

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH WORK IN SLOVENIA



Last updated: April 2018

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1. Strategic and legislative framework of youth work in the country

The Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector may be considered as the most comprehensive and binding official document that addresses the needs and/or rights of young people and stipulates how youth issues should be addressed. The Act was adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia on 18 May 2010, promulgated on 28 May 2010 and entered into force on 12 June 2010.

The Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector determines the public interest in the youth sector as well as the method of implementing the public interest in the youth sector. It defines youth, the youth sector, and the status of youth organisations, the financial grants procedure and national awards. The Act identifies the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth as the public authority responsible for the youth field. It also specifies the responsibilities of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth and ensures the promotion of the interests of the youth sector at the national level. The Act is also a legal basis for adoption of a national youth programme and establishing the Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth.

According to the Act, youth policy is a harmonised set of measures of various sectoral public policies with the purpose of promoting and facilitating the integration of youth in the economic, cultural and political life of the community and appropriate support mechanisms for developing youth work and operation of youth organisations, which is carried out in co-operation with autonomous and democratic representatives of youth organisations and professional and other organisations. The Act also lists a variety of fields where youth policy is implemented, *inter alia* autonomy of the youth, non-formal learning, access to the labour market, social inclusion of young people, volunteering, mobility of the youth, healthy lifestyle, promoting creativity and participation. Beside the definition of the youth and youth policy, the Act brings some other definitions for wider understanding of youth policy and youth sector. It defines “youth organisation” and “organisation for youth” and for the first time it also defines youth work and structured dialogue.

Article 3 (Definition of Terms) defines “youth work” as “an organised and target-oriented form of youth action and is for the youth, within which the youth, based on their own efforts, contribute to their own inclusion in society, strengthen their competences and contribute to the development of the community. The implementation of various forms of youth work is based on the volunteer participation of the youth regardless of their interest, cultural, principle or political orientation.”

The new definition of youth work in Slovenia as established through the Act on Public Interest in Youth Sector provides a framework for all youth organisations and organisations working with young people. The definition adopted through this Act is broadly similar to the European definition in terms of its focus on activities, both by and young people with an emphasis on voluntary participation. Although the Slovenian definition does not directly mention that youth work belongs to the area of “out of school” education, the content of the whole Act carries this meaning and reinforces the importance of “non-formal education”.

2. Funding youth work

There is no analysis available of the proportion of public funding (of GDP) in Slovenia that is dedicated to youth work, either at the national or local level. At the national level, different ministries support different measures according to their field of work.

The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, as the public authority responsible for the youth field, has been co-funding youth work programmes since its beginnings. The amount of money available for youth work programmes in 2015 was €1.2 million. The same amount was allocated in 2016 and 2017; in 2018 the amount has slightly increased to €1.45 million.

The National Programme for Youth, adopted in 2013 for the period 2013-2022, provides a range of different measures in the fields of education, employment and entrepreneurship, housing, health and well-being, the social position of youth, the development of the youth sector, culture and creativity, heritage, media. The amount available for a wide set of measures defined in the National Programme for Youth in 2017 was €215 million (European funds included).

Each ministry is responsible for its budget allocation for measures on national youth policy. The report about the implementation of the measures within the National Programme for Youth is prepared by the Office for Youth and adopted by the National Parliament. The correct and rational manner of use of public resources is monitored by the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia, which provides assessments on the conformity of operations with regulations and guidelines, and on the cost-effectiveness of operations.

EU Funds

There were four public calls using European funds for youth sector only published in the period between 2009 and 2016.

1. European Regional Development Fund (€13 million in the period 2009-2011). There were ten new youth centres established in Slovenia by the end of 2011 with ERDF support; their total accommodation capacity is 420 beds and their investment value amounts to approximately €13 million. The centres are expected to provide a total of 20 000 overnight stays per year, and at least 30 new jobs.

2. European Social Fund (€4 million in the period 2010-2012). €4 million was allocated through a special tender for establishing eight content networks bringing together youth organisations and external partners; they aim to provide better training to young people in the areas of social, citizenship and cultural competences. All networks focus on quality human resources training within the framework of an emerging complex society, which is based on formal and non-formal forms and methods of education.

