five of these centres in Slovenia, and they are responsible for supporting all learners and families with educational and learning difficulties. Centres collaborate closely with schools. The biggest centres are established in Ljubljana and Maribor. The annual budget of the Counselling Centre in Ljubljana for remuneration of employees (manager, staff at the psycho-socio-pedagogical unit, administrative and technical staff) is EUR 1,189,666. The MOL finances 41% of this. The Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia finances 55% and the remaining 4% comes from the Centre's own activities (educational courses, publications, projects, etc.).

Section 3: Data

What data on inclusion in education is available to understand if progress is being made towards equitable learning opportunities for all learners?

3.1 Please indicate if the following frameworks are in place, provide a link and give a brief description of their aims and focus:

Framework	Yes / No	Description
For monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national-level inclusion in education policy	Yes	<p>National Examinations Centre, a central institution for external assessment of pupils, apprentices, students and adults in Slovenia through the National Assessment of Knowledge also evaluate the quality of inclusion in educational level. The main goal is to acquire additional information or feedback on pupils' knowledge and to strive for a better quality of the learning and teaching processes.</p> <p>At the end of the first (in Year 3) and second periods (in Year 6) pupils could decide whether or not to undergo the NAK voluntarily. At the end of Period 1 they took tests in mother tongue and Mathematics and at the end of Period 2 in mother tongue, Mathematics and a modern foreign language (English or German). Results of the assessment gave additional information to schools, pupils and their parents on the pupils' achieved knowledge and had no influence on the final grade in individual subjects or the pupils' general achievement.</p> <p>At the end of Period 2 (in year 6) and 3 (in Year 9) a Final Examination of Knowledge of Pupils (FEKP) is compulsory for all pupils (also for pupils with special needs). Pupils took tests in Slovene, Mathematics and either a modern foreign language or another optional subject.</p> <p>In the Rules on the national assessment of knowledge in basic schools there is also specified that for pupils with special needs there have to be instructions for personalized implementation of the national assessment for students with special needs</p> <p>Information on the enrolment of children and students, employees, institutions and programme structure is collected and administered by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. It publishes the</p>

		<p>information in a form that prevents the identification of a specific statistical unit.</p> <p>Through the National Assessment of Knowledge there is information regarding if the additional support for children with special needs helps to overcome the gaps in knowledge.</p>
<p>For quality assurance across all levels of the system (national, regional, school)</p>	Yes	<p>The adherence of the management and education activities to legislation of public and private institutions with concessions is supervised by the school inspectorate. It carries out regular and extraordinary inspections and examines legal, organisational and other administrative procedures. School inspection is the responsibility of the National Inspectorate for Education and Sport (Inšpektorat Republike Slovenije za šolstvo in šport), which falls under the authority of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. The National Inspectorate is also responsible for inspecting the education of children with SEN.</p> <p>In special institutions for children with special needs, periodic supervision is carried out, primarily concerning the more challenging population of children with special needs</p>
<p>Providing guidance on the use of a range of different data sources for evaluation and self-review at different levels (national, regional, school)</p>	Yes	<p>Quality assessment and assurance in education and training is defined by the Organization and Financing of Education Act, which imposes a duty of the principal to determine and ensure the quality. The law defines self-evaluation as obligatory.</p> <p>At the central level, data is not available and analysed for separate schools; rather data on national averages is available.</p> <p>The National Examinations Centre publishes annual reports on national results.</p> <p>Schools publish online annual self-evaluation reports; they define the process and focal points of self-evaluation at their own discretion. The National School for Leadership in Education provides training programmes of self-evaluation for head-teachers and teachers. Schools join in clusters to participate in projects of the National School for Leadership in Education.</p> <p>The Ministry responsible for education established a National Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Quality in educational institutions in 2014</p>

		<p>and appointed a technical and operational group for guidance and task realization. The aim is to increase the use of information and the decision-making based on facts [evidence-based decision making]. The aim is to improve the planning, implementation and evaluation at all levels of the education system.</p> <p>In the process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of achievements, several projects were carried out with school networks and project groups. Final reports were written and evaluations conducted. On the basis of new knowledge, a development of mechanisms and measures is planned for 2015 to introduce improvements in the education system. Within the national framework for monitoring and evaluation of quality of educational institutions, it is planned that, taking into account the basic system, the implementation is appropriately adapted to the target groups of basic schools with the adapted curriculum, institutions for children and youth with special needs, and adult education.</p> <p>In Slovenia, there is a common belief that student/pupil achievements are good indicators of quality ... data is collected at the national level by way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - national testing of basic school pupils in Grades 6 and 9 - final examination of upper-secondary students (the general and vocational matura) - average final grades of upper-secondary students. <p>Schools have access to performance or achievement data and may use a specific tool to analyse and compare the achievements with the national average, in particular for the purpose of self-evaluation – a relatively new component of the system (since 2007)</p>
Statistical data collection	-	<p>The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (www.stat.si) is the main producer of national statistics and the cohesive force in this field. In addition to linking and harmonising the statistical system, its most important tasks are international co-operation, determination of methodological and classification standards, anticipation of users' needs, collection, processing and dissemination of data and taking care of their</p>

	<p>confidentiality. It follows all quantitative aspects of phenomena in education, analyses them and issues reports published in special publications and through regular announcements on their website. Education statistics covers all levels of education: kindergartens, elementary schools, upper secondary schools with all education programmes, post-secondary vocational colleges, higher education institutions with all education programmes and all continuing education programmes. In addition to analysing detailed statistical data it also calculates and publishes all key indicators. It publishes periodical, thematic or commissioned reports on a wide variety of topic including education.</p>
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Additional information:

In Slovenia, the authorities know about all children if they are in the kindergartens or if they attending the compulsory education. All primary schools have all the information on pupils who must enrol in the first grade at the respective individual school catchment area. If parents do not enrol their child in school, the school must inform the school inspectorate about that.

3.2 What data is collected on learners from vulnerable groups, how and why?

There are no data gathering on other vulnerable groups on National level.

The latest Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2011b) defines nine groups of learners with SEN who need more provisions and resources to support their learning. Data is collected in line with these categories.

Learners are recognised as having SEN when they get an official decision by the National Education Institute Slovenia (NEIS). Parents usually request the introduction of official guidance procedures for learners with SEN, but schools or learners themselves (from 15 years old) can also request it.

The Commission for Guidance of Children with SEN, founded by NEIS, are responsible for the placement. They are working according to the Regulations for the organisation and work of the commissions for guidance of children with SEN (Official Gazette No. 88/13), and Criteria for the assessment of the type and degree of disadvantage, impairments and disabilities of learners with SEN (NEIS, 2015a).

The largest number of placement decisions was issued to learners with deficits in individual learning areas (36.5%). This group is followed by learners with multiple disabilities (28.7%), learners with long-term illness (10.4%), learners with intellectual disabilities (8.5%), learners with speech and language

impairments (7.3%), and learners with limited intellectual capacity (2.5%). This last group has decreased remarkably, as it was excluded as an autonomous group within the Placement Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2000). The groups of learners with physical disabilities, deaf learners and learners with hearing impairments have the same average share (2.3%). Blind and partially-sighted learners and learners with emotional and behaviour disabilities are the smallest groups of learners with SEN, with an average share of less than 1%. Official decisions for children with autism are not yet evident, since they were only recognised as an autonomous group in the Placement Act of 2013. Before this, their official decision was usually issued to them as learners with long-term illness or speech and language impairments.

(Source FPIES Country report Slovenia pp15-16).

3.3 Please provide the available data relating to all learners in the compulsory education system and where they are enrolled for their education.

All questions can be answered using the country's own data sources as far as possible. Alternatively, the data can be provided from publicly available international sources e.g. UIS:

<http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=216> or UOE: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main_Page

Please give a clear reference to the Source in the column provided.

In the Learners column, as far as possible:

- provide actual numbers as far as possible and not estimates.
- only use 0 when the data is zero.
- use M to indicate missing data.
- use NA to indicate the question is Not Applicable (i.e. the country does not have that type of provision).

All questions refer to ALL learners in the education system, not just those formally identified as belonging to a group that is vulnerable to exclusion.

Please provide notes to clarify any issues with the data and include a specific note on the calendar year and/or school year the data refers to.

Data on learner access to compulsory education	Learners	Notes	Source
(i) What is the potential population of learners for the compulsory education system in the country (i.e. how many	Total: 180,973 Male: 93,129 Female: 87,844	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency <u>EASIE dataset</u> <u>Slovenia</u>

children are in the country that should, by law, be in some form of compulsory education)?			
(ii) How many learners are enrolled in all forms of education (i.e. educational settings maintained by the ministry of education or by other authorities such as health, welfare or labour ministries)?	Total: 179,447 Male: 92,400 Female: 87,047	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency EASIE dataset Slovenia
(iii) How many learners are out of any form of education (who by law should be in some form of education)?	Total: M Male: M Female: M		Children/learners considered 'out of education' are those in the age group corresponding to compulsory education who are not enrolled in any form of formal education. EASIE dataset Slovenia
(iv) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools (i.e. all learners, not just those with recognised needs or from vulnerable groups)?	Total: 175,380 Male: 89,741 Female: 85,639	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency EASIE dataset Slovenia
(v) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in inclusive groups/classes with their peers?	Total: 174,881 Male: 89,550 Female: 85,331	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency EASIE dataset Slovenia

(vi) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in separate, special groups/classes, away from their peers?	Total: 499 Male: 308 Female: 191	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency EASIE dataset Slovenia
(vii) How many learners are enrolled in totally separate, special units and/or schools, away from their peers?	Total: 3,143 Male: 1,884 Female: 1259	The data covers ISCED levels 1 and 2 only. Data from school year 2016/2017	European Agency EASIE dataset Slovenia

3.4 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of data collection and monitoring for inclusion in education.

The National Examination Centre and the Evaluation Board at the national level are the chief evaluation institutions within the state that are responsible for the evaluation of knowledge outcomes. The Board evaluates all innovative education and pilot projects that receive consensus from the most important scientific authorities in the state.

As part of an initiative co-funded by the European Social Fund and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport between 2008 and 2015, a project Design and Implementation of Quality Assurance (QA) in Education (KVIZ) is underway. The design of the project is based on previous experiences of evaluating and quality assurance in education in Slovenia, at the same time, the project incorporates various insights from theory, research, policy and practice from abroad. The project consortium partners and public institutions include: preschools, schools and other educational institutions, the National School for Leadership in Education, The National Institute of Education RS, the Institute for Vocational Education and the National Examinations Centre. The main objectives of the project are to design, develop and introduce a QA system in the field of education focused primarily on school self-evaluation, combined with external evaluation and quality indicators. In the framework of designing and implementing QA system, kindergartens and schools are being trained for self-evaluation. The evaluation of the training showed that the participants gained new knowledge and skills for implementing high quality self-evaluation. On average, they have a positive attitude towards self-evaluation. The correlation between (pre)school/teacher capacity (e.g. knowledge, skills and attitudes) and change at the (pre)school level is strong and evident as well as the

correlation between the effectiveness of self-evaluation team and change at (pre)school level.

3.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to data collection issues in the country?

Challenges

OECD, 2011 identified the following challenges to the implementation of school evaluation: Despite the fact that school evaluation is – in general – positively perceived by various stakeholders, there are several challenges that needs to be taken into account. For example, the focus of self- evaluation at schools should primarily address students' cognitive and non-cognitive achievements in order to improve the overall performance of schools. At the same time, self-evaluation at the teacher level should take into account two separate aims, i.e. [i] to improve student achievements; and – relatedly – [ii] to improve the educational practice in schools. Next, use of existing data on school level, national level and international level should be encouraged in order to improve the overall performance in educational institutions. Nevertheless, there remains a dilemma whether there should be a variety of different approaches to self-evaluation or a unitary model of self-evaluation should be developed and implemented.

