
The background features a complex geometric pattern of overlapping rectangles in three colors: dark blue, light blue, and yellow. The dark blue forms the largest background area. Light blue and yellow blocks are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some blocks overlapping others. A prominent white horizontal bar is located in the lower right quadrant, partially overlapping the dark blue and light blue blocks. The text is positioned in the lower left area, within a dark blue block.

**GUIDELINES
FOR IMPLEMENTING
ADULT EDUCATION
GUIDANCE AS A
PUBLIC SERVICE**



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Prepared by members of the working group appointed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport: Katja Dovžak, MSc (MESS, group leader), Lidija Fischinger (MESS), Urška Marentič (IRSVET), Brigita Kruder, MSc (ECAE), Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MSc (SIAE), Margerita Zagmajster, MSc (SIAE), Andreja Dobrovoljc, MSc (SIAE), Anita Jug Došler, PhD (SIAE), Petra Rozman, MSc (Škofja Loka AEC) and Franja Centrih (UPI Žalec AEC).

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SUMMARY

According to Article 52 of the Adult Education Act (AEA-1), which was adopted in 2018, guidance in adult education is the subject of the public service in this field in Slovenia. In order to ensure quality performance of guidance, in June 2020, the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Adult Education adopted the **Guidelines for Implementing Adult Education Guidance as a Public Service**.¹

Guidance in adult education encompasses the following three areas of guidance:

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

Guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education refers to the professional support of counsellors to adults who plan to enrol into education or continue their previously-started education. Counsellors offer adults comprehensive information regarding their education possibilities and help them decide. Counsellors also encourage and motivate adults to participate in and continue their education before, during and after their education and learning, both in terms of continuation of education and career development.

Guidance on identification and documentation refers to the professional support provided by counsellors to adults on identification and documentation of their previously acquired knowledge and skills, which are the first two phases in the comprehensive process of validating their previously acquired knowledge and skills. The active role of the adult in gathering certificates and other documentation is emphasised as well as the active role of the counsellor in guiding the adult through the process and presenting the possibilities of using the results of this process in continuation of education and career development.

¹ The Guidelines were prepared by members of the working group appointed by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport: Katja Dovžak, MSc (MESS, group leader), Lidija Fischinger (MESS), Urška Marentič (IRSVET), Brigita Kruder, MSc (ECAE), Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MSc (SIAE), Margerita Zagmajster, MSc (SIAE), Andreja Dobrovoljc, MSc (SIAE), Anita Jug Došler, PhD (SIAE), Petra Rozman, MSc (Škofja Loka AEC) and Franja Centrih (UPI Žalec AEC).

Guidance on self-directed learning means the professional support provided to the adult by the counsellor within the framework of organised self-directed learning. The guidance takes place before, during and after it. Guidance on organised self-directed learning includes the provision of information, identification of needs, guidance on materials and learning technologies, motivation and guidance in the learning of contents and achieving adult learning objectives, analysis of learning outcomes and seeking learning opportunities.

Guidance in adult education, which is carried out as a public service, **is intended for all adults**, and **in particular** should be **accessible to vulnerable adults**. Special attention is placed on adults without completed primary, vocational or professional education or adults with low basic skills. It is designed for adults who may become (potential participants) or already are included in education at an educational organisation.

The Guidelines comprise the list of terms (terminology) and following **seven chapters**:

1. Introduction
2. Professional background for the definition of guidance in adult education
3. Content of guidance in adult education
4. Organisation of guidance in adult education
5. Staff and other conditions for implementing guidance in adult education
6. Evidence and documentation in guidance in adult education
7. Evaluation and development of the quality of guidance in adult education

In defining the content of guidance in adult education, which is carried out as a public service, **current professional approaches and experience** in the development and implementation of guidance for adults in Slovenia were taken into account, in particular the experience of providers of information and guidance in adult education (IGAE centres)² and the experience of providers of self-directed learning (SDLC)³ as well as experience in regard to developing and implementing the identification and documentation of knowledge and skills that were gained through formal and non-formal education and in informal learning.⁴ European and national strategic and professional guidelines for guidance in adult education were also taken into account.

2 First established in 2001, there were 17 IGAE centres in operation by 2019.

3 The first SDLCs were established in 1995; in 2019, there were 38 providers of SDLC activities.

4 From 2009 to 2019, there were several projects in Slovenia, financed through the European Social Fund, that brought about the development of approaches and tools for the validation and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences of adults obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning.

TERMINOLOGY

Guidance in Adult Education

Guidance in AE, which is carried out as a public service (“guidance in AE”), includes: guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education, on identification and documentation of knowledge and skills and on self-directed learning.

Education professionals providing guidance in AE

In accordance with Article 26 of the AE Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 6/18; “AEA-1”), education professionals providing guidance in AE include: AE counsellor, AE organiser and other professionals (“AE counsellor”).

Informing

Informing means the AE counsellor’s provision of information to the adult.

Advising

Advising refers to short-term assistance by an AE counsellor, which includes explanations, relevant clarifications or advice, in addition to the provision of information and data.

Counselling

Counselling is a professionally more complex and longer process that includes comprehensive in-depth approaches to guidance and facilitates the development of the adult in terms of understanding the processes of decision-making, organisation and validation of his own education and learning as well as career development.

Guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education

Guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education refers to the professional support of AE counsellors to adults who plan to include anew into education or continue their previously-started education. AE counsellors offer adults comprehensive information regarding their education possibilities and help them decide. AE counsellors also encourage and motivate adults to include in and continue their education before, during and after their education and learning.

Guidance on identification and documentation

Guidance on identification and documentation refers to the professional support provided by AE counsellors to adults on identification and documentation of their previously acquired knowledge and skills, which are the first two phases in the comprehensive process of validating their previously acquired knowledge and skills. The active role of the adult in gathering certificates and other documentation is emphasised as well as the active role of the AE counsellor in guiding the adult through the process and presenting the possibilities of using the results of this process in further education and career development.

Identification

Identification is the first phase in the process of validating previously acquired knowledge and skills, where the adult, by himself or together with the AE counsellor, identifies and becomes aware of the knowledge and skills he has obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning.

Documentation

Documentation is the second phase in the process of validating previously acquired knowledge and skills, where the AE counsellor guides the adult in gathering and organising documentation on learning outcomes he has obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning.

Validation of knowledge and skills

The professional guidelines for validating knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning define validation as a process that has the following four phases: identification, documentation, assessment and certification (European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning, 2015).

Guidance on self-directed learning

Guidance on self-directed learning means the professional support provided to the adult by the AE counsellor within the framework of organised self-directed learning (“self-directed learning”). The guidance takes place before, during and after it. Guidance on self-directed learning includes the provision of information, identification of needs, guidance on materials and learning technologies, motivation and guidance in the learning of contents and achieving adult learning objectives, analysis of learning outcomes and seeking learning opportunities.

Career guidance in Adult Education

Career guidance in AE refers to the provision of professional support through which AE counsellor helps the adult to highlight his career development opportunities, which are based on opportunities for further training and learning and contribute to the achievement of the adult's set career goals.

Career

In modern society, career is defined in the broadest sense as an individual's entire life course. Career means the horizontal and vertical progression of the adult. Career development also means the acquisition of various knowledge, skills and experience. It is an active process consisting of different forms of learning and work.

Provider of guidance in AE

Pursuant to Article 53 of the AEA-1, the provider of guidance in AE, which is carried out as a public service ("AE public service provider"), is a public AE organisation whose establishment is laid down in Article 27 of the AEA-1.

Professional working group

The professional working group is a professional body of the AE public service provider that consists of education professionals from different AE programmes or activities.

Strategic Council

The Strategic Council is a form of collaboration between the AE public service provider and other providers of guidance in the Slovenian education system and other organisations in the local or regional environment. Several AE public service providers may participate in the Strategic Council. The organisations agree on the purpose, content and manner of cooperation.