3. European Social Fund (€0.8 million in 2014). The aim of the call was to co-finance projects of non-governmental organisations in the youth sector to develop social and civic competences of young people.

4. European Social Fund (€5 million in the period 2016-2018). The aim of the call was to support innovative ways of youth work and within it employability and employment of young people.

5. European Social Fund (€1.5 million in 2018). The aim of the call was to support employment of young youth workers in the youth sector.

There are no systematic data available on local budgetary allocation for youth work.

3. Forms and examples of youth work in your country

The main fields of youth work defined in the Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector are:

- autonomy of youth;
- informal learning and training and increasing the competences of youth;
- access of youth to the labour market and enterprise development of youth;
- care for youth with fewer opportunities in society;
- volunteering, solidarity and intergenerational participation of youth;
- mobility of youth and international integration;
- a healthy lifestyle and preventing various forms of youth dependencies;
- access of youth to cultural goods and promoting creativity and innovation among youth;
- participation of youth in managing public affairs in society.

The working groups preparing a competence model for youth workers defined a series of youth work activities that are mostly happening in the youth and youth work organisations, namely: workshops, work camps, youth campaigns, successive (continuous) meetings of young people, street work, (international) youth exchanges, youth information and counselling, training of young people, leadership of youth organisations, youth cultural or youth sport events, youth initiatives, team animation, organisation of voluntary work, advocacy, long-term partnership co-operation).

Once a year, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth organises a national meeting with the youth sector and dedicates it to different topics that are relevant for the development of youth work or youth policy. In 2017 the topic was digital youth work, which settled well in the youth work sector where a number of good practices are known. Some of them are listed below:

a) YOUTH PANEL: YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

The Youth Panel consists of a group of six young people aged 14 to 17 who actively participate in the SAFE.SI Centre for Safer Internet in a way that expresses their views, opinions and values on the use of the internet and mobile devices. They are so-called young people's voters, as they represent the aspect of young people in deciding on the type and contents of educational materials for raising awareness in the mentioned field (web content, workshop contents, printed materials ...) and provide important feedback when planning prevention campaigns.

Their opinions, views and experiences are very valuable, as they provide first-hand information on what challenges young people actually encounter when using the internet and mobile devices. Representatives of the youth panel have the opportunity to represent Slovene adolescents at national events, for example, activities during the Internet Safety Day and take part in international events/activities that take place within the framework of the INSAFE network. European Commission (Safer Internet Forum, online INSAFE network surveys).

Organisation: Zavod MISSS – Safer Internet Centre

b) S-CodeKids

Promotion of Afternoon Coding school for young people – two workshops during the week of 9 to 13 October for two hours in two age groups; four various groups with 15 pupils each (4 x 15 participants). Each workshop will include practical work with coding (first steps of

coding) and introduction to creation of interactive animations, games, stories, etc. The goal is to promote coding as a new way of functional learning (learning by doing method), encourage creative thinking and problem solving, and support active participation of pupils. Groups are intentionally small, so our interactive method of learning can be effective and motivate higher participation during classes. Based on these promotional activities we will form a six-month training to continue with classes of coding for children between 5 and 12 years old. In Slovenia, primary and secondary school pupils do not have an obligatory curriculum that would include coding, so all activities on this topic are extra-curricular activities – our wish is to enable every pupil with access to coding from a very early age.

Organisation: Zavod za medgeneracijsko sodelovanje Simbioza Genesis

c) CodeOn!

After-school training event on promotion of coding and digital skills for high schoolers (15-18 years old). The concept includes four practical workshops over two hours, where every participant can choose his/her preferred topic. The topics are: Coding, Internet Safety, Testing ICT Software/Hardware (robotics), Smart online users (applied use of internet and online open-resourced tools). After these workshops, participants will gather in the final joint seminar with the title “Code your future”. It includes three talks by various ICT professionals (coder, engineer, 3D printing expert); each talk will take up to 12 minutes. The purpose is to show participants how many various professions there are in the IT industry and to encourage them to consider this field of profession when they choose their careers. We encourage participants to go deep into the content through practical workshops and to develop creative and constructive thinking and approaches.