Opportunities

In the Annual report on the implementation of the national assessment in the 2018/2019 school year there is a lot of information about the achievements of students with special needs in grades 6 and 9. One of the recommendation written in the Annual report is that, based on the findings in the report, a thorough analysis of the effectiveness of the additional professional assistance received by pupils with special needs in the Slovenian school system need to be carried out.

Source: <https://www.ric.si/mma/Letno%20poro%20%20ilo%20NPZ%202019/2019120913232271/>

Section 4: Curricula, learning materials and assessments

To what extent are curricula, learning materials and different assessment processes and procedures adapted to the principles of inclusive education?

4.1 Curriculum

a. Does the curriculum content include and represent all learners?

Yes

According to the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act the children are placed at regular groups with additional professional assistance and adapted curriculum within mainstream school.

With an official decision and individualised educational plan the adapted implementation of education programme is specified:

- Adapted pedagogical approach
- Adapted materials and learning aids
- Adapted instruction time
- Adapted assessment

Please also see 4.1e

b. Does the process of curriculum development involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?

Yes

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education, there are three national agencies supporting its work: the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia [Zavod RS za šolstvo, www.zrss.si], the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training [Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje in usposabljanje, www.cpi.si], and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education [Andragoški center Slovenije, www.acs.si].

They draw up national curricula for basic, upper secondary and short higher vocational education which are discussed and adopted by the National Councils of Experts and the Minister. They assist in the evaluation and monitoring of schools and contribute to the preparation of state-wide examinations. They promote and encourage the further development of schools, offer expert advice to teachers and initiate education-related projects. External assessment of students, students, apprentices, and adult participants in education is managed by way of organisation and expertise by the National Examinations Centre (www.ric.si).

The curriculum is prepared by the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Education in cooperation with National Education Institute Slovenia which is the main national research, development and consultancy institution in the field of pre-school, primary and general secondary education.

Subject development groups (teachers, independent experts) within National Education Institute Slovenia are also part of curriculum development process

(<https://skupnost.sio.si/course/index.php?categoryid=863>).

c. Is there guidance/procedures for schools to ensure that the curriculum content takes account of all learners (e.g. using flexibility to address differences due to gender, culture, religions, the ethnicities/nations living in the country, their history and culture, differences related to disability and socio-economic background, LGBT community).

Yes

Educational work with special groups and individuals provides teachers with a variety of guidance and instructions.

Example:

Instructions for personalized implementation of the elementary school program with additional professional support for children with specific learning disabilities

(https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/Izobrazevanje-otrok-s-posebnimi-potrebami/OS/Navodila_9-letna_OS.pdf)

Supplement of Instructions for personalized implementation of the elementary school program with additional professional support. Instructions for working with Students with autistic spectrum disorders

(<https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/Izobrazevanje-otrok-s-posebnimi-potrebami/OS/Dopolnitev-navodil-Navodila-za-delo-z-ucenci-z-avtisticnimi-motnjami-.pdf>)

Instructions for Identification and Work with Gifted Students

(https://www.zrss.si/pdf/strokovna_izhodisca_nadarjeni.pdf)

Professional starting points for updating the Concept of discovering gifted children, pupils and students and educational work with them

(https://www.zrss.si/pdf/strokovna_izhodisca_nadarjeni.pdf)

Guidelines for the Integrated Inclusion of Immigrants (Children, Pupils and Students) from Other Linguistic and Cultural Environments in the Slovenian Educational System

(http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2019/programi/media/pdf/smernice/cistopis_Smernice_vkljucevanje_otrok_priseljencev.pdf)

Guideline programme for work of Counselling service within the Basic Schools

<https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/Osnovna-sola/Ucni-nacrti/Drugi-konceptualni-dokumenti/Programske-smernice-za-svetovalno-sluzbo-v-osnovni-soli.pdf>

Learning difficulties in mainstream primary school: The Concept of Work

<https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/Osnovna-sola/Ucni-nacrti/Drugi-konceptualni-dokumenti/Koncept-dela-Ucne-tezave.pdf>

The concept of educational work for pupils and students attending hospital treatment

<http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2018/programi/media/pdf/koncept-bolnisnicni-oddelki.pdf>

d. If individual education plans (IEPs) are used, please describe the procedure for developing (who is involved and how), what they focus on (specific curriculum areas; cross curricular competences; support strategies etc.) and how IEPs are implemented, used across the school?

Since 2000, according to the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act, learners have a right to education in mainstream schools. Additionally, an official decision gives them the right to their own, personalised IEP and, depending on their needs, Additional Professional Support (APS).

The Commission for the placement of children/learners with special needs in first and second level is appointed depending on the type of special needs. It consists of three members: a special educator in the appropriate field (depending on the child's/learner's specific needs), a psychologist, and a specialist paediatrician, specialist child psychiatrist or school medicine specialist. However, as a rule, the team includes those who deal with the child/learner from the perspective of their special needs.

The SEN Guidance Decision is a legal document stating that the child/learner may benefit from special education, indicating the most suitable programme and institution, the type and extent of special educational support, the provision of additional human or material resources and, if needed, a reduced class size.

The SEN Guidance Decision should be reviewed according to the Commission's opinion to give each child/learner a chance to be re-assessed.

In terms of their other individual skills and abilities, children may be guided and placed into various education and training programmes. Educators in both pre-primary and primary schools provide the necessary adjustments in their endeavours to attain the required standards of knowledge. Instructions for working in a specific programme of education and training provide the necessary support to the educators in implementing the curriculum.

Every child/learner who gets an SEN Guidance Decision is eligible for an individual education plan.

The main point of a learner's IEP should be to provide an inclusive educational environment. The goals and

strategies should not revolve around the learner's progress, but around modifications to the learning environment (physical, didactical, methodical and social) that should meet the learner's needs and appropriately support their progress.

According to the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act the headmaster of the educational institution for each individual educational plan appoints an expert group in order to prepare and monitor the implementation of the individualized program, consisting of experts who will participate in the implementation of the educational program for each pupil (all teachers who will teach the pupil for whom the individualised educational plan is prepared) .

This includes a plan for the time spent with specialist staff and all IEPs are usually reviewed 2 times per year. The IEP may include: hours of support, staff responsibilities, parents input, school input, co-ordination, sight assessment (with a pedagogical emphasis) preferred font, size of print etc., individual work and additional needs e.g. mobility training, ICT.

The objectives and outlines of programmes for the education and training of children with SEN are incorporated into the individual education programme. Parents and the pupil are required to take part in the process of writing the individualised programme. Evaluation of the programme is provided at least once a year or in circumstances of major changes within the child's development, especially changes that affect the implementation of the education and training programme.

In the grade 6 and 9, children who are part of the individualised education programme with extra professional support take the national examination on general knowledge. The examination material is adapted to the individual child's type and level of deficiency, disability or disorder. Primarily, the purpose of the general knowledge examination is to obtain information. The other purpose of the examination is to supply children and their parents with information about the outcomes, strengths or weaknesses of these children. The information is also important for teachers and school directors as they can then analyse the outcomes and the reasons behind them and then apply the results to improve didactic equipment and ways of teaching and evaluation. In this way, they are able to adapt the instruction and the school. There are also examinations at national level. The results of the 'national knowledge examinations' provide information about the level of attainment of curriculum standards and thereby enable the evaluation of outcomes at the national level.

e. Are there different curricula or programmes for specific groups of learners at risk of exclusion (e.g. ethnic minorities or minority language groups)

Yes

Learners with SEN



According to learners' capabilities and needs and the best opportunities to provide optimal forms of support and assistance, the Commission for Guidance selects the optimal educational programme for the child. The programmes are spread over three levels, ranging from full inclusion in mainstream education to inclusion in programmes that are implemented in specialised schools and classes.

Most learners with SEN (nearly 98%) attend mainstream kindergartens and schools. The provision of education is adapted to their needs and they are entitled to additional support and assistance (APS) that is provided by teaching staff with specialised skills and special pedagogues (special and social pedagogues, inclusive pedagogues, speech therapists, psychologists, and pedagogues) for a maximum of five hours per week. The approaches and goals that the APS should achieve to enhance inclusive education are set out in the individualised education programmes. These are prepared by a multidisciplinary school team, consisting of teachers, special educators, other school staff involved in the learners' inclusion, the parents and the learners themselves. They specify the work practices, methods of professional or physical assistance, transfers between programmes and other adjustments necessary to organise, test and assess knowledge, progress through the programme and organise teaching time.

The Placement of Children with Special Needs Act governs the placement of learners with SEN within the education system and lays down the manner and form of education provision. There are four forms of education for learners with SEN which differ in intensity and the specialism of help and support:

1. Educational programmes with adjusted implementation and additional professional support (APS), carried out within mainstream education. According to the Placement Act, all groups of learners can be placed in these programmes except learners with intellectual disabilities, as the programmes' prescribed content and minimal knowledge standards cannot be adjusted.

It is possible to adjust the class organisation, testing (grading) and assessing methods, progression and timetables for learners with SEN. All the most common and important adjustments for each group of learners with SEN are described in the guidelines for teachers. According to current legislation, learners are entitled to a maximum of five hours of APS per week. This can be performed either in or outside the classroom, individually or in small groups. There are three purposes of APS:

- learning assistance provided by teachers, which allows additional explanation or serves to bridge any gaps after a learner's long-term absence due to illness;
- support for overcoming specific barriers and disabilities, which is provided by special pedagogues;
- a counselling service, which focuses on creating an inclusive environment and can be carried out either by teachers, school counsellors or by special pedagogues in various fields and is intended for both students and their parents and teachers who teach this student.

The counselling service is a special form of APS which is assigned to all learners that receive any of the

forms of APS. The mandatory assigned APS hours were introduced with the New Placement Act (ZUOPP-1), which was accepted in 2011 and put into force in 2013. There is no additional charge as with other APS hours.

There is an increasing trend of including (the increase is due to a better recognition of the student's special needs, all of these students was already enrolled in primary school just they haven't been recognized as students with special needs) learners with SEN in mainstream basic schools – from 3.33% in 2005/06 to 6.97% in 2019/20 (https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/lzobrazevanje-otrok-s-posebnimi-potrebami/Statistike-in-analize/Tabela_ucenci_s_posebnimi_potrebami.pdf). These learners were placed in the basic school programme with adjusted implementation and APS. The table shows that the total population of learners with SEN increases through the years, mostly due to an increasing number of official decisions. The share of learners with SEN included in specialised forms of education remains stable, at 1-2% of the total population of learners in basic school

(https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MIZS/Dokumenti/lzobrazevanje-otrok-s-posebnimi-potrebami/Statistike-in-analize/OSPP_statistika.pdf).

2. Adapted educational programmes carried out in special schools. Learners are placed in these programmes when the framework of mainstream schools cannot be sufficiently adjusted for the complexity of their disabilities. The adapted educational programmes provide additional subjects and activities such as orientation and mobility, communication and social skills, ICT. This empowers learners' autonomy and maximises their opportunities for whole life learning and independent participation in society. The programme is prepared in two levels:

- Adapted educational programmes with equal educational standard: learners who are blind or partially-sighted, deaf or hard of hearing and learners with speech and language disabilities, motor disabilities and autistic disorders may be placed into this programme. The programme runs at both the basic and upper-secondary levels. Specialised profiles of special pedagogues and teachers with supplementary special education qualification teach in this programme.