Adults in guidance in AE

Adults in guidance in AE ("adults") are individuals aged at least 15 who have fulfilled their legal compulsory education requirements and wish to acquire, broaden or deepen their knowledge and skills. The target group includes adults who are already involved in education and potential participants.

Vulnerable adults in guidance in AE

Vulnerable adults in guidance in AE ("vulnerable adults") are adults whose access to education and learning is hampered due to various barriers, forms of deprivation and deficits and who participate in AE only rarely or not at all.

Competence

“Competence indicates an individual’s ability to make appropriate use of their learning achievements in a variety of circumstances (education, work, personal or professional development). It cannot be limited to the cognitive dimension alone (use of theory, concepts and tacit or hidden knowledge); it also contains a practical aspect (including a variety of skills), motivational and value orientations, views, emotions and other social and behavioural components. Competences comprise internal mental structures – meaning the abilities, capacities and dispositions that are characteristic of an individual” (Guidelines for Preparation of Publicly Verified Education Programmes for Adults, 2020).

Skills

“In addition to knowledge, skills are a directly measurable component of competence. Together with the knowledge and experience acquired and the abilities developed, skills allow an individual to solve problems and perform certain tasks or jobs” (Guidelines for Preparation of Publicly Verified Education Programmes for Adults, 2020).

Knowledge

“Knowledge is a cognitive aspect of competence and is directly measurable. It is a set of facts, principles and theories related to a given field of education that is acquired through learning. We distinguish between declarative (theoretical, propositional) and procedural (process, practical, dispositional) knowledge. Declarative knowledge includes statements about certain events, facts and empirically substantiated generalisations as well as in-depth principles about the nature of things. Procedural knowledge includes heuristic knowledge, methodology, planning of practice, appropriate procedures and skills-related strategies” (Guidelines for Preparation of Publicly Verified Education Programmes for Adults, 2020).

Learning outcomes

“These are the sets of knowledge and skills the individual has acquired during the educational process. Learning outcomes are defined in the programmes and represent the expected level of knowledge and skills the participant needs to demonstrate; they are examined in the assessment procedures” (Guidelines for Preparation of Publicly Verified Education Programmes for Adults, 2020).

ABBREVIATIONS USED

AE – Adult Education

AEA-1 – Adult Education Act

AEC – Adult Education Centre

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CPI – Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training

EC – European Commission

ECAE – Expert Council for Adult Education

EU – European Union

EUROPOP – European Population Projections

Eurostat – European Statistical Office

GOAL – Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners

IAEVG – International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance

ICT – Information and communications technology

IGAE – Information and Guidance in Adult Education

IMAD – Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development of the Republic of Slovenia

LCG – Lifelong career guidance

LLL – Lifelong learning

MESS – Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

NCP LCG – National Coordination Point for Lifelong Career Guidance

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

OECD – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PCSNA-1 – Placement of Children with Special Needs Act

PIAAC – Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences

PS – Primary school

ReMPAE13-20 – Resolution on the Master Plan for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia for 2013–2020

SDLC – Self-Directed Learning Centre

SIAE – Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

SQF – Slovenian Qualifications Framework

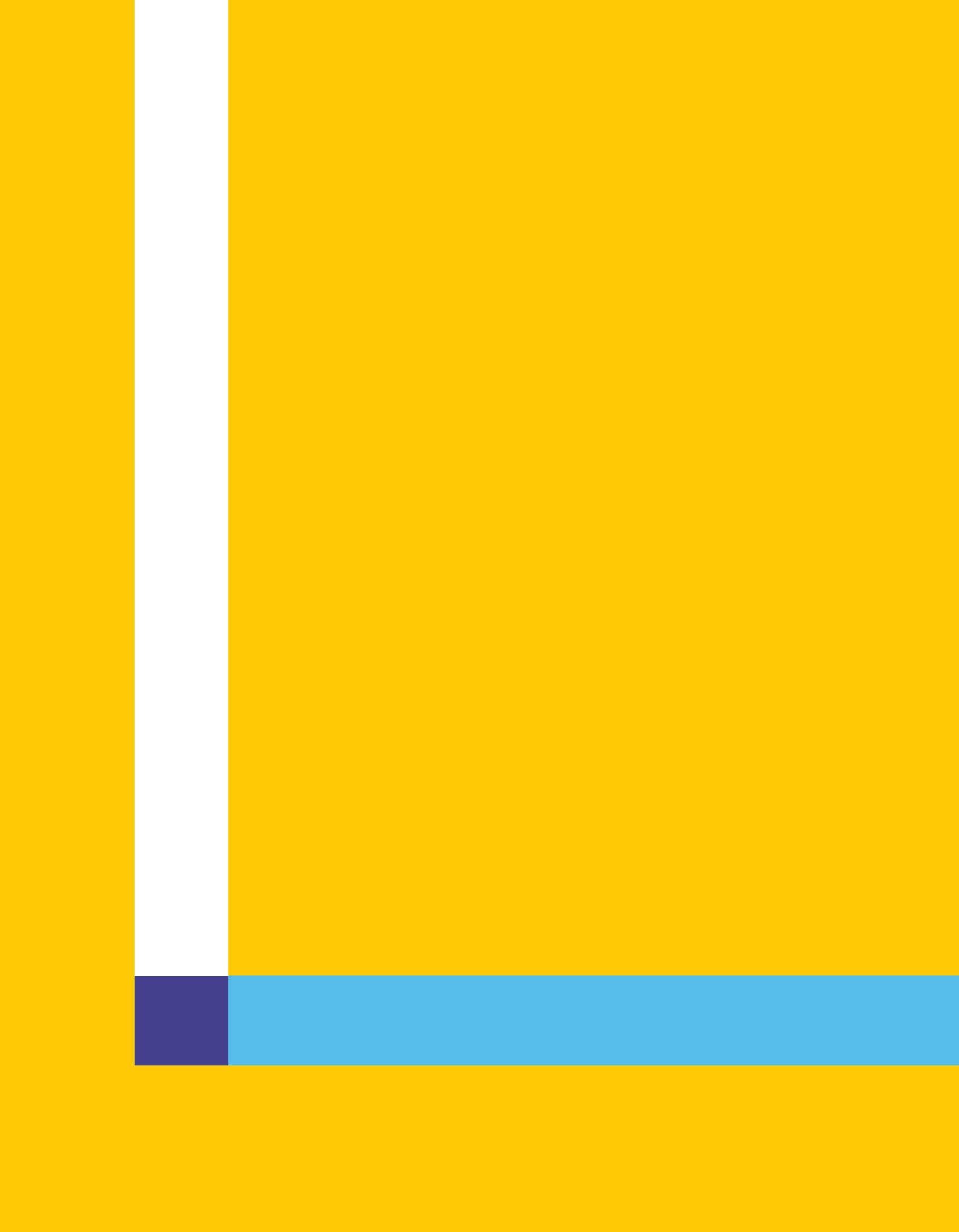
SS – Secondary school

SURS – Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia

TCE – Training and continuing education

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VREPDA – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act



1 INTRODUCTION

The AEA-1 regulates public interest in AE and the manner of pursuing the public interest in education programmes for adults and AE activities. One of the activities is guidance, which according to Article 52 of the AEA-1 is the subject of the public service in AE.

Guidance in AE includes guidance on:

- enrolment in the primary school programme for adults and continuing the educational pathway;
- enrolment in verified education programmes for adults that do not grant an officially recognised educational qualification;
- enrolment in non-formal education programmes for adults;
- identifying and documenting the knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning, supported by documentation, for personal development, further education and entry into the labour market; and
- self-directed learning.

Guidance in AE is intended for all adults, and in particular should be accessible to vulnerable adults. Special attention is placed on adults without completed primary, vocational or professional education or adults with low basic skills.