Organisation: Zavod za medgeneracijsko sodelovanje Simbioza Genesis

d) Programming is a game

The project supports young people (15-24 years old) to make the first steps into the world of programming. With the help of the creative environment of Scratch, participants gain the basics of programming mindset. Participants get familiar with the the environment of programming and then with the help of their mentors, make their first project (animation, story, play, music, art, simulation or something else). Together we experiment and play with new ideas. The workshops are led by the trainer of the Social Academy. Through their experience in digital youth work, they will bring young people closer to programming and open the door to the new world.

Organisation: Social Academy

e) Innovation Jam Course 9

A 12-hour programming course consists of three individual workshops.

- the first workshop covers four hours and focuses on the basics of the cloud environment of the SAP Cloud Platform and the HTML and CSS language. ○ The basics of the World Wide Web and HTML ○ CSS Basics ○ CSS scraps ○ Getting to know the SAP Cloud Platform ○ Publishing the first website on the SAP Cloud Platform

- the second workshop covers four hours and focuses on the JavaScript programming language
 - o Introduction to JavaScript
 - o Examples of managing HTML and CSS via JavaScript
 - o Program concepts in JavaScript
- the third workshop covers four hours and focuses on more advanced use of HTML, CSS, JS and SAP Cloud Platform
 - o JavaScript and jQuery plug-ins/libraries
 - o Advanced JavaScript concepts
 - o JavaScript framework.

Organisation: Zavod Ypsilon

f) Safer Internet Centre

The Safer Internet Centre Slovenia is the national project promoting and ensuring a better internet for kids. The project is co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility; in Slovenia financial support also comes from the Ministry of Public Administration.

The Safer Internet Centre Slovenia has three components: Awareness Centre Safe.si; Helpline Tom telefon; Hotline Spletno oko.

Organisation:

The project is run by a consortium of partners co-ordinated by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana, Academic and Research Network of Slovenia (Arnes), Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth (ZPMS) and Youth Information and Counselling Centre of Slovenia (MISSS).

POMP – IT support to immigrant youth, active participation in the community

Youth Information tool: Digital literacy courses, information and counselling, trainings.

Description: Using information to empower young immigrants

Digital literacy aimed at social, cultural, economic and political integration of immigrant families and youth who have immigrated to Slovenia in the last three years. The aim of the programme is to improve the quality of communication of all necessary information, support and advice on various situations. Using computer literacy programme.

The aim is to provide high-quality integration of individuals into society; it is therefore necessary to ensure effective access to social, cultural, economic and political rights.

Organisation: Zavod MISSS

4. Structures, actors and levels in youth work provision

4.1 State structures deciding on or providing youth work in your country?

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia proposes a National Youth Programme for adoption by the National Assembly. This is the main document that forms the youth policy agenda and specific policy measures, also in the field of youth work.

The co-ordination of youth policy is delegated to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport ([Office for Youth](#)), but the implementation of various measures is a responsibility of competent ministries, namely Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice.

Within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and in line with the Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth as an independent body performs the following tasks:

- prepares the regulations and measures in the field of the youth sector;
- provides financial support for youth programmes and programmes for youth;
- provides for and executes supervision for the implementation of regulations and measures in the youth sector;
- monitors the situation of youth and the impact of measures in the youth sector;
- co-operates with the responsible bodies and other subjects in the youth sector;
- participates in representing the State in the bodies of the European Union and the Council of Europe and at an international level in the matter relating to youth; and
- performs other tasks in accordance with the law.

The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth also co-ordinates works for the Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, which is the governmental consulting body responsible for making cross-departmental decisions on matters in the field of youth and the youth sector. The Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth consists of 20 representatives from both government (ministries) and youth organisations.