Within basic school education there are six special schools with 302 learners with SEN altogether. These are:

- three schools for hearing and speech disabilities with 223 learners with speech and language disabilities and 25 learners with hearing impairments;
- one school within the centre for the education and rehabilitation of learners with motor impairments or chronic illnesses which has 36 learners;
- one school within the centre for blind and visually impaired which has eight learners;

- one newly opened programme for learners with autism with 10 learners in its first class (Ministry of Education, 2016).

- Adapted educational programmes with lower educational standard for children with intellectual disabilities, which may be accompanied by other disabilities. Tuition is at the basic education level and is provided by special pedagogues. After the ninth grade of basic school, leavers from this programme can continue their educational path in the framework of lower-secondary vocational education, although this has uniform knowledge standards.

There were 28 special schools with lower educational standard in 2015/16, with 1,644 learners.

3. Special educational programmes are intended for learners with moderate, severe and profound intellectual disabilities, aged 6 to 18 years. The programmes can be extended up to the age of 26. The instruction is carried out in special schools and institutions, as well as in social care institutions. The programmes are designed to:

- stimulate the development of learners' perception, their physical, emotional and intellectual abilities, and their communicative and social skills;
- train learners to become conscious of health issues and live independently;
- enable learners to attain basic knowledge and skills and allow them the most active and social inclusion possible in their environment.

The programme has no prescribed levels of acquired knowledge and is carried out by special pedagogues. The final goals are set individually for each learner.

In 2015/16, 1,318 learners were included in special educational programmes.

4. Treatment programmes are intended for minors with emotional and behavioural disorders who are at risk of being or have already been expelled from mainstream educational programmes due to their condition. Treatment programmes aim to be socially inclusive, preventive, compensational and corrective. They are mostly carried out by social pedagogues, in collaboration with class teachers. If learners' development is endangered and they need more intensive support, they can be placed in residential treatment institutions. Many of these learners also have mental health issues (psychiatric disorders, self-harm, addictive behaviour, etc.). Social work centres determine the placement. Learners may attend schools within the institutions or mainstream schools. In Slovenia, there are 10 such institutions, with 690 learners in basic and secondary education in 2015/16. There is no separate data about the number of learners in basic education.

Overall, the number of learners who are enrolled and educated in mainstream classes with their non-disabled peers for at least 80% of the time in the school year 2015-2016 is 10,091 (5.93%). The number of learners in adapted educational programmes in special schools with equal educational standard is 302

(0.18%). The number of learners in adapted educational programmes in special schools with lower educational standard is 1,644, which is 0.96% of the whole population (172,013). The number of learners in special educational programmes is 1,318. This group is not included in statistical data concerning learners enrolled in basic school education.

Learners from ethnic minority communities

The models of education introduced to the ethnically mixed areas of Prekmurje and of Slovenian Istria are designed to act as a basis for the implementation of the equal position of the Hungarian and Italian national community, of their language and their culture. However, mostly due to historical reasons the two education models differ between themselves as concerns the language organization of teaching. In Slovenian Istria, teaching in schools is practiced in one language, that is, in the Slovenian language in a school with the Slovenian teaching language, and in the Italian language in a school with the Italian teaching language. At the same time, the second language learning, the language of the environment, is compulsory for all the students. On the ethnically mixed area of Prekmurje, however, schools are bilingual, which means that teaching is carried out in two languages, in Slovenian and in Hungarian. It is characteristic of this model that both, students of the Slovenian and of the Hungarian nationality, attend the bilingual classes. According to numerous analyses both models meet the needs and both of them guarantee a high level of protection and development of minorities on ethnically mixed areas.

In years 2014/2015 two additional projects primarily aiming at fostering the training of teachers in bilingual areas (Italian, Hungarian), are being financed from the funds of the MESS and from the European Social Fund (ESF). The scope of the project is to provide educators and teachers as well as the managerial staff of minority educational institutions of Prekmurje and of Coastal region with the possibility of language training in minority languages and the updating of the minority education system. The basic objective of the project is rising language competences of the teaching staff in minority languages, and consequently raising the competitiveness of the children attending minority educational institutions. An indirect objective of the project is improving the quality and efficiency of educational systems, mainly improving the teaching of the Hungarian and Italian languages.

Learners from the Roma community

Roma represent a particularly vulnerable group. In February 2011, the National Expert Council for General Education adopted a supplement to the Roma education strategy from the year 2004 in which additional measures for an increase in their educational level and their successful integration into the system of education are laid down.

The proposed measures are directed in ensuring:

- early participation in the educational system (ensuring spacious capacities in the Roma settlements, development and offer of aid programmes, extracurricular activities and adult programmes);
- a Roma assistant (acquisition of a National Vocational Qualification, education of assistants, a systematic regulation of employment);
- the adaptation of programmes in terms of content (recommendation for introducing the Roma culture into textbooks, as well as staff training);
- continuous professional development for the staff;
- special forms of organisation and material conditions;
- individualization and differentiation with no segregation (didactic strategies, evaluation, after school study assistance);
- various forms of study assistance;
- the establishment of trust in the school, as well as eliminating prejudice;
- the education of adult Roma for the elevation of the educational level as well as workforce development (counselling centres, education of Roma girls and women);
- establishment of social incubators in Roma settlements for all Roma, to prevent prejudices and to include all Roma in education;
- to improve and give opportunity for extra-curricular activities for Roma children.

In accordance with the Roma Education Strategy:

- different manuals and books have been published in Roma language dialects;
- Roma Culture as an optional subject has been offered;
- annual programmes addressing intercultural co-existence are prepared and implemented;
- training seminars for teachers are carried out every year;
- school projects and other activities fostering intercultural dialogue have been carried out;
- networks of teachers who teach Roma have been established for counselling and sharing good practices;
- ensure equal opportunities in access to quality education for Roma children at all levels;
- the Ministry allocates additional funds and has set favourable norms for classes with Roma;
- the non-formal education for Roma has been stressed in different environments: adult education centres or social incubators within Roma settlements;

- Roma children are included in extra-curricular activities free of charge.

In addition, these measures are part of the National Programme of Measures for the Roma 2010-2015 (https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/SLOVENIA_National%20Programme%20of%20Measures%20for%20Roma%202010-2015.pdf). Implementation is being financed by national resources and the ESF, for example:

- increased quality of education for Roma children. The Ministry allocates additional funds
- and has set favourable norms for classes with Roma. Moreover, it has financed development and research studies related to the issue of successful integration of Roma pupils and to the standardisation of the Roma language as a basis for teaching Roma;
- early inclusion of children in the educational process – the government finances
- preschool programmes;
- the development of language skills (the Roma and Slovenian languages) and
- socialisation within educational institutions.

Learners with a migrant background

In October 2012, the National Council of Experts for General Education presented renewed Guidelines for the inclusion of preschool and school migrant children (first adopted in 2009)

(http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2019/programi/media/pdf/smernice/cistopis_Smernice_vkljucevanje_otrok_priseljencev.pdf) . The Guidelines defined, in particular, the principles, instructions and ideas for efficient overall integration of children and their immigrant parents in the Slovenian system of education. The Guidelines embraced instructions, ideas, and recommendations for kindergartens, basic schools and upper secondary schools, and residential homes on how to create suitable conditions for successful learning of all participants irrespective of eventual differences in their psychophysical abilities, language, and socio-economic family status:

- additional expert help in learning Slovenian in the first year of education in the Republic of Slovenia for migrant pupils has been provided since 2006; and in the second year of education since 2010/2011;
- for pupils who are foreign citizens or stateless persons and reside in the RS, the methods and deadlines for their knowledge assessment, the number of assessment marks etc. can be adapted in accordance with their parents. The knowledge of foreign pupils can be assessed according to their progress in achieving the goals and standards of knowledge defined in the syllabi. If a pupil moves to another area and enters a school which implements the basic-school program according to the adapted curriculum for basic schools

in ethnically mixed areas, his or her knowledge of Italian or Hungarian as a second language can be assessed according to his or her progress in achieving goals or standards of knowledge defined by the syllabi. Adjustments for knowledge assessment are taken into account up to two school years. At the end of the school year in which they first entered basic school in the Republic of Slovenia, migrant pupils from other countries can be unassessed in individual subjects and progress to the next year. At the proposal of the class teacher, the promotion is decided upon by the teachers' faculty;

– migrant pupils from other countries whose mother tongue is not Slovenian and enter Slovenian basic school in Year 6 or Year 9 for the first time, take the national examination of knowledge on a voluntary basis in that school year.

4.2 Learning materials

a. Is there autonomy for schools and teachers to select learning material/textbooks etc?

Yes

The National Curriculum Document, adopted by the National Council of Experts for General Education (<https://www.gov.si/teme/programi-in-ucni-nacrti-v-osnovni-soli/>), comprises general content of compulsory subjects and general objectives which all students should achieve. Within this framework, schools and teachers specify the actual content of subjects; they choose their own teaching methods and have the freedom to select textbooks and exercise books of their choice (although textbooks must be selected from a list of approved materials adopted by the Council of Experts). Elementary school activities include the compulsory curriculum and extra curricular activities. Attendance of the latter is optional. The compulsory curriculum comprises compulsory subjects and compulsory subject options along with discussion periods, during which students discuss different issues that concern their life and work with their class teacher.

Compulsory school subjects in basic education are: mother tongue (Slovenian; Hungarian, and Italian in ethnically mixed areas), one foreign language studied from the age of 9 to 14, mathematics, geography, history, civic and patriotic education and ethics, environmental studies, physics, chemistry, biology, social studies, music, visual arts, technologies (ICT included), home economics and sports. In the last cycle, schools must offer optional compulsory subjects in the field of social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and technology, and foreign languages. From the school year 2008/09 the second compulsory foreign language is gradually being phased in (in grades 7 to 9); it is expected that in 2011/12 all students shall be obliged to learn two foreign languages. In addition to compulsory subjects, students of the last cycle must choose 2 hours of optional subjects. If parents agree, students can take 3 hours of optional studies. Extra activities consist of before-school and after-school classes and other forms of students' care,

supplementary lessons (for underachievers), additional lessons (for talented students), extra-curricular activities, and out-of-school classes.

b. Are there policies to ensure the availability of textbooks/materials that promote the inclusion of learners from different vulnerable groups? (e.g. resources relevant to different ethnic groups etc.)

Yes

Please see section 4.1e above.

c. Is there guidance/procedures to help schools to make learning materials accessible for all learners? (e.g. Braille/large print for learners with visual impairment, materials in other languages).

Yes

National guidelines to improve built environment, information and communications accessibility for people with disabilities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 113/2005. Ljubljana).

Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act

(www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4342)

d. Is ICT used to improve access to materials for vulnerable groups?

Yes

Policy on ICT for inclusion is included in the overall policy on ICT in education.

Strategic plans are included in national policy on ICT in education. Schools are autonomous, but comply with national and international guidelines.

Slovenia identified a further use of new technologies which require the establishment of the appropriate ICT infrastructure network in education (such as wi-fi networks and clients for pupils, students) as some of the key challenges for the future of education. To this end, the Operational programme for the programme period 2014–2020 (<http://www.eu-skladi.si/kohezija-do-2013/ostalo/op-final-en>) provides more than 20 measures and their use of ICT is crucial for an effective implementation, their total value exceeding €30 million. In addition to pupils and secondary students who struggle to progress, special attention will be given to talented pupils as well.

Please also see section 6.4e

e. Are there specific financial and practical resources available for textbooks/materials/ICT for different vulnerable groups?