By decision No. 024-49/2018/1 dated 28 December 2018, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport appointed a working group⁵ for the drawing up of the Guidelines for Implementing AE Guidance as a Public Service (“Guidelines”).

The Guidelines are based on the principles of public interest in AE set out in Article 4 of the AEA-1, whereby the principles listed below are particularly important for guidance in AE:

- lifelong education and learning;
- equity and equality and equal opportunities with regard to accessing, addressing and achieving learning outcomes;

⁵ The working group included the following members: Katja Dovžak, MSc (MESS, group leader), Lidija Fischinger (MESS), Urška Marentič (IRSVET), Brigita Kruder, MSc (ECAE), Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MSc (SIAE), Margerita Zgajmajster, MSc (SIAE), Andreja Dobrovoljc, MSc (SIAE), Anita Jug Došler, PhD (SIAE), Petra Rozman, MSc (Škofja Loka AEC) and Franja Centrih (UPI Žalec AEC).

- freedom and autonomy with regard to choose educational paths, content, forms, means and methods;
- creativity and flexibility, taking into account specific cultural, social and educational characteristics.

The Guidelines also take into account the goals by which the public interest in AE is realised. They are set out in Article 5 of the AEA-1, whereby these goals are particularly important for guidance in AE:

- greater access to quality educational and learning opportunities;
- acquisition of general and vocational competences for personal growth as well as active participation in the community and on the labour market;
- empowerment for democratic participation in social processes, lifelong learning (“LLL”) and socially responsible behaviour;
- lowering structural and especially individual barriers to participation of the population in education and learning; and
- encouraging and motivating individuals with low education and other vulnerable groups to participate in education and learning.

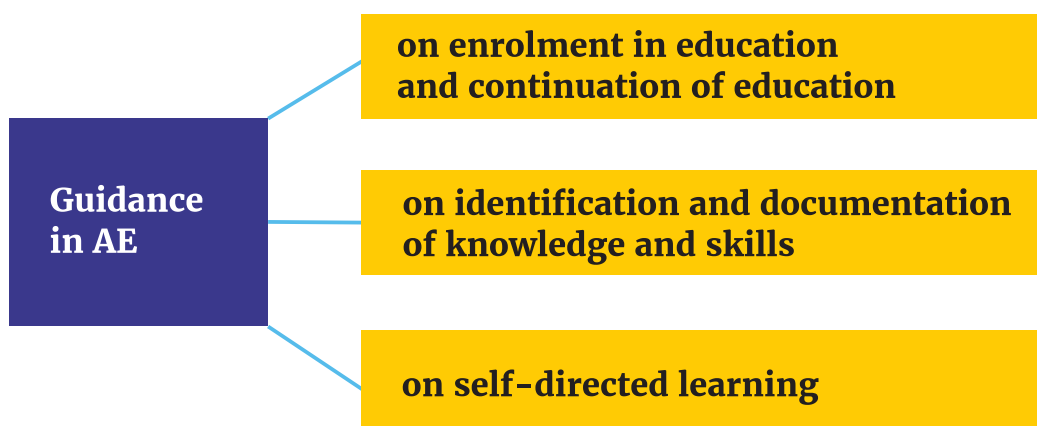
In these Guidelines, guidance in AE encompasses the following three areas of guidance (as shown in Figure 1):⁶

- enrolment in education and continuation of education;
- identification and documentation of knowledge and skills and
- self-directed learning.

Guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education comprises the following guidance activities: guidance on enrolment in the primary school programme for adults and continuing the educational pathway, on enrolment in verified education programmes for adults that lead to officially recognised educational qualifications and on enrolment in non-formal education programmes for adults. Integrating these three guidance activities into a single area is professionally sound, because the guidance work involved in all three is underpinned by the same starting points and approaches that contribute either to the enrolment or to the continuation of the educational pathway of adults at various levels of formal education or in non-formal education and in learning.

⁶ What the areas have in common is described in the second and third chapter along with the specific content of each area.

Figure 1: Guidance in AE



These Guidelines set out guidance in AE carried out by AE public service providers. Guidance in AE is intended for all adults in the local or regional environment where the AE public service provider operates. It is designed for adults who may become or already are included in any educational organisation.

In regard to guidance in AE, these Guidelines specify the starting points for the definition of guidance in AE, content, organisation, staff and other conditions for implementation, records and documentation and the evaluation and development of quality.

In defining the content of guidance in AE, current professional approaches and experience in the development and implementation of guidance for adults in Slovenia were taken into account, in particular the experience of providers of information and guidance in AE (“IGAE centres”)⁷ and the experience of providers of self-directed learning (“SDLC”)⁸ as well as experience in regard to developing and implementing the identification and documentation of knowledge and skills that were gained through formal and non-formal education and in informal learning.⁹ European and national strategic and professional guidelines for guidance in AE were also taken into account.

⁷ First established in 2001, there were 17 IGAE centres in operation by 2019.

⁸ The first SDLCs were established in 1995; in 2019, there were 38 providers of SDLC activities.

⁹ From 2009 to 2014, there were several projects in Slovenia, financed through the European Social Fund, that brought about the development of approaches and tools for the validation and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences of adults obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning. In regard to AE, the work continues in the 2016–2022 period as part of the ESF project Professional support to information and guidance activities and validation and recognition of non-formally acquired knowledge 2016–2022, which is led by the SIAE.

2 PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND FOR THE DEFINITION OF GUIDANCE IN AE

This chapter sets out the professional bases for defining guidance in AE, the basic principles of guidance in AE and the target groups and lists the European and national strategic and professional guidelines.

2.1 Professional bases for defining guidance in AE

Guidance in AE is one of the main support activities in AE that significantly contributes to:

- greater accessibility to education;
- greater enrolment in education; and
- greater effectiveness and efficiency of AE and learning.

Guidance in AE contributes to the achievement of individual goals in the education and learning of the adult as well as to the implementation of the strategic goals of the country, region, individual group or organisation. It is defined as comprehensive professional support for adults at all stages of the education and learning process: before and during education and after education and learning (Vilič Klenovšek, 2018).

The expert justification for guidance in AE is founded upon the needs of adults for LLL, as defined by S. Jelenc Krašovec and Z. Jelenc (2009), who referred to it as andragogic guidance work. They wrote: “/.../ The basic goal and function of andragogic guidance work is: to help the individual carry out their education or learning successfully. This basic goal, which defines the whole process, can be broken down into a series of individual goals, such as:

- realising the individual’s goals, motives and values related to education and learning;
- strengthening motivation and self-confidence in education and learning;
- choosing appropriate education offers and opportunities;
- choosing and determining methods of execution and strategies;
- effectively organising the execution of education and learning;
- effective and efficient learning;
- developing and strengthening competences for learning;

- application and possibilities of using the acquired knowledge;
- monitoring education and learning activities” (ibid., 2009, pp. 24–25).

The above goals demonstrate the complexity and diversity of guidance in AE.

In these Guidelines, guidance in AE encompasses the following three areas of guidance:

- enrolment in education and continuation of education;
- identification and documentation of knowledge and skills;
- self-directed learning.

As part of guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education,

AE counsellors offer professional support to adults who plan to include anew into education or continue their previously-started education. They help adults decide by giving them comprehensive information regarding their education possibilities in the primary school programme for adults, in secondary and higher vocational education programmes for adults, in verified education programmes for adults that do not grant an officially recognised educational qualification and in non-formal education programmes for adults. AE counsellors also encourage and motivate adults to participate in and continue their education or learning before, during and after their education and learning.