Local level

The constitution defines municipalities as local self-governed communities which are in principle financed from their own resources (collected taxes, benefits, income from property), whereby economically weak municipalities are supported by government subventions. The compliance of municipality bodies is controlled by national bodies.

The Act on Public Interest in the Youth Sector defines that local communities implement the youth policy at a local level in accordance with its own interests, needs, capabilities and circumstances, such as the number and structure of inhabitants, its economic power, and spatial and personnel capacities in the youth sector. Local communities may implement the youth policy at a local level by adopting a local programme for youth, establishing a working or consulting body for youth issues, financially supporting the programmes in the youth sector, and implementing other measures in the youth sector.

The role of local communities in developing youth policies varies and depends on the size of each local community. The municipality of Ljubljana, the capital, has a structure within the city administration (youth department) that provides public tenders (for youth programmes, projects, information network, international activities), youth research, networking NGO in youth sector, information network for young people, educational programmes and trainings for youth workers, empowerment of youth NGO structures. In 2015, the Council of the Municipality of Ljubljana adopted a youth strategy.

Smaller communities co-operate closely with youth centres that take over part of the tasks that local community should provide. Because most of the local communities do not have a youth office, the co-operation with local authorities and youth centres is of essential importance.

4.2 National or local youth councils

The top-level legal frameworks establishing youth councils and other youth organisations in Slovenia are the Public Interest in Youth Sector Act ([Zakon o javnem interesu v mladinskem sektorju](#)) and the Youth Council Act ([Zakon o mladinskih svetih](#)), both of which define the National Youth Council of Slovenia ([Mladinski svet Slovenije](#)) as a voluntary association of national youth organisations with the status of an organisation in the public interest of the youth sector. Apart from a nation-level youth council, local communities' youth councils are also envisioned, but they have been set up only in a few local settings. Youth councils are not part of the country's fundamental institutions as mentioned in the constitution.

The National Youth Council of Slovenia has [12 full member organisations and two associated member organisations](#) (April 2018). It is accountable to its member organisations and composed of an assembly, a supervisory board and a board. The assembly is composed of two representatives from each of the 12 full-member organisations and a president of the National Youth Council. The Assembly meets at least twice per year. For the supervisory board and board positions, elections are held every two years. An individual can serve up to three consecutive terms and must not be older than 33 years of age on election day. The supervisory board meets at least once a year. Candidates for elected office can be proposed by member organisations, and the selection process is fully in the domain of member organisations. Nominations for board membership include written support for candidacy by at least four member organisations in addition to the organisation proposing the candidate. Elections are held by secret ballot. Public measures for facilitating greater inclusiveness or diversity do not exist.

Role and responsibilities

The National Youth Council defends the interests of young people and promotes youth participation in the formulation of policies that have a significant impact on their lives and

work. In a narrower sense, it strives to improve the situation of young people as a specific social group. It encourages the development of voluntary organising by young people and seeks to strengthen the activity of youth organisations, irrespective of their different interests and ideological or political orientation. The National Youth Council aims to encourage the development of youth organisations as an instrument for active participation by young people in public life at all levels.

The National Youth Council's responsibilities are:

- the creation of youth policies
- youth advocacy
- co-operation with government institutions
- international co-operation
- preparation of various trainings and educational materials
- promotion of volunteering
- co-operation with academia
- providing information
- co-ordination of youth councils
- statutory activities and other activities for member organisations
- implementation of different projects.

The Council's role in policy-making:

- under the Youth Council Act and the Public Interest in Youth Sector Act, the National Youth Council is involved in a civil dialogue
- participation in the framework for the Council of the Government for Youth
- individual co-operation with the ministries.

Funding

The National Youth Council receives public funding. Its resources are acquired from membership fees and other contributions from member organisations, the state budget and the budgets of local communities, property rights and donations, as well as other sources. The main funders are the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, the National Agency of the programme Erasmus+: Youth in Action and the European Youth Foundation. When using funds, the National Youth Council is accountable to the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth.