No

The accommodations that are made for textbooks (braille) are mainly financed by projects and with special invitations to tender.

4.3 Assessment

a. Is there a national/local assessment framework that includes all learners?

Yes

The Slovene school system contains both external and internal forms of assessment. They are set in the context of the Organization and Financing of Education Act and other sectoral acts (see section 1.1.3, Chapter 1). The following forms of evaluation can be identified, i.e.

- external evaluation as the evaluation process that is led and carried out by external institutions and experts;
- internal evaluation as the evaluation process that is led and carried out by the school staff in cooperation with external stakeholders (local authorities, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sport etc.); and
- self-evaluation as a form of internal evaluation that is carried out by the user itself in order to obtain the information required.

Teachers assess students throughout the period of instruction of the subject. In grades 1 and 2, teachers assess students' progress with descriptive marks. From grade 3 onwards, teachers assess the achievement of knowledge standards in accordance with the prescribed curriculum with numerical marks 1 to 5, whereby 1 is a negative mark and all others are positive marks.

At the end of grades 6 and 9, students take national assessment in language of instruction and mathematics and foreign language in grade 6 or third subject chosen by the minister in grade 9.

Assessment is mandatory for students. Results do not have any bearing on final marks; they are only additional information about the level of students' knowledge.

Schools organise remedial classes for students in need of learning assistance and supplementary classes for students who exceed the prescribed knowledge standards. Schools may adapt assessment to students who at the same attend music schools, students who are promising athletes, SEN children and immigrant students.

At the end of the 2018/2019 school year, 17,455 students completed successfully the regular education programmes of basic school. 1.5 % of students leave basic school after fulfilling their legal obligation to attend school (9 years) without having acquired their final certificate. (Source MIZŠ)

b. Is there guidance for teachers on how to use curriculum-based assessment to identify all learning needs in the classroom?

No information available

c. Is there guidance/procedures on providing access to tests/examinations when learners need additional support/reasonable adjustments? (e.g. adapted materials, extra time etc.)

Yes

In the national Instructions for special educational programmes with additional professional assistance in a nine-year elementary school there are guidance how to provide access to tests/examinations.

There are guidance for:

pupils with specific learning disabilities in individual fields of education, blind and partially sighted children or children with functional visual disturbance, deaf children and children hard of hearing, children with speech and language impairment, physical impairment, children with chronic diseases , and children with emotional and behavioral disorders.

d. Are there specific arrangements and/or formal procedures to support the assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning? (e.g. those with disabilities)

Yes

According to the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act, the SEN Guidance Commission coordinates professional and administrative activities that qualify a child/learner to get a placement in an appropriate educational setting. The Commission prepares an expert opinion based on direct procedures with the child/learner, including an interview with the child's/learner's legal representative, and on the basis of pedagogical, special-pedagogical, social, psychological, medical and other documentation acquired by the relevant institutions in accordance with the legislation governing personal data protection. The SEN Guidance Commission reports the professional statement to the National Educational Institute, which issues an SEN Guidance Decision.

The Commission for Guidance of Children with SEN, founded by NEIS, are responsible for the placement. They are working according to the Regulations for the organisation and work of the commissions for guidance of children with SEN (Official Gazette No. 88/13), and Criteria for the assessment of the type and degree of disadvantage, impairments and disabilities of learners with SEN (NEIS, 2015a). The Commission is appointed depending on the type of disability and consists of at least three members: a special pedagogue in the appropriate field, a psychologist, and a specialist paediatrician. Based on existing and received documentation, interviews and, if needed, an examination, each member of the Commission is responsible for writing an expert opinion on the learner's SEN. A written report by the learner's teacher

and the institution where the learner is enrolled is a mandatory and important piece of professional documentation. It proves the learner has been provided with the guaranteed continuum of professional assistance that is available in mainstream educational settings. The Commission can be extended with additional specialists (such as a teacher, psychiatrist, optometrist, audiologist, professional staff of Centres for Social Work, etc.) if more specific information is needed.

The Commission delivers an Expert Opinion, which encompasses basic information about the learner, synthesis of opinions of all members, the type and degree of disability, they also establish the placement proposal into the most appropriate programme and school or institution. If necessary, the commission specifies the extent, type and professionals for additional professional support (APS), the adjustments of rooms and equipment, assistants for physically impaired learners, aids and other learner's rights according to the law, etc. Based on the Expert Opinion, NEIS issues the official decision on the placement of the learner with SEN into the most appropriate educational programme, considering a continuum of provided adjustments, help, and APS. Prior to issuing a decision, the NEIS consults parents about the expert opinion and ensures that the school or institution fulfils the admission conditions. The parents may appeal against the decision.

The dynamics of work of the Commission for Guidance and the number of learners with SEN that got their Official Placement decisions issued by the NEIS from 2005 to 2014 are presented in Table 3. Learners are grouped by the type of disability, unrelated to the educational programme of placement.

The largest number of placement decisions was issued to learners with deficits in individual learning areas (36.5%). This group is followed by learners with multiple disabilities (28.7%), learners with long-term illness (10.4%), learners with intellectual disabilities (8.5%), learners with speech and language impairments (7.3%), and learners with limited intellectual capacity (2.5%). This last group has decreased remarkably, as it was excluded as an autonomous group within the Placement Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2000). The groups of learners with physical disabilities, deaf learners and learners with hearing impairments have the same average share (2.3%). Blind and partially-sighted learners and learners with emotional and behaviour disabilities are the smallest groups of learners with SEN, with an average share of less than 1%. Official decisions for children with autism are not yet evident, since they were only recognised as an autonomous group in the Placement Act of 2013. Before this, their official decision was usually issued to them as learners with long-term illness or speech and language impairments.

e. Is ICT used in the assessment of vulnerable groups?

Yes – partially

Assessment through computer programmes is used via a program called SNAP - Special Needs Assessment Profile – SNAP-Together (<https://www.center-pds.si/Katalogtestov/Vpra%C5%A1alnikizau%C4%8Ditelje/Profiloceneposebnihpotreb-SNAP-Zdru%C5%BEen.aspx>)

It is used as a psychometric test that helps to systematically collect information about a child's specific learning, social, emotional, and behavioural problems. It is also used in the assessment process for the Expert Opinion which is the basis for the legal decision.

This program is not obligatory.

4.4 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, studies, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to issues around curricula, learning materials and assessment processes.

Project: Quality of Slovenian textbooks (KaUč) (1.2.2017-30.6.2022), main partner in the project is University of Ljubljana, faculty of pedagogy. In Slovenia, textbooks are one of the less researched areas of the school field. A review of the situation shows that there are many deficits in the field of textbook comprehension in Slovenia. The central objective of the project is the development of textbook quality indicators for practical applicability in the process of textbook validation and evaluation.

(<http://kauc.splet.arnes.si/o-projektu/osebna-izkaznica/>) Project: Assessment of Transversal Skills 2020 (ATS2020) (2015 do 2018) is an innovative policy experimentation project co-funded by the European Commission. ATS2020 provides a comprehensive learning model for the enhancement of student indispensable transversal skills within curricula and offers new approaches and innovative tools to teacher for the development and assessment of these skills. (<http://www.ats2020.eu/>)

Please note, Slovenia takes part in international evaluation studies such as TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS, ICILS, TALIS, ESLC.

4.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to curricula, learning materials and assessment processes in the country?

Challenges

The EU 2019 Semester report argues young EU people lack digital skills. The International Computer and Information Literacy results from 2013 show that only 16 % of pupils in primary school acquire the necessary digital skills to use information and communications technology for collecting and processing

data and solving problems independently (Ministry of Education, 2018). In addition, only around 5.5 % of high school students met all the digital skills targets (National Examination Centre RIC, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2018).

OECD Education Policy Outlook for Slovenia, 2016:

There is a challenge around enhancing evaluation and assessment tools aligned with educational goals in order to improve student outcomes. Student assessments are mainly used to make decisions about student retention or promotion and to monitor schools' progress from year to year. Teachers conduct student assessments and are autonomous in selection of assessment methods. At the end of each school year, students receive a report stating their grades in individual subjects. Students are awarded descriptive grades in the first two years of basic school. Later on, they receive numerical grades on a five-level scale. A challenge centres on giving schools more flexibility and support to organise pedagogical work and implement curricula.

OECD Resources Report, 2017:

Another challenge for the Slovenian education system is achieving a comprehensive framework for evaluation and assessment to improve student outcomes.

FPIES Country Report, 2016:

- The current system of guidance for children with SEN, provided by NEIS, is very regulated and procedural. It is based on a medical approach, defining a learner's disabilities and translating them into the child's educational needs through IEP. The discussions showed that there are some advantages to this system, but it is too rigid and does not support equity. Schools reported that some learners would need IEP and APS (only available with an official decision) and some learners have the APS but may not need it all the time. The lack of flexibility in support allocation may hinder stakeholders to act according to learners' needs. The system may be improved by shifting from an input-based model, based on a medically legitimated official decision, to a throughput model, connected to educational needs and schools' abilities to meet diverse educational profiles.

Opportunities

Rather than focusing primarily on compensating the need for support based on an official decision, the system should support and promote a school development approach, building on inclusive design for learning. Enabling special schools and counselling centres to advise and support stakeholders of the schools between RTI steps 1 to 3 without a need for an official decision could assist this shift.

Section 5: Teachers and support personnel

How are staff in schools prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds, in terms of their initial training, continuing professional development and their attitudes to inclusion?

5.1 Please list type of staff, their numbers and required level of education for the position in different type of educational institutions

Background

Teachers in the public sector of the Slovene school system are civil servants. They are appointed to civil service after an open recruitment. Contractual status is possible under certain circumstances. The employment of teachers is the head teachers' responsibility with regard to the systemisation of posts. The school puts a public advertisement for a vacant post and requirements that candidates have to meet: education level, subject area and other special requirements. Selection criteria for applicants who meet the legal requirements are not published. Head teacher selects a teacher on the basis of applications. Individual aspects of the terms and conditions of employment and issues concerning the careers of professionals are regulated at the national level by the general law on employment relations, by the educational legislation and through administrative regulations issued by the Minister of Education. Conditions of service are stipulated in greater detail through negotiations between the Ministry of Education and Sport and the representative trade unions organised within the education and training sector in Slovenia.

Recruitment is the responsibility of schools and kindergartens in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Sport. Schools and kindergartens are responsible for publicising positions open for recruitment which have approval from the Ministry. The process of matching those teachers seeking employment with available teaching posts takes place in schools and pre-school institutions. Employment of teachers is head teachers' responsibility with regard to the systemisation of posts. Selection criteria for applicants who meet the legal requirements are not published. Head teacher selects a teacher on the basis of applications.

A head teacher has a permanent employment as a teacher yet he/she performs the function of a head teacher for 5 years. He/she is appointed and dismissed from head teachership by the School Council which is in charge to conduct both procedures. The head teachers of educational institutions are pedagogical leaders and managers of their institutions. They are responsible for the entire staff management policy of the institution, including determination of the number of teaching posts, the recruitment of new staff, in-service training, staff promotions or salary increases and disciplinary matters. They also monitor the work of staff, advise them, and organise mentorship for trainee teachers. Finally, they are obliged to teach; their teaching or counselling workload depends on the size of the institution.

All education staff shall hold a relevant pedagogical-andragogical educational qualification, while education staff in education of SEN children shall hold special pedagogical educational qualification.

General data on the school system

In the 2018/2019 school year, 187 854 students attended 772 basic schools and branches, as well as 58 specialised schools, special units of mainstream basic schools and institutions for SEN children. In total, there were over 19 000 teachers employed in basic education.