With regard to guidance on identification and documentation, AE counsellors offer

professional support to adults on identification and documentation of the knowledge and skills they acquired in formal and non-formal education, and in informal learning, which are the first two phases in the validation process (the other two are assessment and certification). In this process, the adult works together with the AE counsellor to identify and become aware of the knowledge and skills he has obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning. The AE counsellor guides the adult in gathering and organising documentation on learning outcomes he has obtained in formal, non-formal and informal pathways of education, learning and work. Having an active role in this is essential for both, the adult and for the AE counsellor, who guides the adult through the process and shows him how the results of this process can be used in further education and career development.

With regard to guidance on self-directed learning, the AE counsellor offers adults

professional support within the framework of organised self-directed learning. Guidance on self-directed learning includes: the provision of information, identification of needs, planning, motivation and guidance on materials, learning technologies, the learning of contents and achieving learning objectives, analysis of learning outcomes and seeking opportunities for self-directed learning.

In addition to guidance in AE, Slovenia also offers: a school counselling service in primary and secondary schools, guidance in higher vocational colleges, guidance in faculties and guidance in Employment Service offices.

Guidance on career planning and development is also provided in companies, private human resource development organisations, NGOs and elsewhere. The figure in the appendix shows how guidance in AE is positioned in Slovenia.

With the aim of achieving mutual coordination and integration of guidance activities in the Slovenian education system, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport appointed the Expert Group for Lifelong Career Guidance (“LCG”) in 2014.¹⁰ The expert group is responsible for exchanging information on activities and coordinating the joint activities presented on the website of the National Coordination Point for Lifelong Career Guidance (“NCP LCG”), which is managed by the Employment Service of Slovenia (more information: <https://www.vkotocka.si/strokovna-skupina/>).

Guidance in AE differs from other guidance activities in these key aspects:

1. **content:** guidance in AE focuses on guidance related to enrolment in education and continuation of education, identification and documentation of knowledge and skills and self-directed learning;
2. **providers:** providers of guidance in AE are public organisations for AE;
3. **target group:** all adults, especially vulnerable adults;
4. **collaboration with the environment:** guidance in AE includes at least the following:
 - analysis of the needs of adults in the local or regional environment for guidance, education and self-directed learning;
 - promotion of LLL as well as encouraging and motivating adults, especially vulnerable adults, for education and learning;
 - cooperation with educational and other organisations and social stakeholders in the local or regional environment and at the national level;
 - development work.

All aspects of guidance in AE listed above are described in more detail below.

¹⁰ The expert group uses the term lifelong career guidance (LCG) as an umbrella term. Pursuant to the Labour Market Regulation Act (2010), lifelong career guidance includes activities that enable the identification of capacities, competences and interests for making decisions in the field of employment, education, training and choosing a profession and enable guidance through various paths of life in such a manner that an individual becomes aware of their capacities and competences and uses them accordingly.

2.2 Basic principles of guidance in AE

The development and implementation of guidance in AE is based on these basic principles:¹¹

1. accessibility;
2. voluntariness;
3. professionalism;
4. development orientation;
5. integration and collaboration;
6. transparency and documentation;
7. quality and evaluation of own work.

Each of these principles is briefly described below.

2.2.1 Principle of accessibility

The principle of accessibility includes:

- a) the principle of equal opportunities and accessibility for all;
- b) the free-of-charge principle; and
- c) the principle of dedicating special attention to vulnerable groups in society.

a) Principle of equal opportunities and accessibility for all

Guidance is provided for different groups of adults according to their needs in regard to personal and professional development, development for active citizenship and work-related development, regardless of any obstacles they might have (physical, personal, social and other).

Accessibility for adults is also ensured by carrying out guidance in AE in various forms of organisation, both at the provider's offices and through outreach. Guidance in AE can be implemented in different forms and in different ways.

b) Free-of-charge principle

Guidance in AE is free of charge. This way, it is also accessible to adults who are less motivated and to those who are already socially isolated or marginalised in society because of their poor financial standing.

11 The following sources were taken into account in defining the basic principles of guidance in AE: Čačinovič Vogrinčič, G., et al. (2008). Programske smernice. Svetovalna služba v gimnazijah, nižjih in srednjih poklicnih šolah ter strokovnih šolah in v dijaških domovih and Etične smernice IAEVG – slovenska priredba (2019).

c) Principle of dedicating special attention to vulnerable groups in society

To enable all adults to be included in LLL, guidance in AE pays special attention to vulnerable adults. Various barriers make it even more difficult for these adults to engage with guidance, learning and education, which is why they need additional motivation. Guidance in AE offers them new opportunities to go beyond the limitations and empowers them to participate in LLL.

2.2.2 Principle of voluntariness

The basis for guidance in AE is the voluntary decision of the adult to make use of the professional support tailored to his needs, characteristics and the goal of his enrolment in guidance.

2.2.3 Principle of professionalism

The AE counsellor provides guidance professionally, in accordance with modern theoretical findings and guidance skills and taking into account ethical principles. The AE counsellor must take into consideration in their work the following:

a) Principle of professionalism of work

Professionalism of work in guidance is based on:

- confidentiality;
- respectfulness;
- adult orientation;
- objectivity and impartiality;
- information;
- monitoring and taking into account the needs of the individual and their cultural, social, educational and other characteristics.

b) Principle of professional autonomy

The AE counsellor carries out guidance in AE with professional autonomy, irrespective of the expectations of others in or outside their organisation. They give adults concrete, independent and professionally sound information. The basic principle observed by the AE counsellor in carrying out guidance is the benefit to adults and operation in line with ethical and professional guidance standards.

c) Principle of professional upskilling

The AE counsellor is responsible for his own continuous professional development. He regularly attends expert meetings, training sessions and other professional events and activities that contribute to the professionalism of his guidance work and to the development of the guidance profession (e.g. learning about new developments in the field, different innovative guidance, educational and learning methods, tools and approaches). They participate in national and international development projects and in upskilling in Slovenia and abroad.

2.2.4 Principle of development orientation

The aim of guidance in AE is the comprehensive treatment of adults in education and the development of this activity in organisations – AE public service providers – in which guidance is implemented. The most important is comprehensive guidance, complemented by other activities where development-analytical work is essential.

Development work of the AE counsellor comprises:

- continuous identification of the needs of various groups of adults in the local or regional environment for guidance, education and learning;
- developing new forms of encouragement and motivation of adults for enrolment in guidance in AE;
- developing different approaches to guidance in AE for individual groups of adults;
- participating in international, national and regional development projects;
- introducing novelties into guidance in AE at the practical level; and
- cooperating with various stakeholders and social partners for this purpose.

Development work also includes active participation of the AE counsellor in expert consultations, conferences or other expert meetings in Slovenia and abroad.

2.2.5 Principle of professional integration and collaboration

In carrying out guidance in AE, the AE counsellor collaborates with education professionals in their organisation (including in the professional working group) and from other organisations (educational and other organisations), as well as with other stakeholders in the local or regional environment (including in the Strategic Council) and at the national level.

He also collaborates with the above in the implementation of comprehensive guidance work (e.g. in representing an adult or, if necessary, in joint guidance) or in the exchange of knowledge and experience. This ensures accessibility, professionalism, independence and quality of guidance in AE and facilitates complementation of the work of various institutions.

2.2.6 Principle of transparency and documentation

The AE counsellor documents guidance in AE in the prescribed manner and using the prepared forms that have been agreed and determined in accordance with guidance in AE. Data obtained in this way serves as a basis for documenting how the guidance process is conducted. The AE counsellor's work must be documented in an agreed uniform manner to ensure transparency of guidance in AE.

2.2.7 Principle of quality and evaluation of own work

The AE counsellor is responsible for the quality implementation of guidance in AE. He regularly monitors and evaluates his own work and draws up reports and expert analyses. He participates in developing and evaluating the quality of guidance in his organisation. At the national level, he works with the organisations in charge of evaluating and developing quality in guidance in AE.

