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EVALUATION - THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUALIFICATIONS

Occupations, in the traditional sense, no longer follow the dynamics of the labor market, but express the complexity of the tasks, which are constantly changing in the sphere of work. Increasingly rapid development of the economy, especially the development of new technologies and services, causes constant updating of the existing occupations and the development of new occupations or qualifications required to complete the profession or sets of tasks in the profession. In the Republic of Slovenia the document that serves as the basis for designing different pathways to achieve professional qualifications is the national occupational standard. It is important for the occupational standard to respond quickly to the demands of the labor market and the demands of the modern ways of organizing work in companies and craft or service activities.

The Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (Institute for VET) involves in the process of developing occupational standards the most prominent employers in the field of industry or other entities in the field of craft or service activities. These stakeholders together with the Institute for VET on the basis of development trends define current occupational profiles and standards and help identify the need for new qualifications.

More about the benefits of NVQ for the applicants

National Vocational Qualifications give individuals a possibility to validate their skills and knowledge obtained through the pursuit of one's occupation, volunteer work, leisure activities, participation in non-formal training programs, self-learning etc. National Vocational Qualifications attests to one's competence to perform a certain occupation. Adults can obtain national Vocational Qualifications if they:

- acquired different vocational competences throughout their lifetime, but did not have them assessed or awarded;
- reached the age of majority (18) or are exceptionally younger and who no longer enjoy the status of an apprentice or secondary school student and have gained relevant work experience;
- wish to be promoted in their professional career without obtaining a higher level of professional education or completing a formal education programme.

The certificate is not merely valid at a company level, but is also recognized at national and European level since it is also included into the Slovene and European Qualification framework. The applicant who has obtained the National Vocational Qualification has better chances to find a job or be promoted in the workplace. Benefits include:

- providing for fairly quick and simple acquisition of recognized documents to pursue the occupation;

- enabling the development of one's career and personal development as the results of learning and experience acquired throughout one's lifetime are being validated;
- facilitating an applicant's transition between different companies and sectors since National Vocational Qualifications represent a publicly recognized document;
- applicant is more competitive in the labor market, both in Slovenia as well as in the EU Member States;
- applicant can be promoted in his/her career at the same level of education as he/she can obtain a publicly recognized document to pursue the occupation at a more advanced level in terms of work complexity;
- applicant acquires the basis for possible remuneration by the company;
- enhanced social integration and motivation for further training;
- better employment opportunities for job seekers and inactive population.

National Vocational Qualification for Intercultural Mediator and Community Interpreter for Albanian

In cooperation with Slovene and international experts, the most important stakeholders in Slovene public institutions and human and social services, and with the representatives of TRAMIG consortium, the Institute for VET guided the working group in developing new qualifications in the field of integration of migrants and interpreting. The qualifications were prepared according to the Slovene National Qualification Law: first step was the preparation of the proposal and the next preparation of the occupational standards and catalogues for the two qualifications. It was agreed that in 2019 only documents for two national vocational qualifications in the field of integration of migrants will be prepared: Intercultural mediator and Community interpreter for the Albanian language. Since in Slovenia there are, also, labor market needs for the interpretation in other "migrant" languages, national vocational qualifications for community interpreters for Arabic and Persian are planned to be prepared in near future.

The working group, which consisted of the experts from the field of integration of migrants and that of interpreting, analyzed the tasks in the profession's profile and trends in the activities of mediation and interpreting. It developed two occupational standards, which determine the content of a vocational qualification and define the knowledge, skills and professional competences needed for the practicing of the profession. Professional/occupational competences are outlined in the form of the abilities of the candidate that are needed in different professional settings. The competences that were identified during this process for the two professions are presented below.

Intercultural mediator is able to:

- plan and organize work activities in the field of intercultural mediation
- act as a communication bridge between persons whose first language is not Slovenian and stakeholders in the field of integration / integration of immigrants
- establish and facilitate intercultural communication and work in institutional and non-institutional settings
- establish an open attitude towards the linguistic, cultural and other diversity of the target groups
- adhere to the principles of interculturality based on the respect for the diversity of people, their peaceful coexistence and act to overcome stereotypes and prejudices
- ensure the quality and efficiency of work and be focused on achieving solutions in a given situation
- protect health and the environment and to use modern information and communication tools
- take care of their own professional development in the field of integration / integration of immigrants

Community interpreter for Albanian language is able to:

- plan, organize and monitor work activities in the field of interpretation and translation from Albanian into Slovenian and vice versa
- work in institutional and non-institutional settings, in different areas of social life
- interpret and translate the accompanying short texts from Albanian into Slovenian for the needs of the community
- interpret and translate the accompanying short texts from Slovenian into Albanian for the needs of the community
- interpret in consecutive interpreting mode, take notes during the interpreted assignment, sight-translate materials written in both working languages, use chuchotage
- use the equipment (such as tele- and videoconferencing technology)
- comply with international codes of ethics and standards for community interpreters
- relate well with with users of interpretation services, various organizations and others
- ensure the quality of community interpretation and take care of one's own professional development
- protect health and ensure safety at work
- develop entrepreneurial skills, skills and behavior and use information and communication technology

The two occupational standards with their tasks, skills, knowledge and competences present the document basis for the development of vocational qualifications. These first documents were approved on 20 December 2019 by the professional Council¹ for Vocational and Professional Education and will be made public by the end of January 2020 on www.nrpslo.org as soon as the Ministry of Labor gives its final approval.

At the same time – in year 2019 – also the catalogues for both qualifications were being developed by the working groups of experts. The catalogues will serve as the document basis for the certification of National Vocational Qualifications – for the validation and verification of the skills and competencies of the applicants.

On 22 May 2020, the Minister of labor of the Republic of Slovenia approved two catalogues of professional knowledge and skills standards for both professional qualifications in the field of integration of migrants, namely the those for Intercultural Mediator and those for the Community Interpreter for the Albanian. With this action, both qualifications came into force and are published on the websites of the Slovenian National Information Center (NRP): <https://www.nrpslo.org/podrobnosti/npk/80483271> and <https://www.nrpslo.org/details/npk/20871151>.

With the approval of both catalogues, the last formal legal condition in Slovenia was fulfilled (followed by the implementation by the National Examination Center), so that at the beginning of 2021 it will be possible for candidates to actually obtain a certificate in Slovenia - of course, after verification and certification of their competences. The certificate that the candidate will obtain on the basis of the evaluation of the personal collection folder and the practical assessment of knowledge and skills testifies that the holder of the certificate is able to effectively perform work in the mentioned fields at the Slovenian 6 or European 5 qualification level (5 EQF level).

¹ The council, founded by the Government of Slovenia, is the highest authority in the field of vocational qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia. It decides on professional matters in the field of vocational education and provides professional assistance in decision-making and regulation of this field.

Given the fact that both vocational qualifications are prepared transparently, based on defined learning outcomes in occupational/vocational standards and at a certain level of difficulty, I suggest that both vocational standards and the catalogue of standards of professional skills be translated into English. This will allow both qualification documents to assist and guide the development of similar professional qualifications in other EU countries, which is also one of the goals of the TRAMIG project, since such qualifications help with the integration of migrants. The English translations of the national occupational standard and the catalogue of standards of professional skills with its transparent definition and verification of the learning outcomes, which is valid at the European level, will enable faster adjustment to needs of the labor market in the field of integration of migrants. It will help candidates understand the expectations of employers and assist employers to find and employ the right profile for their needs.

Prepared by mag. Barbara Velkov Rozman, Institute of RS for VET, and member of the Advisory Board at the TRAMIG project

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Velkov Rozman', is positioned over the text of the preparer's name.