Employees total 20,900

Teachers - 18, 358 (Full time equivalent positions 17,802)

Leadership - 918

Counsellors - 786

Other 838

(Source: The-Education-System-in-the-Republic-of-Slovenia-2018-19)

Type of staff	Number	Required education	Comment
Mainstream schools			
Teachers		<p>Preschool teachers, second teachers in the first grade and teachers of professional subjects in vocational and technical education hold an educational qualification of no less than bachelor's degree programme.</p> <p>Relevant programmes at bachelor's level, usually take 3 years (180 ECTS), while programmes for teachers of professional and theoretical subjects usually take 3 or 4 years (180 or 240 ECTS).</p> <p>There are two pathways to a teaching qualification: under a concurrent model (in parallel with the subject of instruction) or under a consecutive model.</p>	

Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)		Other teachers, school librarians and counsellors have to have a master's degree. Relevant programmes take a total 5 years or 300 ECTS (integrated master's programmes, 3+2, or 4+1).	
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)			
Head teachers		Head teachers are high ranking teaching professional obligatory to have at least second cycle degree. Data of the school year 2016/2017 show that 75% of basic school head teachers held a higher education qualification (equivalent to the second cycle degree), and 13.5% the Master of Science degree, 1.5% the Doctorate of Science. In recent years, women head teacher outstripped male (63.7%). Slovenian legislation regulates that all head teachers are required to participate in the training programme leading to the Headship Licence.	
Special schools			
Teachers		Teachers of SEN children have a qualification in special needs education (equivalent to the second cycle degree) or teachers with educational qualification in the relevant fields and completed study	

		programme of professional training in special needs education.	
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)		Other teachers, school librarians and counsellors have to have a master's degree. Relevant programmes take a total 5 years or 300 ECTS (integrated master's programmes, 3+2, or 4+1).	
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)			
Others (please specify and add rows as required)			
Other institutions offering education if they exist (i.e. children's homes, young offenders institutions etc).			
Teachers		Teachers of SEN children have a qualification in special needs education (equivalent to the second cycle degree) or teachers with educational qualification in the relevant fields and completed study programme of professional training in special needs education.	
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)		Other teachers, school librarians and counsellors have to have a master's degree. Relevant programmes take a total 5 years or 300 ECTS (integrated master's programmes, 3+2, or 4+1).	
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)			

Others (please specify and add rows as required)			
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5.2 Please indicate if education/training on inclusion in education is available for the following groups of professionals.

Type of staff	Yes	No	No information	If yes please state if pre- or in-service, mandatory or optional, who provides education/training and summary of content
Head teachers/School directors	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Teachers	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Teacher Assistants	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Professional Staff	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Inspectors	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Teacher Trainers	X			Cross reference to 5.4
Others (please list add rows as required)				

5.3 Is education and training of teachers aligned with national policy goals on inclusive education?

No

In Slovenia we don't have national policy goals on inclusive education written in legislation.

Policy decisions on the inclusive education is made in the Directorate for Preschool Education and Primary Education (Sector for education Students with special needs) within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

5.4 With respect to the main initial teacher education programmes, describe how inclusion in education is addressed in it (i.e. requirement for number of academic credits under European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), subjects and topics covered, focus etc).

The first cycle study programmes of generalist teachers integrate theoretical, professional and subject syllabi. Subject components and didactics relate to the education programme of basic school. The study includes: pedagogical and psychological theories, philosophy and sociology of education, inclusive

education, subject-specific didactics, a foreign language, ICT, wide selection of elective subjects, as well as a compulsory practical training at basic schools (15 credits)

Induction into teaching is specified by the relevant rules on traineeship and professional examination for education staff issued by the Minister responsible for education. The induction may be organised as a traineeship. Trainees learn about all content needed for independent teaching as defined by the programme, as well as study for the professional examination. The traineeship lasts 6 to 10 months. In certain extraordinary circumstances, it may be reduced or extended. The mentor and the trainee together develop the relevant traineeship programme. (Eurydice, National Education Systems, Slovenia).

The education required to teach at all age levels of education and training is regulated by legislation instituted by the Minister of Education and Sports. The same is true for the population of children with special needs and the professionals involved in counselling work in pre-primary institutions and primary and secondary schools (psychologists, educators and social workers).

Teachers may obtain the required education and training at the three state universities. The Central Faculties of Education in Ljubljana, Maribor and Koper educate and train educators at the pre-primary level and subject teacher level. They also train professionals in the field of inclusive education and training of children with special educational needs, specifically for the following disabilities or disorders: sight, hearing, speech, language, learning and emotional and behavioural impediments. The essential objective of this programme is to train future teachers for quality implementation of programmes and inclusive education and rehabilitation, enabling them to work with people who have special needs in different work situations.

In addition to regular studies, the Central Faculties offers programmes of continuous education and training for working with a selected group of children with special needs and a study programme of continuous education for supporting children and young people with learning and psychosocial impediments. In this programme, pre-primary and primary school teachers upgrade their professional education with specialised education knowledge and findings that are mostly practice-oriented.

In the academic year 2011/2012, the principle that all teachers should obtain certain knowledge of children with special needs was incorporated, irrespective of the subject group of their study programme (Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education – subject study).

Pre-primary and primary school teachers may obtain additional knowledge on working with children with special needs in practice within programmes of continuous education and training, as they are advertised for each academic year and prepared within the National Education Institute. (Eurydice, National Education Systems, Slovenia).

The Institute of Education of the Republic of Slovenia has an important role in introducing novelties and innovations in the field of pupils with SEN. Its mission is to manage projects and introduce innovations which are transferred into practice following trials. One of its projects was the experimental introduction of units for learners with SEN suffering from autistic spectrum disorder (European Agency, Country information Slovenia, Systems of support and specialist provision, p.1).

CPD programmes qualify pre-school teachers and teachers for different posts, for teaching a new subject or a subject on a higher level. Providers of these programmes are higher education institutions that have developed and implemented the programmes in accordance with the rules on higher education. The law also prescribes the programme for head teachers – compulsory for all who wish to apply for the position of head teacher. It is implemented by the National school for leadership in education.

Continuous professional development is a right and a duty for all educational staff and attending programmes of CPD is a prerequisite for promotion to professional titles (Mentor, Advisor and Councillor). Every year, the Ministry responsible for education announces a public call for proposals and co-financing of continuous development programmes. The Ministry outlines the priority topics and fields. The Council of experts for general education defines priority themes on the recommendation by the Ministry and in co-operation with the development and counselling institutes. The programmes are then selected by the tender commission and approved by the Minister's decision. (Eurydice, National Education Systems, Slovenia).

Faculties of Education in Ljubljana

Name of Study Programme:	SPECIAL AND REHABILITATION PEDAGOGY
Type of Study Programme:	first cycle university study programme (UN)
Duration:	4 years
Number of Credit Points (ECTS):	240
Mode of study:	Full-time
Place of study:	Ljubljana
Professional title awarded :	Professor of Special and Rehabilitation Pedagogy (UN)

Subject Schedule of the Study Programme with the Foreseen Responsible Persons

1st Year, 1st Semester

Didactics - 4 ECTS, Research Methods in the Field of SRP - 5 ECTS, Developmental Psychology with Pedagogical Psychology - 4 ECTS, Foreign Language - 4 ECTS, An Introduction to SRP – Theoretical and Legal Bases - 5 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing People with Special Needs (SN) - 4 ECTS, Elective Subject D - 4 ECTS

1st Year, 2nd Semester

The Theory of Education - 4 ECTS, Developmental Psychology with Pedagogical Psychology - 6 ECTS, An Introduction to SRP – Groups of People with SN, Education - 5 ECTS, The Psychology of People with SN - 5 ECTS, The Fundamentals of Social Pedagogy - 4 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Music Education - 3 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Art Education - 3 ECTS

2nd Year, 3rd Semester

Adapted and Auxiliary ICT - 4 ECTS, Cooperation, Counselling and Team Work - 4 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Physical Education - 6 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing People with Severe Mental Development Disturbances I - 6 ECTS, The Movement Impaired and the Long-Term III: Characteristics and Assessment - 6 ECTS, Elective Subject C - 4 ECTS

2nd Year, 4th Semester

The Recognition and Assessment of Special Needs - 5 ECTS, Fundamental Strategies for Working with People with Speech-Language Disturbances and with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - 4 ECTS, Psychomotoric Development and Learning - 4 ECTS, Fundamental Strategies for Working with the Blind and Visually Impaired - 4 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing People with Severe Mental Development Disturbances II - 10 ECTS, Practice I - 3 ECTS

3rd Year, 5th Semester

Characteristics and Assessment of People with Severe Specific Learning Disabilities (SSLD) - 8 ECTS, People with Mental Development Disturbances: Characteristics and Assessment - 5 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Slovene - 6 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Mathematics - 5 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Movement Impaired and Long-Term III People - 6 ECTS

3rd Year, 6th Semester

The Philosophy of Education - 5 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Natural Sciences - 5 ECTS, Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Social Studies - 5 ECTS, Ensuring the Quality of Life of Movement Impaired and Long-Term III People - 3 ECTS, Adulthood, Aging and Forms of Assistance - 4 ECTS, Practice E II - 4 ECTS, Elective Subject C - 4 ECTS

4th Year, 7th Semester

The Individualised Programme - 7 ECTS, Strategies for Working with Children with SSLD - 7 ECTS, Strategies for Inclusion and Psychosocial Adaptation - 5 ECTS, Practice III - 3 ECTS, Elective Subject C - 4 ECTS, Elective Subject D - 4 ECTS

4th Year, 8th Semester

The Sociology of Education - 4 ECTS, Interactive and Environmentally Conditioned Learning Difficulties - 4 ECTS, Strategies for Working with Young People and Adults with SSLD - 5 ECTS, Practice IV - 5 ECTS, Elective Subject C - 4 ECTS, Elective Subject D - 4 ECTS, Graduation Project - 4 ECTS

Professional Elective Subjects (C) - each 4 ECTS

Teaching and Instructing Children with SN: Music Games, Pupils with Deficient Concentration and Hyperactivity, Expression with Movement/Assistance with Art, Computer Assisted Statistical Analysis of Data, Swimming Literacy of People with SN, Therapeutic Recreation for the Elderly, Social-Communication Skills and Difficult Behaviour, The Pedagogy of Maria Montessori, Creativity with Puppets

General Elective Subjects (D) - each 4 ECTS

Movement for Encouraging the Development of Communication, Adapted and Auxiliary ICT, Education and Gender, Movement Games for Children and Young People with SN

Faculties of Education Maribor

Name of Study Programme:	INCLUSION IN EDUCATION
Type of Study Programme:	Master's study programme, second cycle
Duration:	2 years
Number of Credit Points (ECTS):	120
Mode of study:	Full-time/Part-time
Place of study:	Maribor
Professional title awarded :	Magister/magistrica profesor/ profesorica inkluzivne pedagogike

Faculties of Education Koper

Name of Study Programme:	INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICS
Type of Study Programme:	Master's study programme, second cycle
Duration:	2 years
Number of Credit Points (ECTS):	120
Mode of study:	Full-time/Part-time
Place of study:	Koper

Professional title awarded :	Magister/magistrica profesor/ profesorica inkluzivne pedagogike
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CURRICULUM

In year 1 the student concludes 10 courses: 8 compulsory (48 CP) and 2 elective subjects (12 CP). The elective subjects can be selected from the offer of internally or externally elective subjects.

In year 2 the student concludes 2 compulsory subjects (12 CP), 1 elective subject (6 CP), research work (6 CP), practical training (6 CP) and gets ready for the defence of the master's thesis (30 CP).