4.3 Youth and youth work NGOs

The most important legal frameworks establishing youth and youth work organisations is the Act on the Public Interest in Youth Sector ([Zakon o javnem interesu v mladinskem sektorju](#)). It defines a youth organisation as an autonomous, democratic, volunteer and independent association of youth, which with its operation enables young people to gain planned learning

experience, form and express their viewpoints and implement their activities in accordance with their interests, cultural background, principle or political orientation, and is organised as an independent legal entity, namely as a society or an association of societies or as an integral part of another legal entity, namely a society, an association of societies, a trade union or a political party providing that the autonomy of operation in the youth sector has been ensured by the basic act of this legal entity.

When an organisation receives the status of public interest in the youth sector, it get access to different instruments (including financial) in the youth sector. There were 102 organisations with the status registered in April 2018.

At the local level, the majority of youth work is delivered through publicly funded youth centres or youth councils and some other youth organisations and institutions. In more recent years, there has been a growth in the funding and support of publicly funded local government-led **youth centres** mostly as an: "Answer of local governments to the needs of young people (specially the non-organised youth) in the local community." They are focused on all fields of youth work; with larger organisations focusing more on education, and smaller ones on leisure and cultural activities. **Youth councils** in particular serve to unite youth organisations in a given locality with the requirement that at least 90 per cent of members are aged up to 29 years and that 70 per cent of members of the management are aged between 15 and 29 years.

4.4 Other relevant actors

Zavod MOVIT NA MLADINA - the **National Agency of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action** at that time played an important role in encouraging and promoting youth participation. With the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme and its predecessor is an important instrument in developing the youth policy at the national and local levels and plays an important role in involving (especially unorganised) young people in Slovenia in the activities of youth and other civil society organisations by funding the project that encourages participation of young people in democratic life.

Website: www.movit.si

The Youth Network MaMa combines and represents organisations that run youth centres or are active in field of youth work in Slovenia in order to support youth, their spending of quality free time and a better life in the society. With its activities, the Youth Network MaMa stimulates and promotes creative activities of youth and emphasises the principles of tolerance, co-operation and at the same time social awareness among its members and the wider public.

Website: <http://www.mreza-mama.si/>

Institute NEFIKS is a Youth organisation that promotes the values of volunteering and non-formal education in Slovenia by motivating young people to get education in different areas and persuading employers to consider non-formal education as a reference when getting a job. In addition, NEFIKS with its workshops, stakeholder meetings, public promotion and a system of peer advising for lifelong career orientation delivered by NEFIKS tutors or peer advisors widely opens the door for professional and social inclusion of young people, especially those "left behind". NEFIKS also carries out projects for building strong

relationships between learners, entrepreneurs and agencies. Through its tools – booklets and e-Nefiks – the organisation helps young people to record and recognise their non-formally acquired competences in order to show them in real life to employers. E-Nefiks has integrated the eight key competences as defined by the EC that young people can assess.

Website: <http://www.talentiran.si/index.php/component/content/category/51-nefiks-in-english>

MOBIN, youth mobility and information institute, is a non-governmental non-profit organisation, which is dedicated to manage the European Youth Card Programme in Slovenia named EjlKartica (previously called EURO<26). Until June 2010 the European Youth Card Programme was an independent part of the MOVIT institute. MOBIN, the youth mobility and information institute, is a full-time member of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA).

Website: http://ejkartica.si/en/about_us/

Youth Information and Counselling Centre of Slovenia (MISSS) is a non-governmental non-profit organisation, working as a national youth information and counselling service, thus collaborating with [16 regional and local youth information and counselling centres](#) throughout Slovenia. The local YIC, applying the European standards and principles of generalistic youth information work, disseminate information in their local space and provide counselling in choosing the right information.

Website: <http://www.misss.si/>

The Social Academy encourages the social responsibility of Slovene citizens by engaging in education, research and cultural activities. The organisation Social Academy relies on three foundations – three constituent units: education, research and culture. The main activities: Social academy studies, different types of education, cultural and educational evenings, production of various publications, cultural events and international activity.