2.3 Target groups in guidance in AE

Guidance in AE is intended for all adults. For greater accessibility of guidance services for adults, guidance in AE should be developed and implemented as close as possible to where the adults live and work, throughout their lives and in a manner that reflects the needs of different groups of adults in the local or regional environment. It should be especially accessible to vulnerable adults whose access to education or learning is hindered due to various barriers, forms of deprivation and deficits and who participate in continuing education and learning only rarely or not at all.

Vulnerable adults are:

- adults without completed primary education;
- the unemployed, in particular older people and the long-term unemployed without vocational or professional education and those with underdeveloped key or occupational competences;

- the employed without vocational or professional education and the employed with underdeveloped basic or occupational competences as well as the employed who are no longer able to practice a profession due to its specific psychophysical requirements, their age or restructuring of the work process;
- adults with underdeveloped basic or occupational competences, regardless of their employment status or other characteristics;
- young adults leaving school early and dropouts;
- other vulnerable adults with limited access to social, cultural, financial and educational goods, such as adults from less developed regions and the rural population, older adults, Roma, minorities, migrants, the homeless, people with disabilities,¹² adults with special needs¹³ and convicts.

When planning and implementing guidance in AE, the AE public service provider should take into account the needs and characteristics of the adults in the given local or regional environment, paying particular attention to vulnerable adults. For this reason, they must regularly analyse the needs of adults for guidance, education and learning and adapt the implementation of guidance accordingly.

2.4 European strategic and professional bases

The strategic importance of guidance in AE is also highlighted by European documents dealing with AE. The Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning in Europe (2011) stipulates, among other things, that it is necessary to enhance access to high-quality education and learning opportunities for adults by encouraging the development of effective lifelong guidance systems (ibid., 2011, p. 3).

The document *Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults* (2016) includes the recommendation that guidance and/or mentoring services should be provided to support learners' progression through all steps of the upskilling process (ibid., 2016, p. 14). The document also contains the recommendations that Member States should enable adults, on the basis of tailored, flexible and quality learning offers, greater access to adult learning, education and upskilling, which also supports participation in self-directed learning opportunities for adults (ibid., 2016).

¹² The status of people with disabilities in Slovenia is, among others, regulated by the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act (VREPDPA, 2014).

¹³ Slovenia has a valid Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (PCSNA-1, 2017), which has not been "transposed" into the field of AE. However, the definition of children with special needs can also be applied *mutatis mutandis* to adults in AE.

The fundamental European documents for guidance include the Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies (2008), which stipulates that guidance is a series of activities that enable citizens at any age to identify their capacities, competences and interests and make educational, training and occupational decisions. Furthermore, the document sets out four priority areas of guidance development, two of which are also important for guidance in AE: enabling access of all citizens to guidance and developing quality assurance systems in guidance (ibid., 2008).

The report *AE and Training in Europe – Widening Access to Learning Opportunities* (2015) specifically highlights the fact that guidance is also important for overcoming the barriers of adults in relation to participation in education.

The Erasmus+ project entitled GOAL (Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners) ran from 2015 to 2018 and featured the participation of six European countries, Slovenia among them. The aim of the project was to draw up key recommendations for developing policies and practices for guidance in AE in EU Member States (the project was carried out within the KA3: Support for Policy Reform programme). The prepared key recommendations cover five areas, which are defined as key areas for planning and implementation of quality and effective guidance in AE (Carpentieri, Lister and Popov, 2018):

1. established partnerships;
2. developed outreach that has been put into practice;
3. defined and ensured continuous improvement of the competences of AE counsellors;
4. ensured quality guidance process that is conducted in accordance with the recommendations of the profession and ethical standards, using appropriate guidance tools;
5. established system for assessment and development of quality.

The proposals designed for Slovenia emphasise that guidance for adults is an important part of the LLL concept and has a fundamental role in raising awareness about the importance of LLL and greater participation of adults in continuing education and training (Dobrovoljc, Kunčič Krapež, Perme, Vilič Klenovšek and Višekruna, 2017). In regard to development policy planning for this area, it was proposed that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport should play a central role and that the existing coordination bodies for AE “/.../ should be in charge of harmonising and searching for optimum solutions that benefit the learning adult in Slovenia” (ibid., 2017, p. 30).

The promotion of non-formal and informal learning validation processes in EU Member States is supported by the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012). The document presents a set of concrete measures that offer every EU citizen the opportunity to participate in the validation and recognition of knowledge acquired through non-formal and informal learning (ibid., 2012).

At the European level, strategic and professional recommendations for the validation of knowledge and skills acquired through formal and non-formal education and through informal learning are also prepared by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (“Cedefop”), which published the new European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning in 2015.

In 2012, to support Member States in the development and upgrading of the validation system, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) prepared the UNESCO guidelines for the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning.

A further three documents that directly or indirectly support the role and implementation of self-directed learning are presented below. The document entitled *Employment and Social Developments in Europe (2016)* emphasises the importance of active state policy in regulating the different forms of LLL and investing in it within the public and private sectors. In *Rethinking Education: investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes (2012)*, Member States were called on to promote open and flexible learning by tapping into the potential of ICT, because it enables more effective learning and greater accessibility and reduces barriers to education. The document *Recommendation on adult learning and education (2015)* highlights the need to adopt measures at the national level to ensure the provision of information and to motivate adults and guide them towards relevant learning opportunities. Member States should have inclusive and sustainable strategies where every individual would have opportunities to learn and fully participate in the development processes of the environment in which he lives and works.

2.5 Slovenian strategic and professional bases

The Master Plan for AE is the main Slovenian strategic paper and technical document for the development of AE. At the time of writing these Guidelines, the Resolution on the Master Plan for AE in the Republic of Slovenia for 2013–2020 (2013) (“ReNPIO13-20”) was in effect.¹⁴

¹⁴ A new strategy paper on the master plan for AE for 2021–2030 is being prepared.

According to ReNPIO13–20, every adult citizen of Slovenia will be provided with equal opportunities for quality education at all stages of life (ibid., 2014). It sets out four key goals (ibid., 2014):

1. raise the level of education of the population and the level of key competences;
2. increase the employability of the active population;
3. improve the opportunities for learning and engagement in education;
4. improve the level of general education.

It also defines a headline indicator to be achieved by 2020: the participation rate of the population aged 25 to 64 in LLL should increase from 14.5 % in 2012 to 19 % in 2020 (the EU target for 2020 is 15 %).

ReNPIO13–20 sets out several activities in support of the achievement of the set strategic goals and indicators in AE in Slovenia, and organised guidance is among them.

The Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and the European Commission is a fundamental document for drawing funds from the European Social Fund that are also intended for the development of AE. At the time of writing these Guidelines, the Partnership Agreement between Slovenia and the European Commission for the period 2014–2020 (2014) was in effect. Thematic objective 10 includes measures for investing in and promoting training, education and the transfer of knowledge to different environments and practices. It highlights the importance of enhancing equal access to LLL for all age groups in the formal, informal and non-formal contexts; improving the knowledge, skills and competences of the labour force and the promotion of flexible opportunities and forms of learning, also through career planning and development and the validation of acquired competences (ibid., 2014). A new document for the period 2021–2027 is being prepared.

The Active Ageing Strategy (2017) addresses the challenges of Slovenia's ageing population. As in other European countries, the age structure of the population in Slovenia is changing, life expectancy is increasing, the share of people over 65 is growing rapidly¹⁵ and the share of the working-age population is decreasing. In the years ahead, these trends will be even more pronounced. In terms of changes to the education and training of older people, emphasis is placed on education and training across the entire life course and on intergenerational cooperation in order to leverage the huge potential of the knowledge and experience of all generations, while these people are still employed (ibid., 2017).

15 In 2016, 18.4 % of the population of Slovenia was aged over 65, which is expected to increase to 24.8 % in 2030 and to 29.5 % in 2060 (source: SURS 2016 and EUROPOP 2013 for 2030 and 2060).