The second cycle study programme Inclusive Pedagogy has been conceived as a two-year master's study. Students have to accumulate 120 CP (ECTS) in order to complete it successfully. In each year of their studies the students can accumulate 60 CP.

School teachers who provide Learning assistance which is one of the additional professional support for children with special needs in primary schools, need to finish an in-service training programme for teachers for additional professional assistance, otherwise they can't provide Learning assistance as an additional professional support for children with special needs.

5.5 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to initial teacher education and/or professional development issues.

TALIS 2018 (Teaching and Learning International Study)

During their initial education and training, 83% of teachers in Slovenia were instructed on subject content, pedagogy and classroom practice – a share that is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (79%). Only 52% of teachers report having participated in some kind of formal or informal induction when they joined their current school, compared to 42% of teachers across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS.

Taking part in some kind of in-service training is commonplace among teachers and principals in Slovenia, with 98% of teachers (OECD average 94%) and 100% of principals (OECD average 99%) attending at least one professional development activity in the year prior to the survey.

Attending courses and seminars is one of the most popular types of professional development for teachers across the OECD. In Slovenia, 93% of teachers participate in this kind of training, while 59% of teachers participate in training based on peer learning and coaching. It is interesting to note that teachers, across

the OECD, report that professional development based on collaboration and collaborative approaches to teaching is among the most impactful for them.

Teachers in Slovenia appear satisfied with the training they received, as 87% report that it had a positive impact on their teaching practice, a share that is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (82%). It is also true that teachers who report participating in such impactful training tend to display higher levels of self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

However, when it comes to teachers' views on areas of spending priority in the education sector, Slovenia is among the few countries where "offering high-quality professional development for teachers" is considered to be highly important by more teachers as compared to other priorities, such as "improving teacher salaries" or "reducing class sizes by recruiting more staff".

Furthermore, some areas of professional development are still lacking, according to teachers. Across the OECD, developing advanced ICT skills is one area in which teachers say that they need more training, along with teaching in multicultural/multilingual settings and teaching students with special needs. Among these three areas, teachers in Slovenia expressed a particularly high need for training in teaching students with special needs.

Teaching students with special needs

On average in Slovenia, 31% of teachers work in classes with at least 10% of students with special needs (i.e. those for whom a special learning need has been formally identified because they are mentally, physically, or emotionally disadvantaged), which is higher than the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (27%).

In Slovenia, 46% of teachers were trained to teach in mixed-ability settings as part of their formal teacher education or training, while 57% of teachers on average felt prepared to teach in such settings when they finished their studies.

Furthermore, although 54% of teachers on average participated in professional development activities including teaching students with special needs in the 12 months prior to the survey, training in teaching special needs students is the professional development topic with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a high need for it – 23% in Slovenia (compared to 22% across the OECD).

On average in Slovenia, 28% of school principals report that delivery of quality instruction in their school is hindered by a shortage of teachers with competence in teaching students with special needs (compared to 32% across the OECD). As opposed to "shortage of support personnel", which is the most frequently reported shortage by principals across the OECD, in Slovenia principals consider the "shortage of teachers with competence in teaching students with special needs" as the main barrier to quality instruction.

Although 54% of teachers participated on average in continuing education and training activities for the

teaching of students with special needs in the 12 months prior to the survey, education and training for the teaching of students with disabilities is the development area with the highest percentage of teachers reporting a high level of need. 23% in Slovenia (compared to 22% in the OECD).

Teaching in multicultural or multilingual settings

On average in Slovenia, 16% of teachers work in classes with at least 10% of students whose first language is different from the language of instruction, which is not significantly different from the average of OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS (18%). However, Slovenia's linguistic diversity at the school level decreased in the past ten years, with the proportion of teachers who work in schools with more than 10% of students whose first language is different from the language(s) of instruction dropping from 29% to 13% (OECD average 21% in 2018).

In Slovenia, 12% of teachers were trained to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting as part of their formal teacher education or training, while 27% of teachers on average felt prepared to teach in such settings when they finished their studies.

Furthermore, although in Slovenia 18% of teachers on average participated in professional development activities including teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting in the 12 months prior to the survey, 14% of teachers report a high need for professional development in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting (compared to 15% across the OECD).

However, on average in Slovenia, 58% of teachers feel they can cope with the challenges of a multicultural classroom "quite a bit" or "a lot" in teaching a culturally diverse class (compared to 67% across the OECD) (TALIS, 2018)

5.6 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to teachers and support personnel in the country?

Challenges

OECD Education Policy Outlook, Slovenia 2016 identifies a system challenge as improving teaching conditions and investing in the quality of teaching.

The EU 2019 semester report states that: Slovenia has a generally well performing education system, but it could be improved in certain areas and sustained for the future. Slovenian students in general education perform well in international comparisons. Socio-economic status is comparatively less important for education outcomes (European Commission 2018b). Its importance, however, grows with the level of education (Cankar et al., 2017) and there are visible disparities when looking at pupil underachievement

rates, especially when comparing the top and bottom socioeconomic quartiles (European Commission 2018d). Literacy among young people has improved significantly and is high by international standards, though performance of boys in reading literacy is still a concern. At 4.3 %, the proportion of early school leavers is the second lowest in the EU. The rate of over 4-year-olds participating in early childhood education and care is increasing slowly but continuously (European Commission, 2018e). It stood at 90.9 % in 2017, still 4.4 pps below the EU average. There is also a need to review general school curricula and improve the situation of teachers to attract a sufficient number of qualified students to choose pedagogical studies (OECD 2018). Slovenia's teachers are relatively old with 38 % of teachers aged over 50. There are recognised issues around diversity of school staff: the statistical data show that the vast majority of teachers is female: at the basic level, there are more than 97 % of women, at the lower-secondary level, there are 79 % of women, and at the secondary school level, there is 66.7 %.

With regard to the leadership of educational institutions, there is a vast majority of female headteachers at the pre- primary level (96.3 %); however, the percentage decreases with the level of education: at the basic school level, there is 73.3 % of female headteachers, and at the secondary school level, there is only 56.1 %.

TALIS 2018 (Teaching and Learning International Study) identifies that according to teachers, there is still a lack of further education and training in some areas. In the OECD, developing advanced skills in the use of ICT is an area that teachers say yes to they need more education and training. The same applies to teaching in multicultural / multilingual settings and teaching students with disabilities. Teachers are among the areas listed in Slovenia expressed a particular great need for training for the teaching of students with special needs.

Professional collaboration can become a solid foundation for innovative and effective practices. On average across the OECD, teachers who engage in professional collaboration, which involves a higher degree of interdependence among teachers, also tend to report more frequent use of effective teaching practices such as cognitive activation. However, professional collaboration is not a frequent practice across the OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS. In Slovenia, 26% of teachers report participating in collaborative professional learning at least once a month (OECD average 21%) and 20% engage in team teaching with the same frequency (OECD average 28%)

Section 6: Schools

How does the work of schools, school management and leadership impact on access, participation and provision of equitable opportunities for all learners?

6.1 Who is excluded from attending any form of school?

Please give reasons for this group being excluded from attending school and describe any form of alternative provision made for them?

Children/learners considered 'out of education' are those in the age group corresponding to compulsory education who are not enrolled in any form of formal education (EASIE data, Background Information Slovenia).

There is no data on the numbers of learners out of education.

Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (2000): pupils with SEN are also provided with the option of opting for basic school education provision at their place of residence (i.e. their home). Through the education a child must acquire the same education standard as required by the programme of the public school. The decision on education at the place of residence is made by the commission that examines the child and assesses that, due to deficiencies, barriers or disorders, a pupil cannot attend education at school

6.2 Are there issues around the over- and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings?

Yes

In 2019, there were 28 residence halls (residential schools) for permanent or temporary accommodation, 5 of which were social care institutions, available to SEN children. They cater to various groups of children and their specific needs: children with intellectual disabilities, children with physical disabilities, blind and visually impaired children, deaf and children with hearing impairments, and children with emotional and behavioural problem and children with autistic disorders.

6.3 Please give details on the main admissions criteria for schools.

a. Highlight any issues with the national policies.

The concept of an inclusive school system strives towards assuring equal rights and opportunities in education for all, regardless of gender, nationality, social and cultural origin, religion, political or other convictions, education, social status, disabilities or any other personal circumstances, as guaranteed by the

Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. It supports, promotes and develops learners' active participation, co-operation between home and school and the co-creation of learning and teaching by allowing learners to express their thoughts and ideas, their creativity, giftedness and strengths. The twelve key aims and principles are highlighted in Article 4 of the Placement Act (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2000; 2011b) and guide educational institutions towards assuring:

1. The best benefit for the learner;
2. Consistency and complexity of education;
3. Equal opportunities, while taking into account learners' diversity;
4. Parent or guardian involvement in the process of guidance and further education and all forms of assistance;
5. An individualised approach;
6. Inter-disciplinarity;
7. Maintaining the balance between the different areas of a learner's physical and mental development;
8. Guidance to the most suitable education programme as soon as possible;
9. Immediate and continuous support and professional assistance in educational programmes;
10. Vertical permeability and connectivity of programmes;
11. Organisation of education and training as close to the place of residence as possible;
12. Providing adequate conditions that allow optimal development of each learner.

By ensuring the achievement of the above objectives and principles, the renewed system of education began to become a more qualitative and inclusive learning environment for all learners. Inclusion is thus a reciprocal process that enriches and promotes personal development, as it requires the empathic vigilance of the individual and of the society. With a tendency towards social cohesion, mutual care, looking for common good and removing obstacles, it promotes diverse and multisensory learning, creativity and progress both in education and in society in general.

b. Where schools set their own admissions criteria, please outline any impact on inclusion.

Not applicable - schools do not set their own admission criteria

6.4 Please provide information on the different forms of support that are available to learners in schools.

Background

As specified by the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (in Slovenian) adopted in 2004,

authorities, educational institutions and other subjects were provided an opportunity to adopt special measures to ensure equality for all. Special emphasis was placed on individuals who found themselves in less favourable situation due to their personal circumstances.

All public kindergartens and schools shall have a counselling service provided by counsellors. These may be professionals in the field of psychology, pedagogy, social work, social pedagogy, special pedagogy, rehabilitation pedagogy, etc.

Larger kindergartens and schools have several counsellors on staff and smaller ones have at least one, employed part-time. Counsellors perform three commonly interconnected and intertwined types of activities: supportive, developmental and preventive, as well as activities of planning and evaluating. They perform pedagogical, psychological, and social counselling. They help children, students, upper secondary students, teachers, parents and management. Furthermore, they are involved in developing and implementing individualised programmes for SEN children.