Website: <http://www.socialna-akademija.si/>

Voluntariat - SCI Slovenia is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation which coordinates voluntary work and international work camps in Slovenia. Voluntariat organises training for volunteers and other people in order to spread an understanding of the ideals of voluntary work; organises voluntary work in Slovenia together with local groups, associations and other organisations which work in the area of nature conservation, peace education, help the disadvantaged etc., when and where needed; supports the initiatives of groups and individuals who are working voluntarily to show solidarity with local communities and to promote self-help within disadvantaged communities; analyses and evaluates all work it supports, taking into account both the local and wider context in which it is carried out, and publishes the result of its projects; offers and spreads information about voluntary work in Slovenia and other countries; joins international actions which promote co-operation between people of different nations, religions, cultures and political beliefs, convinced that such understanding of others can lead to non-violent resolutions to conflicts.

Website: <http://www.zavod-voluntariat.si>

There are some examples of good practices of the participation in the decision-making process of the young people on the local level developed in local municipalities, as follows:

In a municipality there can be a **Commission for Youth** issues. It is appointed by the mayor as his consultative body, with the purpose of making recommendations on different issues within his competences; in this case on youth issues. The commission issues conclusions, gives incentives and makes suggestions to the mayor. The commission consists of young representatives and those from the local community.

The Board of the Local Community Council for Youth involves citizens in the decision making process of the municipality, regarding the youth issues, and it is regulated by law. This board monitors and identifies the needs of young people in order to find the solutions regarding the youth issues in the municipality; gives recommendations to the Local Community Council relating to youth matters and participates in the budget planning of assets for youth. The board consists of young representatives and those from the local community.

5. Recognition

The important momentum for political recognition was the adoption of the Act on the public interest in youth sector in 2010. This Act describes youth work and areas of youth work, provides measures for public funding of youth work as well as awards for youth work projects and youth workers. Pursuant to this Act, the entire youth work sphere is in the public interest; youth work is defined as “organised and target-oriented activities of and for young people, within which young people, based on their own efforts, contribute to their inclusion in society, strengthen their competences and contribute to the development of the community”.

The Act was adopted in June 2010, the Regulation for its implementation in 2011. In 2013, based on the Act, the Resolution on the National Programme for Youth was adopted. The resolution includes the chapter "Youth and Society", which aims to support youth and youth work organisations. Concrete measures based on the National Programme for Youth include: a yearly call for youth work programmes; specific calls for youth and youth work organisations to develop youth sector capacities and improve young people's competences using the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund; a yearly call for youth work awards and youth workers awards; development of non-formal educational paths for youth workers. Further improvement of validation of non-formal learning is included in the Operational Programme of the Republic of Slovenia for the programming period 2014-2020 (the coherent strategy of Slovenia for investment of the EU Cohesion Policy funds).

Beside the Act on the public interest in youth sector, there are some other legislative measures that promote the recognition of non-formal education and learning, such as:

- Vocational and Technical Education Act - the validation of non-formally acquired knowledge; however, the assessment of knowledge is, to a great extent, limited to vocational skills acquired outside the school system. With regard to programmes for vocational and technical education, parts of programmes, i.e. modules, may be recognised on the basis of the rules for the recognition of non-formal education.
- Volunteering Act - emphasises the role of non-formal education through volunteering. In individual secondary schools, volunteering has been integrated into the curricula, while some universities have started to recognise experience and skills acquired through volunteering.
- Act on Slovene qualification framework - validation of qualifications.

In promoting the recognition of the non-formal education in youth work, there are a series of examples of good practice, such as Nefiks – System of recording non-formally acquired knowledge, My experiences – a tool for validation and recognition of working experience, gained by student work ([Moje izkušnje](#)), Learning badges – Utilisation of open digital badges to value and recognise learning during non-formal learning activities ([Učne značke](#)) and others. These tools are being developed in different contexts (international learning mobility, increasing employability, etc.) and different channels (youth work, volunteer, student work, full-time employment ...).