In 2017, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the Vision of Slovenia 2050, a strategic paper for further development that also highlighted the LLL of Slovenia's population as a key goal.

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia also adopted the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 (2017). Its primary objectives and strategic orientations include (ibid., 2017, p. 18):

- an inclusive, healthy, safe and responsible society;
- learning for and through life;
- a highly productive economy that creates added value for all;
- well-preserved natural environment;
- high level of cooperation, competence and governance efficiency.

The Strategy states that knowledge and skills are essential for quality life and work. It notes how important it is “/.../ that learning for and through life includes the largest portion of the population possible, whereby quality and accessibility are crucial, with particular attention paid to disadvantaged groups” (ibid., 2017, p. 26.).

In addition to the strategic development orientations, data on the state of AE in Slovenia additionally underpins the importance of developing and implementing guidance in AE:

- low rate of participation in LLL at ages 25 through 64 (11.2 % in 2019),¹⁶ which is quite far from the 19 % target participation rate by 2020;
- data on participation rates of individual groups of adults shows that adults with less than four years of secondary education participate in LLL four times less often than adults with higher education (Mirčeva, Radovan and Žalec, 2014);
- PIAAC survey data for Slovenia (Javrh, 2016, p. 22) shows that Slovenian achievements are below the OECD average: about one in four adults have low levels of skills; the proportion of adults who achieved the highest levels in individual skills does not exceed 10 % (for example, 3.7 % of adults reached the highest level in problem-solving in technology-rich environments); the proportion of adults who reached the lowest levels (Level 1 or lower) is 24.9 % in literacy skills, 25.8 % in numeracy skills and as much as 49.1 % in problem-solving in technology-rich environments; there are major differences in the mastery of skills according to age, as the proportion of adults aged 45–55 who reached only Level 1 or lower in

¹⁶ Eurostat (2020). Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/education-and-training/data/database>

literacy skills is 34.55 %, which is twice as much compared to adults aged 25–34, 36.17 % in numeracy skills (18.9 % more than adults aged 25–34) and as much as 81.6 % in problem-solving in technology-rich environments (25.5 % more than adults aged 25–34); there are also major differences according to the level of education, socioeconomic situation and having a migrant background.

Orientations in strategic papers and projects as well as other data indicate that the key characteristics of the present times are global change and accelerated development in all areas of human life and work, whereby new knowledge and skills will be key guides and companions. Guidance that supports and develops pathways toward this will be among the key support activities in AE.

3 CONTENT OF GUIDANCE IN AE

This chapter describes the content and structure of the tasks of AE counsellors, divided into six sets. The shares of recommended working hours for all AE counsellors of an AE public service provider at the annual level are divided into these sets:¹⁷

1. direct guidance: 50–55 %;
2. informing: 5–10 %;
3. planning, monitoring and evaluation of guidance: 10–15 %;
4. development tasks: 5–10 %;
5. collaboration and connection inside and outside the organisation: 5–10 %;
6. professional development: 5–10 %.

The share of working hours of direct guidance provided by all AE counsellors at the annual level is at least 50 %. The distribution of working hours for AE counsellors by sets is determined in the AE public service provider's annual action plan in line with professional needs and priorities.

In regard to direct guidance, the specific tasks for each of the three areas of guidance in AE are described below, whereby the tasks of direct guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education (described under point 3.1.a) and the tasks of direct guidance on identification and documentation of knowledge and skills can be linked (described under point 3.1.b).

The tasks described under points 3.2 to 3.6 are common to all three areas of guidance in AE.

3.1 Direct guidance

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 50–55 %.)

In relation to direct guidance, AE counsellor operates based on the specific needs of adults and must know the possibilities and needs of the local environment as well as the wider region and at the national and international level (educational services, shortage and surplus occupations, jobs of tomorrow, labour market conditions, information of educational organisations, access to information through various media, study materials, etc.).

¹⁷ The sources used in calculating individual sets of tasks for guidance in AE: the concept and practice of operating Centres for Information and Guidance in AE – IGAE centres and Self-Directed Learning Centres (SDLC) as well as data from the monitoring of both activities in 2014–2018.

a) Direct guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education

Direct guidance provided by the AE counsellor on enrolment in education and continuation of education comprises:

- encouragement and motivation for enrolment in education and for continuation of education and learning;
- presentation of possibilities and professional support in assessing the most appropriate education and learning opportunities on the basis of prior education and learning (formal, non-formal and informal), career path and other circumstances;
- professional support in the planning and organisation of education and learning, which includes the preparation of an education and learning plan for the adult, a plan for resolving learning difficulties and more;
- training to develop learning competence, career planning and development competence and the like;
- support in removing situational, dispositional and institutional barriers to effective education and learning;
- encouragement and motivation for career planning and development and highlighting career development opportunities arising from education and learning opportunities;
- monitoring the results of guidance and the progress of the adult.

b) Direct guidance on identification and documenting the knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning

The professional guidelines for validating knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning recommend that validation as a process should have the following four phases: identification, documentation, assessment and certification (Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, 2012; European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning, 2015).

Guidance in AE includes the first two phases, identification and documentation. In the identification phase, the adult works alone or in collaboration with the AE counsellor to identify and become aware of the knowledge and skills he has obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning. He is guided by the purpose and goals for which he decided to participate in the process.

Documentation is the second phase in which the adult collaborates with the AE counsellor in gathering and organising documentation on learning outcomes he has obtained in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning. Certificates on learning outcomes may differ in form and content.

AE counsellors provide professional support to adults in both phases. Professional support encompasses:

- encouraging and motivating the adult to engage with the process of identification and documentation;
- encouraging and motivating the adult to actively participate in gathering proofs and other documentation;
- documentation analysis;
- guiding the adult through the two phases;
- gathering and organising documentation and assessing its adequacy in regard to the purpose and goals of the assessment process;
- presenting and encouraging the use of modern online and electronic tools;
- referral to formal recognition procedures at authorised providers (for assessment and certification);
- demonstrating how the results of this process can be used in further education (to facilitate enrolment in continuing education, for more flexible methods of acquiring key and occupational competences) and career development (for new occupational and personal opportunities).

c) Direct guidance on self-directed learning

Through self-directed learning, adults strengthen their learning mindset and realise their learning objectives. They are given access to learning in order to acquire, refresh or update their knowledge, skills and key competences, carry out LLL and learn languages and other learning and/or specialised contents, including those they need for performing a job (Jug Došler and Zagmajster, 2018).

By providing guidance to adults on self-directed learning, they gain an organised learning environment and professional support in learning, which is offered by the AE counsellor. Self-directed learning is intended for all adults who for whatever reason do not have access to or do not like traditional forms of education (ibid., 2018).

Professional support encompasses:

- identifying the interests, learning needs and level of prior knowledge of adults in a particular content or area;

- planning and monitoring the individual learning of adults in self-directed learning;
- motivating, encouraging and empowering adults for self-directed learning;
- using materials, educational resources and technology in self-directed learning;
- sharing knowledge about learning and the methods and techniques of learning;
- guiding the learning process;
- monitoring the learning progress of adults.

Direct guidance outlined under points a, b and c is carried out in the form of:

- advising, which refers to short-term support by an AE counsellor, which in addition to the provision of information and data also includes explanations, relevant clarifications or advice; and
- counselling, which is a professionally more complex and longer process that includes comprehensive in-depth approaches to guidance and facilitates the development of the adult in terms of understanding the processes of decision-making, organisation and validation of their own education and learning as well as career development. In this, the AE counsellor may also use various guidance tools as well as study materials and other types of materials that help them provide quality of counselling process.

Direct guidance outlined under points a, b and c is carried out with varying frequency:

- as a single guidance session or
- in the form of multiple sessions.