There are also other ways of support in public schools such as:

Individual and group support - 0.5 hours per class per week – stipulated by normatives and standards

Remedial education- 0.5 hours per class per week – stipulated by normatives and standards

Education of chronically ill children - 1 class/12 able to move/6 bed-ridden children/1 teacher - stipulated by normatives and standards

Individual and group support for Roma children and also for foreign children/migrant

a. Inclusive pedagogy, personalised learning and universal design approaches

Yes

Master's study programme, second cycle - INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICS which is being implemented on Faculty of Education in University of Primorska. Since the 2009/10 school year, 306 inclusive pedagogues have graduated. In every individualised plan for the pupils beside individualisation of education, the expert group must beside individualisation of education also plan: strategies for including a pupil with special needs into a group/class and into the school community. Those strategies are important for quality in inclusion for every child. Individual goals and forms of work in individual areas of education, reasonable accommodations in the assessment process, the possibility of the use of adapted and assistive educational technology, skills for maximum independence in life (adaptation skills) and a individual transition plan (when needed).

b. counselling and mentoring possibilities

Yes



From the preschool, basic education and secondary education the Slovenian education system offers counselling and mentoring possibilities within the Support of school advisors located in the schools. Stipulated by normatives and standards there are one school advisor per 20 classes. Those school advisors have the obligation to work at least 40% working time with children.

c. input from specialist teachers/therapists

Yes

The continuum of help and support within educational programmes in which learners with SEN are placed according to current legislation is described in sections 4.1e and 4.3d.

d. input from learning support assistants

Yes

The State has placed conditions on ensuring equal opportunities of deaf children and children hard of hearing, namely it adopted the Slovenian Sign Language Act (2002; in Slovenian). It specifies that the deaf and hard of hearing have the right to use the Slovenian sign language and to request an interpreter. The measures adopted on the basis of the National guidelines to improve accessibility of built environment, information and communications for people with disabilities (2005; in Slovenian) facilitate easier integration of persons with disabilities and other functional impairments

According to the Rules on additional professional and physical assistance for children with special needs the children with special needs in primary school have the right to additional professional assistance, which is implemented as assistance to overcome deficits, obstacles or disruptions or as learning aid, is carried out jointly or individually within or outside the class. As a rule, additional technical assistance is provided on a weekly basis, but also in a concise form and occasionally. Additional professional assistance as a counseling service is provided within the framework of the integrated child treatment defined in the individualised program.

For Learners with physical disabilities and for Blind learners there is physical assistance assigned as a permanent or temporary companion.

Exceptionally, a temporary companion for the provision of physical assistance shall also be assigned to the: learners with visual impairments, learners with long-term illnesses, learners with emotional and behavioural disorders, learners with autistic disorders.

e. availability of ICT / assistive technology

Yes

Policy on ICT for inclusion is included in the overall policy on ICT in education.

Strategic plans are included in national policy on ICT in education. Schools are autonomous, but comply with national and international guidelines.

The objective is to expand the provision of e-materials and to improve the existing, up-to-date, high-quality and (publicly) available e-contents by exploiting the possibilities offered by new media (interactivity, multimedia). The creation of e-materials should involve participation by all types of experts and institutions. The multi-professional level of e-material production and distribution system should be established within the didactic and technological framework.

The principal objective of professional development in this area to raise the level and quality of ICT-related knowledge of all pupils, teachers and management staff, who should become proactive factors in the education computerisation process. Emphasis will be placed on active use of ICT in order to improve the existing quality of knowledge.

A further objective is to improve the level of equipment used by individuals and education institutions, provide internet access and upgrade technical assistance and/or consultancy facilities, with a view to providing, via ICT, efficient and high-quality education, including the related administration and management.

f. Please describe any other forms of support available.

Children who reside in the Republic of Slovenia and whose mother tongues are not Slovenian, upon entering basic school receive lessons of the Slovenian language and culture and, through cooperation with their countries of origin, also lessons of their mother tongues and cultures. Measures for the integration of children of immigrants are defined by the Guidelines for the integration of immigrant children, which represent a concrete form of implementation of the strategy of including children, pupils and students in the education system as an integral part of the national strategy.

6.5 Please give a description of the strategies in place for practically supporting mainstream school staff teams to increase their capacity to be inclusive and to improve access, participation and achievement for all learners.

Strategy	Description of the focus
Co-operation between mainstream schools and	Within special institutions and schools with the adapted programme, there is a mobile service

<p>specialised institutions, where examples of good practice are present, has been established at the national level. Most commonly this applies to examples where there are units from schools offering the adapted programme. This form of provision allows transfer between programmes, meaning that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) integrated in a special unit attend special subjects in mainstream schools.</p>	<p>provided by disability experts. They are responsible for the provision of aid required to overcome deficiencies, barriers and disorders. Their job is to visit children, pupils and students at pre-school institutions and schools and provide them with additional professional support. They also offer advice to teachers and educators on the adjustments of school activities required for each student.</p> <p>A significant role in the state has been entrusted to the special institutions for the deaf, the blind and persons with physical disabilities that, within the scope of their competences, provide mobile treatment of disabilities for children and youths. Their work includes training for teachers of groups that include a child/children or youth with a specific deficiency, barrier or disorder.</p> <p>Institutions for the deaf include well-developed health-care units which also provide treatment to children with complex or severe speech problems that are the result of an impaired development and require instant treatment.</p>
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6.6 Please provide information regarding school buildings and infrastructure.

a. Are there schools that face infrastructure issues that are barriers to inclusion?

Yes

In 2015–2016 there were 452 public basic schools in Slovenia and six private schools. All are supposed to accept learners with SEN unless there is a reasonable justification (e.g. architectural barriers). The measures based on 2005's 'National Guidelines to Improve Accessibility of Built Environment, Information and Communications for People with Disabilities' facilitate the easier inclusion of people with disabilities and other functional impairments. There is a network of 57 schools that are fully accessible for children with physical disabilities and another 28 schools that are accessible but with some limitations (e.g. non-adapted toilets).

b. Are there strategies and/or initiatives to improve school buildings and infrastructure?

Yes

Facilitating multimodal mobility of people with disabilities (project, 2017)National project: Spatial data to enable multimodal mobility for the persons with physical disabilities and blind and partially sighted 2018 – 2023

If yes, please describe the strategies, their aim and focus.

Strategy	Description of the focus
Spatial data to enable multimodal mobility for the persons with physical disabilities and blind and partially sighted 2018 - 2023	Main goal: Provision of data and environment to permanently ensure the use of spatial data to enable multimodal mobility for the persons with physical disabilities and blind and partially sighted),
...	

6.7 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of the school system, potentially drawing on information from school inspections and / or school self-review work.

Evaluation of various forms of additional professional assistance granted to children in accordance with the Law on the guidance of children with special needs (2016) - National evaluation study
Annual Report of Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Education and Sport for 2018

Main conclusions in relation to pupils with special needs (Annual report of Inspectorate):

- insufficient or inadequate communication between all stakeholders (among professionals and management, parents, participants in education),
- regular teachers who provide additional professional assistance based on legal decisions for children with special needs, still lack a sufficient specialist knowledge,
- when adjusting the education of children with special needs, there is a tensions between the school and the parents, mainly due to their expectation of lowering the minimum standards,
- There is a trend of increasing complaints related to knowledge assessment also in the knowledge assesment for pupils with special needs in the line of the reasonable adjusting the assesment process and tests of knowledge in connection to Individualised educational plan.

6.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to schools in the country?

Challenges

OECD Resources Review, 2017:

- In basic education, there is a gap between growing demands and needs of schools on one hand, and limited public funds for assuring the implementation of the desired scope of the after-school care programme. The state finances 25 hours of this programme a week for 50 minutes per class. Care of children after this time is not paid from the state budget. Classes for the after-school care programme are created based on valid norms and standards and the number of applications. Schools are trying to provide quality after-school care programme in schools mainly to respond to the needs and wishes of parents (working day in Slovenia usually starts between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning and ends between 16:00 and 17:00 in the afternoon). The increase of working tasks resulting from this leads to increasing pressure on the budget. – this is not a challenge relating to inclusion in Slovenia!
- The fundamental dilemma is how to ensure an optimal method of financing that would provide all of the participants with optimal and comparable educational conditions regardless of the school's size and status, whilst taking into account the limited budgetary resources. Due to reduced funding for education, some schools were more disadvantaged than the others and limited resources are especially felt in providing funds for infrastructure in schools. The challenge is to ensure an appropriate standard and quality of school infrastructure with limited financial resources.
- School location also has an above-average impact on student performance. Slovenian students in city schools (population of 100 000 or more) outperform those in rural schools (population under 3 000) by 74 score points, after accounting for differences in students' socio-economic status (compared to the OECD average of 18 score points).

Evidence from the European Commission (2011) shows that educational attainment of Roma in Slovenia is low compared to their peers. Fewer Roma are enrolled in pre-school education. They often are not proficient in Slovene, leave education early (after basic education) and have lower educational support at home.

The EU 2019 semester report states that: Slovenia has a generally well performing education system, but it could be improved in certain areas and sustained for the future. Slovenian students in general education perform well in international comparisons. Socio-economic status is comparatively less important for education outcomes (European Commission 2018b). Its importance, however, grows with the level of education (Cankar et al., 2017) and there are visible disparities when looking at pupil underachievement rates, especially when comparing the top and bottom socioeconomic quartiles (European Commission

2018d). Literacy among young people has improved significantly and is high by international standards, though performance of boys in reading literacy is still a concern. At 4.3 %, the proportion of early school leavers is the second lowest in the EU. The rate of over 4-year-olds participating in early childhood education and care is increasing slowly but continuously (European Commission, 2018e). It stood at 90.9 % in 2017, still 4.4 pps below the EU average.

The Education and Training Monitor 2019 for Slovenia states: Furthermore, against an evolving technological and demographic background, teachers need new skills more than ever, including for dealing with cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom, teaching in a technology-rich environment, and adopting collaborative teaching practices. While 92% of teachers report regular participation in professional development, 21% of them declare a further need for training on teaching students with special needs; 16% report a further need for training on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for teaching; and about 13% report a further need for training in teaching in multilingual and multicultural environments.

PRACTISING INCLUSION IN SLOVENIA: ANALYSIS OF SOME SYSTEMIC, PROCEDURAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS (Suzana Pulec Lah, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Andreja Trtnik Herlec, National Centre for Leadership in Education, Slovenia (andreja.herlec@solazaravnatelje.si), Mojca Vrhovski Mohoric, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education (2005):

Key change agents

The key agents of change in schools are the teachers and the head. The decisive factors are professional development and support from the head and colleagues.

It should be noted that in Slovenia there exists only one middle management position, that of the deputy head (assistant principal). Thus, we have no deputies for pastoral care, no staff development co-ordinators and no SENCOs (special educational needs co-ordinators). All responsibilities for these domains remain with the principal (head teacher). In larger schools and kindergartens, children with special needs have traditionally been in the custody of their own Counselling Service consisting of one or two full-time professionals: educational psychologists, special educators, speech therapists, social workers or pedagogues. School Counselling Service has been the motor of all integration processes, working with the child with special needs, his peers, his family, his teachers, peripatetic specialist support, special schools, and last but not least, with the school management.

By the nature of their job, the head teachers have the power and authority within their organisations for long-term processes, such as developing school cultures that promote collaboration, inclusion and learning for all.

The head teacher takes up an important position in accommodating the school to the pupils with special needs and working with them: »The head is more of a background person, almost unnoticeable. He or she works slowly, step by step, and sometimes makes a step back in order to run before taking a leap over the next obstacle. S/he provides the organizational adaptations in the school and funds to make individual work possible.

But more importantly, the head has crucial influence on the »climate« and attitudes of the school to the pupils with special needs. S/he has an important influence upon whether the teachers accept this kind of work as a challenge or a turmoil. S/he keeps track with the processes of working with the pupils with special needs and makes the right priorities and emphases in the work of teachers. S/he influences the system of school values as a whole by his or her own attitude and values and can even have influence on the parents' attitudes to these questions,« emphasizes the head of one of the Slovene primary schools. (Paj, in: Trtnik Herlec 2002, p. 220).

The results of our research about organisational factors of inclusion (Trtnik Herlec and Pulec Lah, 2004) (72 respondents) include the following analysis of current problems and weaknesses as perceived by the school management:

Systems threats:

Insufficiently considered and defined concept and policy strategy on the national level causing problems in implementation. The schools are left on their own which is not right because the task should be worked on professionally and with full support from the state.