The development of a professional occupation status for youth workers in Slovenia is still underway. The first important momentum was in 2008, when four occupation categories for the youth work role were specified, but these were only for those working in publicly funded youth centres:

- youth worker I (IV level education)
- youth worker II (V level education)
- co-ordinator of youth programmes (VI level education)

- head of youth programmes (VII level education).

Later on, the Office for Youth introduced an initiative to prepare the vocational standard and a catalogue of professional knowledge and skills standards for youth workers, based on the Resolution on the National Programme for Youth. In 2017 this has become a national vocational qualification certificate for youth workers.

In 2017, youth work as a vocation has been recognised as part of the National Vocational Qualification System and with it, part of the Vocational Education and training system in Slovenia. The National Vocational Qualification is a Public Certificate based on the National Vocational Qualifications Act. It is an occupational or professional qualification required for different professions. Within this system, one cannot obtain the same title as in the educational system, but it provides individuals an opportunity to assess and validate knowledge and skills obtained through non-formal learning. National Vocational Qualifications attest to one's competence to perform a certain occupation. The certificate is not merely valid at a company level, but is also recognised at national and European levels.

System for recognition of non-formal education and learning in Slovenia – general context

There are two main legally acceptable ways for recognition of non-formal learning in Slovenia:

- the recognition of non-formal knowledge, skills and competence within the formal education system – through continuing interrupted education, as a follow-up after attaining higher levels of education, changing direction/sector in education etc. – when educational institutions recognise the acquired knowledge on the basis of relevant legislation and credit system
- the National Vocational Qualifications System (Sistem nacionalne poklicne kvalifikacije) when non-formally acquired knowledge and skills is recognised by the labour market under the facilitation of the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training. Youth work as a vocation was recognised through the latest system.

Existing arrangements

Slovenia is involved in the majority of the mentioned initiatives, including Council of Europe quality label, Erasmus + Youthpass, European Youth Capitals, Youth Friendly Cities.

6. Quality standards

In Slovenia, an individual can acquire the National Vocational Qualification of Youth Worker. It is an occupational or professional qualification required for different professions. Within this system, one cannot obtain the same title as in the educational system, but it provides individuals with an opportunity to assess and validate knowledge and skills obtained through non-formal learning. National Vocational Qualifications attest to one's competence to perform youth work as an occupation. Vocational competences of youth workers defined in the catalogue are as follows.

Youth workers are able to:

- designate, implement and evaluate youth programmes in co-operation with young people,
- establish and maintain co-operative and confidential relations with a young person,
- work with young people in groups and teams,
- enable young people to acquire competences,
- undertake activities to disseminate the results of young people's work,
- ensure the quality of one's own work and take care of one's own personal and professional development,
- respect the principles of sustainable development and the protection of health at work with young people.

More information on competence framework in the Slovenian language:
<http://www.nrpslo.org/poklicni-standard.aspx/33655450>.

There are no minimum standards for quality youth work in Slovenia. The Office for Youth, when implementing its yearly/two-yearly call for funding youth work programmes, defines some minimum standards for quality youth work programmes (e.g. evaluation of youth work programmes with active participation of young people, methodology that encourages participation of young people in all phases of the projects/programmes, etc.) and has recently started a process of developing a national framework for quality youth work. For this reason, two national meetings with different stakeholders were organised (one in 2014 and the other in 2018) and the Working Group was designated by the Council of the Government of Slovenia for Youth with the aim of defining quality in youth work.

7. Knowledge and data on youth work

The history of youth work has been well described in the publication *Contributions to the history of the development of the youth sector in Slovenia* written by Janez Škulj, the former director of the National Agency for EU programmes in the field of youth. The same author has also contributed an article to the Youth Partnership publication *History of youth work*.

An important contribution for the development of the concept of youth work in Slovenia was made by the National Youth Council in 2011. Different authors active in the youth work sector prepared a publication on youth work in theory and practice (*Mladinsko delo v teoriji in praksi*) with contributions including: society and young people, youth policy, youth work, history of youth work, impact of youth work, methods in youth work, etc.).