In cases where guidance takes place in the form of multiple sessions, each session has its own characteristics that the AE counsellor must consider:

- first session: usually this is intended for basic familiarisation with the needs and goals of the adult and mutual information;
- subsequent sessions: in-depth counselling where the AE counsellor may also use various guidance accessories and tools as well as study materials and other types of materials;
- final session: the guidance process is assessed and further activities of the adult in education or career development are planned; in the final session, within the scope of guidance in self-directed learning, learning achievements are assessed, any failures or successes in learning are analysed and participants are guided towards continuing their self-directed learning and finding new opportunities for self-directed learning.

The AE counsellor may monitor the adult even after the final session, if they so agree or if this is planned in the context of assessing and developing the quality of guidance (e.g. monitoring and evaluating the long-term results and effects of guidance).

Sessions outlined under points a, b and c can be of different durations:

- they are short in the case of advising or counselling, lasting from 15 to 30 minutes;
- they are longer when counselling lasts over 30 minutes.

3.2 Informing

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 5–10 %.)

Informing means the AE counsellor's provision of information to adults. The information may be:

- general: about different opportunities in AE, providers, enrolment conditions, funding, employment opportunities, etc.;
- specific: linked to individual areas of guidance in AE, e.g. about the opportunities for enrolment in individual education programmes, identification and documentation procedures, self-directed learning opportunities, types of self-directed learning materials, etc.

Informing is a short form of guidance and lasts up to 15 minutes.

3.3 Planning, monitoring and evaluation of guidance

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 10–15 %.)

- The planning, monitoring and evaluation of guidance may include:
- identifying the needs of different groups of adults for guidance;
- participation in planning the content and scope of guidance;
- monitoring the implementation, results and effects of guidance;
- participation in the evaluation, assessment and development of the quality of guidance;
- organising and keeping records and documentation of guidance;
- preparing and updating the conditions for guidance (databases, professional and study materials, tools and other).

3.4 Development tasks

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 5–10 %.)

Development tasks may comprise:

- keeping up with novelties in AE and more broadly in education and introducing them to guidance in AE;
- developing training for adults participating in guidance in AE (e.g. workshops for developing the learning-to-learn competence and career planning and development);
- updating, developing and introducing new professional materials and new tools, study materials to support guidance work and the exchange of experience and good practices among AE counsellors;
- collaboration in developing and implementing new approaches to guidance in AE;
- collaboration in preparing and implementing professional events, in developing and preparing promotional and information materials and activities;
- participation in national and international projects.

When carrying out developmental work, the AE counsellor collaborates with national public institutions and other organisations in the local or regional environment (e.g. as part of the Strategic Council) in accordance with the needs of different groups of adults and pursuant to the counsellor's tasks laid down in the third chapter.

The development tasks are carried out in line with the professional needs set out in the AE public service provider's annual working plan.

3.5 Collaboration and connection inside and outside the organisation

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 5–10 %.)

Collaboration and connection inside and outside the organisation encompasses:

- coordinating the work of all who participate in guidance or are connecting with it at an AE public service provider;
- collaboration with education professionals from other educational organisations (primary schools, secondary schools, higher vocational colleges, private educational organisations and others);

- collaboration with education professionals from other organisations in the context of implementing guidance in AE (e.g. social work centres, Employment Service offices, employers, NGOs, public services);
- participating in the organisation and implementation of activities related to the professional working group and the Strategic Council.

3.6 Professional development

(Recommended working hours at the annual level: 5–10 %.)

Professional development includes:

- professional development of AE counsellors for the implementation of guidance in AE, e.g. in regard to the content and specificities of guidance in AE, the characteristics of different groups of adults, especially vulnerable adults, the identification of needs, the planning of education and career development, the use of guidance tools, the preparation of an education and learning plan, leading of guidance process (different approaches, methods and techniques), ICT in guidance and in self-directed learning, the development of business networking skills, supervision in guidance in AE, the evaluation and development of quality, etc.;
- monitoring and planning the professional and career development of the AE counsellor.

The SIAE prepares professional guidelines for the implementation of guidance in AE in the form of protocols, reminders and the like and provides access to all materials in one place.

4 ORGANISATION OF GUIDANCE IN AE

This chapter describes how guidance in AE is organised at the AE public service provider and includes an organisational chart, forms, methods, place and venue of implementation and partnership with organisations in the local or regional environment.

4.1 Organisational chart of guidance in AE

Guidance in AE can be provided by AE public service providers. They should include guidance in their organisational charts as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Organisational chart of guidance in AE



Figure 2 shows that the organisation of guidance in AE takes into account the prior development and implementation of guidance in IGAE centres and the prior development and implementation of organised self-directed learning at SDLCs. The activities of IGAE centres include guidance related to enrolment in education and continuation of education and to identification and documentation of knowledge and skills of adults. Guidance in self-directed learning is carried out in the context of SDLC activities.¹⁸

It is expected that guidance in AE is carried out by at least two AE counsellors, whereby it is recommended that one AE counsellor provides guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education and on identification and documentation of knowledge and skills, while the other provides guidance on self-directed learning. The share of employment of an AE counsellor for a given area of guidance in AE depends on the amount of public service funding.

The different types of guidance, i.e. guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education, on identification and documentation of knowledge and skills and on self-directed learning, are carried out in different, adequately equipped spaces.

AE counsellors providing guidance in AE are included in a professional working group assembled pursuant to Article 39 of the AEA-1.

4.2 Forms and methods of providing guidance in AE

In accordance with the basic principles and to ensure it is as efficient as possible, guidance in AE is implemented in different forms and in different ways.

Guidance can be provided in two forms:

- a) **Individual:** the guidance process includes the AE counsellor and the adult. The AE counsellor tailors the treatment method and the management of guidance according to the respective person, whereby they also rely on appropriate guidance tools, materials and the like. The individual form is more appropriate when an in-depth and longer counselling process is needed. Its advantages include: closer contact between the AE counsellor and the adult, guidance tailored to the adult's individual needs, guaranteed confidentiality and secrecy of all data communicated by the adult in the process.

¹⁸ This links all previous tasks of educational professionals at the SDLC, specifically those of SDLC leader, SDLC mentor and SDLC counsellor.

- b) **Group:** the guidance process includes the AE counsellor and several adults. The advantages of the group form include allowing the mutual interaction of adults in the group and thus mutual exchange of experience, views on education, learning and career development, the exchange of experience related to the barriers they face and how to overcome them and more. Adults in the group can offer support to each other. The group form of guidance can be the starting point for subsequent individual engagement.

Both forms are more commonly used in the case of guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education. The types of guidance related to identification and documentation and to self-directed learning are usually conducted individually, and the group form is provided as necessary (more often in informing).

Guidance in AE can be implemented as follows:

- a) **personally:** in direct contact between the AE counsellor and the adult;
- b) **by phone:** landline and mobile phone, whereby it is recommended that the AE counsellor be available at the phone number dedicated to the provision of guidance in AE;
- c) **by email and regular mail:** it is recommended that a dedicated email address be created at the provider for the purposes of guidance in AE;
- d) **online:** using online tools, such as online classrooms, video and audio conferencing, social networks and the like.

These guidance methods require appropriate ICT support and personal data protection.

AE counsellors are also available for personal and phone information and direct guidance at least once a week in the afternoon.