Insufficient and vague official guidelines on inclusion of children with special needs.

Issuing the legal decision on the basis of one-time observation of a child (static diagnostics) results in general and less useful recommendations for practical work with the child. A member of the Streaming Committee should spend a full day or two in the child's group or classroom; s/he should communicate with the child's teacher and take part in the whole procedure for a longer period of time before finishing the assessment and making recommendations.

Long duration of the process of streaming/program selection and insufficient communication with the child's school.

Increased workload: no systematically scheduled time for team meetings and counselling; all this and more comes as additional workload for the teachers and their good will.

Insufficient system support, supervision and evaluation.

Insufficient availability of training and professional development programs for inclusion of children with special needs.

Organization problems:

Increased pressures on teachers: it is difficult to ensure equal conditions for learning to all the pupils if the teachers do not have additional professional support in the classroom and if the class size is not reduced.

Schedule organisation is extremely complex, especially in the third cycle of the primary school.

In-coming statements during the school year: additional professional support is not always available and there is a problem with the official systematization of newly required posts during the school year.

Financial and staffing issues:

Shortage of special education teachers and others qualified for providing additional professional support to teachers, especially in smaller and rural towns and regions (e.g. Prekmurje area).

External professionals (visiting teachers) take more time to establish contacts with the child and school staff; it is better to have a special education teacher or a similar professional on the staff.

Inappropriate providers of additional professional support: often the school appoints their part-time teachers without specialist training and thus solves labour problems (creates a new full-time work post); some schools cannot find appropriately trained teachers for additional professional support.

Insufficiently trained educators: if we want to slowly move to real inclusion of children with special needs, the educators have to be trained in individualised and pupil-centred teaching, planning individualised education plans, working in teams and collaborating/working with the parents of children with special needs.

Negative attitudes of some teachers to the children with special needs.

Working space problems for additional professional support, owing especially to the prevailing »pull out« system and individual coaching and support offered to the pupil with special needs.

Opportunities

The 'Only (with) others are we' 11 projects (in Slovenian *Le z drugimi smo*) aim to train 10,000 expert workers and leaders at all levels in social and civic intercultural competencies in order to boost the integration of migrants and the acceptance of diversity, to support faster identification of potential conflict situations and to develop intercultural relations and conflict resolution. The participants are taught how to include this approach in any lesson to help the integration of migrant students and to help students adopt the attitude that diversity is enriching. The project is part of a larger project to strengthen the social and civic competencies of education staff that is funded by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the European Social Fund (ESF). The budget is EUR 1 million, of which EUR 800 000 is from the ESF. 'Only (with) others are we' is running from 2016/2017 to 2020/21. The Slovenian Migration Institute and the Educational Research Institute carry out, with external help, five free 16-hour professional training

courses with the following titles: 1) Living the Diversity: Immigrant Inclusion and Slovene Language; 2) Zero tolerance for violence: Challenges and Issues; 3) Respectful communication and Conflict Management; 4) The Challenges of modern Society in Education; 5) Intercultural Relations and Integration in Education Practice.

The Education and Training Monitor 2019 for Slovenia states: Amendments to the Vocational Education Act entered into force in September 2018. They focus on: quality evaluation of learning at the workplace; establishing a register of learning places at national level; and introducing a certificate providing detailed, uniform and internationally comparable information to employers on vocational qualifications, in line with the Europass Certificate Supplement. Other amendments aim to ease the integration of migrants into secondary education by giving those without proof of former education the possibility of enrolling in upper secondary education by taking an examination, and by having schools provide intensive Slovenian courses during their first year. There is currently no legal obligation to track vocational graduates, but it is part of the national quality assurance indicators.

The attendance of children from the age of 4 in early childhood education has expanded, and is, by now, almost universal. There are also high rates of participation in early childhood education by children from the age of 3. Yet the 90% participation rate for the general population decreases to 77.8% in the group of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Experiencing education in the early years of life has been found to be beneficial for better learning outcomes later on in life, and particularly so for children from socio-economically disadvantaged homes. The challenge of ensuring equal access to education in the early years needs to be addressed.

Section 7: Communities, parents and students

How far does the wider school community support learners to access and benefit from education opportunities?

7.1 Have there been any campaigns to raise awareness of inclusion in education at national or local level?

Yes

Resolution on the Family Policy 2018–2028: “A Society Friendly to All Families (Official Gazette of RS, No. 15/18) states: Education is of utmost importance to society as well as to the individual. It enables (social and individual) development, but is also an important factor in social mobility. As such, it can contribute to economic development, improving social cohesion and reducing social inequalities, and thus to greater social well-being (Barle Lakota, Trunk Širca, 2010). Based on this, it is an important task of the state to provide quality and widely accessible public education based on the concept of inclusion.

The idea of inclusive education should therefore be pursued at all levels of education (pre-school, primary, secondary, higher education as well as in lifelong learning programs).

7.2 Does legislation/policy support parental involvement in schools?

Yes

In the Organisation and Financing of Education Act there are few articles which support parental involvement in schools:

Article 46 (Composition of the School Council)

The council of a public kindergarten or school shall be composed of three representatives of the founder, five representatives of the staff, and **three representatives of parents**.

Article 66 (Council of Parents)

A council of parents shall be established in a public kindergarten or school to implement the interests of parents in an organised manner. The kindergarten or school shall ensure technical and financial support for the council’s activities. A council of parents shall consist of one representative per class elected by parents at the class parent-teacher conference. The head teacher shall convene the first council of parents.

The council of parents shall:

- Recommend the above-standard programmes;
- Consent to the head teacher’s proposal on the above-standard services;

- Participate in drafting the proposal of a development programme for a kindergarten or school, education plan, school house rules, and convey an opinion about the annual work plan;
- Convey an opinion about candidates who meet the conditions of service for head teacher;
- Discuss the head teacher's reports on educational issues;
- Deal with parents' complaints related to education;
- Elect parent representatives to the school council of the kindergarten or school, and other school bodies; or it
- May adopt its own programme for cooperation with a school, regarding integration in the local environment, in particular;
- May set up or form a working group in agreement with the school leadership; and
- Perform other activities in accordance with the law and other regulations.

The councils of parents may form local or regional networks of councils of parents. Local or regional networks may further form a national association of networks.

Article 135 (School Funds)

The school shall establish the School Fund to finance activities that are not part of the education programme or not publicly financed to purchase above-standard equipment, to improve the standard of instruction, and the like.

The school fund referred to in the preceding paragraph shall obtain funding from parent contributions, donations, inheritances, and other resources.

The school fund shall be managed by the Board, consisting of a president and six members, of which at least three shall be school representatives.

The Board shall be appointed by the **council of parents**.

The school representatives shall be proposed by the school council. The Board may adopt rules on the school fund. A fund may be established also by a kindergarten.

The fundamental objectives and principles in the education of children with SEN in the acts listed are underpinned by the following principles and objectives contained in the Guidance of Children with Special Needs Act:

- inclusion of parents in the education process

Parents and children with special needs shall be included in the preparation and monitoring of the individualised programme, taking into account their maturity and age. One of the main Aims and principles of the education of children with special needs written in the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act is involving parents, adoptive parents, foster parents and guardians (hereinafter: parents) in placement procedures and the forms of assistance.

According to the article 25 of Placement of Children with Special Needs Act The placement procedure for a child with special needs shall begin with a written request of the parents.

7.3 Does legislation/policy support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities (e.g. services/employers)?

Yes

In the Organisation and Financing of Education Act there are few articles which support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities:

Article 16 (Decision on Providers)

The providers of education programmes at basic schools, basic music schools, and education programme at residence hall for pupils, except for education programmes at private schools or private residence halls, shall be determined by the local community or several local communities by agreement.

Article 40 (Founder)

Public kindergartens or schools shall be founded by local communities or by the State.

Article 41 (Founders of Kindergartens or Schools)

Public kindergartens, music schools, basic schools and residence halls for pupils shall be founded by a local community.

Article 53a (Procedure for Head Teacher Appointment)

The head teacher shall be appointed by the council of a public kindergarten or school. Prior to selecting a candidate head teacher, for all eligible candidates the council shall seek:

- the opinion of the assembly of pre-school teachers, school teachers or lecturers;
- the **opinion of the local community** where the public kindergarten or school has its registered office, and also the opinion of the self-governing national community if the public school or kindergarten is founded by the self-governing national community;
- the opinion of the council of parents.

Article 82 (Schools)

In accordance with the norms and standards, the funds of the local community shall provide funds for:

- Payment of costs for the use of premises and equipment for basic and music schools, and other material costs, with the exception of material costs under Article 81 for basic schools;
- Music schools for the reimbursement of costs to employees in accordance with the collective labour agreement;
- Transportation of basic school pupils in accordance with Article 56 of the Basic School Act, except for the transportation of pupils with special needs on non-school days;

- Investment in the maintenance of the real estate and equipment of public basic and music schools;
- Additional activities of basic schools, and
- Investment in basic schools, music schools, and educational organisations for adults, and part of the funds for investment in education of national communities.

7.4 Does legislation/policy support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g. support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice?

Yes

In the Organisation and Financing of Education Act there are few articles which support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g. support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice:

Article 20 (Modernisation)

New officially recognised programmes or new sections of the officially recognised programmes of public kindergartens and schools shall be instituted, monitored and evaluated by the respective public institutions referred to in paragraph 1 Article 28 of this Act.

Article 28 (Public Institutes)

Public institutes may be established to perform the following tasks:

- provide expertise for decision-making on matters within the responsibility of expert councils and the ministry
- develop, introduce, monitor and evaluate curricula
- research and development in education
- develop quality at all levels of education
- monitor and evaluate education practice, management and leadership of educational institutions
- provide advisory service in education - organise continuous the professional development (CPD) of education staff and head teachers
- implement procedures for the placement of SEN children
- support users in developing international projects
- administer national testing
- curricular and extracurricular activities in out-of-school settings
- mobility of youth and staff in education
- organise school competitions
- museum activities in education and sports, and other tasks in education.

7.5 Does legislation/policy set out a role for NGOs, DPOs, or other organisations representing vulnerable groups?

Yes

Non-Governmental Organisations Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 21/18)

7.6 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of parental and wider community involvement in the work of schools.

Proposals of Association of Assets of Parents' Councils of Slovenia (2018)

Their overall finding is that there are good, dedicated and committed teachers in Slovenian schools, and they are very grateful for their work for the benefit of their children. They think that the knowledge children acquire in the schools is, according to objective external research, good. Compared to school systems in Europe, Slovenia has a relatively well-functioning morning care system, subsidized school meals, extended stay.

However, the Slovenian school system also has shortcomings that concern us. As parents of children whose future lies ahead, we point out weaknesses and suggest improvements. It should:

1. arrange curricula,
2. establish a quality assurance system in primary school,
3. ensure a stable and comprehensive textbook policy,
4. strengthen the care role of the school,
5. ensure timely treatment and the same criteria for children with special needs in the process of Placement of Children with Special Needs,
6. balance the management of primary schools in the school councils (3 parents– 3 teachers – 3 from local community),
7. to strengthen the partnership role of parents in the school system.

7.7 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to communities, parents and students in the country?

Opportunities

In 2013, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth co-financed operations of 59 youth centres that aim above all to promote the active participation of young people in local environment, in particular the participation of young people with fewer opportunities by reason of social exclusion. In 2012/13, the

Office's programme of co-financing the construction of youth centres with accommodation facilities expired. In the scope of the programme, one put up ten youth centres across Slovenia. In total, the youth sector gained 456 new beds and created 28 new jobs.