In 2010 and 2011, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth also funded three analyses of the situation of youth work and youth sector in Slovenia, which were carried out by the Youth Network MaMa and the Foundation Pohorski Bataljon. These three publications examined the functioning and impacts of the youth centres and youth field organisations in Slovenia as well as youth work at the local level:

- Youth work and youth policy at the local level (*Mladinsko delo in mladinska politika na lokalni ravni*), 2010; Youth Network MaMa;
- Youth Centres in Slovenia (*Analiza razvoja in potencialov mladinskih centrov v Sloveniji*); 2011, Youth Network MaMa;
- Analysis of the Situation and Potentials of Non-governmental Youth Field in Slovenia (*Analiza razvoja ter potencialov nevladja mladinskega polja v Sloveniji*), 2011, Foundation Pohorski Bataljon).

In 2012, the Youth Council of Slovenia published its analysis of the functioning and impacts of national youth organisations (*Analiza razvoja in potencialov nacionalnih mladinskih organizacij v Sloveniji*).

Other important publications:

Analysis of local youth policies in municipalities (*Analiza lokalnih mladinskih politik po občinah*), 2015, Institute for youth policy;

Youth 2010 (*Raziskava mladina 2010*), 2010, Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth

Youth 2013 (*Raziskava mladina 2013*), 2013, Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth

Analysis of work and potentials for growth and development of local youth councils (*Analiza dela in potencialov za rast in razvoj mladinskih svetov lokalnih skupnosti*), 2013, National Youth Council.

In the period 2009-2012, four million euros from the European Social Fund were allocated through a special tender for establishing eight content networks bringing together youth organisations and external partners; they aim to provide better training to young people in the areas of social, citizenship and cultural competences. All networks focus on quality human resources training within the framework of an emerging complex society, which is based on formal and non-formal forms and methods of education.

The networks were engaged in providing conceptual bases and documents and in testing models aimed at increasing the competences of young people who develop their competences through non-formal education in the youth work field. In parallel, the youth sector in Slovenia was also strengthened.

Network contents:

1. Development of models of formal and informal education for the youth worker for inclusion in programs of organisations;
2. Development of active citizenship;
3. Raising public awareness on youth topics;
4. The establishment and development of local youth policy;
5. Intergenerational co-operation;
6. Developing the social capital of youth;
7. Developing the research culture of youth;
8. Intercultural dialogue and understanding of other cultures.

There are no systematic data on the number of young people and the number of youth workers available. The closest estimations are the data collected within the public call for co-financing of youth work programmes implemented by the Office of Republic of Slovenia for Youth. In 2017, there were 123 598 young people involved in the youth work programmes of 109 organisations in the youth sector.

8. European and international dimension of youth work in the country

The Republic of Slovenia, mainly through the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, participates in different intergovernmental bodies. It is active in the Joint Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (CMJ), in the Youth Working Party of the Council of the EU, as well as in the relevant bodies of the United Nations. Slovenia is a party to The Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card, and is active in the follow-up group of the agreement.

The Office for Youth has translated the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on youth work into Slovenian, and has disseminated it to relevant stakeholders (available here: http://www.ursm.gov.si/nc/si/medijsko_sredisce/novica/5745/).

There are, however, no special measures on the national level that offer extra support for international youth work. The activities are mostly funded through Erasmus+: Youth in action programme, which is the main programme in Slovenia to promote the international dimension of youth work. Slovenia has one of the highest numbers of project applications, taking into account the funds available, so it can be claimed that international youth work is quite popular among the organisations in the youth sector in Slovenia.

Organisations in the youth sector are also active in the international youth work. Slovenian National Youth Council is for a member organisation of the European Youth Forum (YFJ), and several of its member (youth) organisations are members of the international non-governmental youth organisations (Zveza Tabornikov Slovenije – national scout movement is a part of WOSM etc.). There are several other organisations that actively participate in European organisations and networks, for example the Institute MOBIN is a member of the EYCA network, Institute MISSS is a member of the ERYCA network, and Institute MOVIT is a part of the Eurodesk network.