4.3 Place and space of implementation of guidance in AE

Guidance in AE can be implemented in different ways, depending on the place and space:

- a) **at the offices** of the AE public service provider and
- b) **outside the offices**, as outreach, depending on appropriate conditions:
- **at an outside location:** guidance is carried out outside the AE public service provider's offices, in a different organisation (these can be other educational organisations, libraries, social work centres and others). The alternative location (one or more) is pre-planned and recorded in the annual work plan. Guidance is always provided at

the same place and space, according to a pre-determined schedule (agreed at least one year in advance). The space must allow the implementation of both individual and group types of guidance in AE;

- **through mobile service:** this is organised in cases of occasional needs for guidance in chosen organisations or in public spaces (at the library, shopping centre, public event in the local/regional environment outdoors and other suitable venues). Mobile service can also be carried out in the context of organisations with activities for individual groups of adults, such as occupational activity organisations, the Employment Service, social work centres and others;
- **with an information (info) point:** informing adults is the main purpose of an info point. There can either be an AE counsellor present who will personally provide information from the prepared materials or this can simply be a place that offers information materials without an AE counsellor present. The info point can be provided at various locations ranging from public spaces (library, primary care centre, social work centre and others) to various organisations that get many adult visitors (educational organisations for adults, companies and others).

Guidance in AE outside the AE public service provider's offices is organised according to the specificities of the local or regional environment (e.g. depending on the distance of smaller places from the main office for guidance in AE, type of settlement, the availability of guidance in AE to individual groups of adults and the like).

4.4 Partnership with organisations in the local or regional environment

Providers of guidance in AE connect with organisations that, in the context of the local or regional environment, offer various guidance and educational activities for adults, decide on human resources development strategies, help plan and implement the regional development policy and collaborate with other social partners.

Connection and collaboration of partner organisations contributes to:

- higher availability of guidance in AE for all adults in the local or regional environment;
- complementary and coordinated work of partner organisations;
- better familiarity with the identified needs for the development of human resources in the local or regional environment and the response to them;
- the development of human resources in the local or regional environment.

In order to coordinate their partnership with other providers of guidance in the Slovenian education system and other organisations in the local or regional environment, AE public service providers form a Strategic Council. The purpose of the Strategic Council includes:

- exchange of information on the goals and contents of guidance in AE and the situation in AE in the local or regional environment;
- identification of the participating partners' needs in regard to the use of guidance in AE;
- preparation of joint professional events in the local or regional environment designed to increase the availability of education and guidance in AE for adults in the local or regional environment;
- connecting with other local or regional environments and institutions at the national level as well as in the international arena.

Every AE public service provider must be part of a Strategic Council. It is recommended that these organisations are invited into the partnership and thereby into the Strategic Council:

- providers of other guidance activities for adults;
- educational organisations that also provide education for adults;
- municipalities or founders of public AE organisations;
- regional units of the Employment Service;
- social work centres;
- development agencies;
- libraries;
- NGOs providing services for adults;
- organisations of other social partners (employers, trade unions, associations and chambers).

Members of the Strategic Council adopt an agreement on the purpose, content and manner of cooperation. The SIAE prepares a draft agreement.

5 STAFF AND OTHER CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING GUIDANCE IN AE

5.1 Staff conditions for implementing guidance in AE

The conditions for implementing guidance in AE for AE counsellors are stipulated under Article 26 with reference to Article 19 of the AEA-1. They must meet the following conditions:

- perfect command of the Standard Slovenian language;
- an educational qualification from a second-cycle study programme or a level of educational qualification corresponding, in accordance with the act regulating higher education, to the educational qualification of the second cycle;
- a pedagogical andragogical educational qualification pursuant to the act regulating the organisation and financing of education; and
- passed professional exam in education.

In accordance with Article 26 of the AEA-1, education for AE counsellors is prescribed by the minister responsible for education.

It is recommended that the AE counsellor has knowledge of andragogy, pedagogy, psychology, organisation, staff and education system management and staff management.

AE counsellors must constantly upgrade their professional competence. In terms of contents, their further education and training must be based on current topics concerning guidance in AE, AE in general and development tasks of guidance in AE.

For the professional training of AE counsellors, it is recommended that the SIAE prepares a professional training programme for implementing guidance in AE that covers the following topics:

- content and specificities of guidance in AE;
- characteristics of different groups of adults, especially vulnerable adults;
- identification of educational needs;
- planning education and career development;
- use of guidance tools;
- preparation of an education and learning plan;
- leading of guidance process (different approaches, methods and techniques);

- ICT in guidance and in self-directed learning;
- communication in guidance;
- business networking skills;
- supervision in guidance;
- evaluation and development of quality and more.

AE counsellors are also provided with supervision¹⁹ as part of their professional training. It is recommended that the AE public service provider prepares an induction programme for AE counsellors who are beginners in regard to guidance in AE.

5.2 Other conditions for implementing guidance in AE

Other conditions that must be met for implementing guidance in AE include:²⁰

a) Accompanying work and support activities:

- accompanying work includes: management, administration, accounting, technical work and ICT-related work;
- support activities include: activities for working with vulnerable adults and supervision.

b) Material conditions

Space and equipment, guidance and study materials, professional literature, consumable goods and other material:

- space must be provided at the provider's offices, where individual and group forms of guidance can be carried out;
- when carrying out guidance outside the offices of the AE public service provider in the context of an outside location or as a mobile service, space must be provided that will, depending on the form and method of implementation of the guidance, ensure accessibility and confidentiality for the adult; the space must also have appropriate equipment: a table, chairs, cabinets, partitions, shelves and more;

¹⁹ Supervision is the process of specific learning and development as well as a support method used in professional reflection enabling counsellors to gain new professional and personal insights as their own experience. It helps them integrate practical experience with their own theoretical knowledge to come up with their own solutions to the problems they face at work in order to better manage stress and to build their professional identity. Supervision supports the professional and personal learning and development of the counsellor (Žorga, 2013). The AE counsellor needs supervision due to the difficulty and complexity of guidance. The difficulty of guidance also characterises the provision of guidance to vulnerable adults.

²⁰ Other conditions are set out in more detail in the Rules on Standards and Norms in AE.

- ICT equipment: computer(s) (desktop, laptop or tablet) and a printer; a laptop and a mobile phone must be provided in the case of outreach; guidance on self-directed learning requires several computers and a minimum of three learning places; an internet connection must be provided;
- guidance and learning tools: questionnaires, reminders, protocols, e-tools, collection folder / portfolio of learning outcomes, databases, online portals, study materials for self-directed learning and other types of materials that can be used for self-directed learning (e.g. handbooks, textbooks, online materials and resources, various books, dictionaries, atlases and the like), online resources and online materials for self-directed learning, etc.;
- professional literature: related to the professional work of the AE counsellor (for all three areas of guidance in AE);
- small inventory, telecommunication connections, printing, photocopying and similar.

c) Other conditions

The provision of guidance in AE also requires resources for:

- professional training of AE counsellors;
- engagement of external associates for the provision of guidance in AE and the engagement of volunteers;
- implementing guidance outside the offices of the AE public service provider – outreach (in the context of an outside location, in the form of mobile service, info point);
- compensation and reimbursement to workers;
- developmental work;
- promotion;
- organisation and implementation of professional events;
- covering operating costs;
- covering payment transaction costs; and
- covering other costs associated with the provision of guidance in AE according to the work plan.

6 EVIDENCE AND DOCUMENTATION IN GUIDANCE IN AE

The evidence and documentation related to guidance in AE are prescribed by point two of section seven of the AEA-1 and by the Guidelines. Data entered in the evidence and documentation forms are the basis for planning, organising, implementing and monitoring guidance in AE.

The following data is collected in addition to the statutory evidence:

- where the information on the possibilities for guidance was first found;
- about the field of guidance;
- whether the adult is a member of a vulnerable group and if so, which one;
- the form, method, place and venue of provision of direct guidance;
- the results and effects of guidance; and
- how the AE counsellor's tasks are structured.

Subject to the specific nature of the content of direct guidance in the individual field of guidance in AE, the following data is also collected:

a) In relation to guidance on enrolment in education and continuation of education:

- about the use of guidance tools.

b) In relation to guidance on identification and documentation the knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal education and in informal learning:

- about the purpose of the identification and documentation;
- about the use of guidance tools;
- about the standards of knowledge used; and
- about the engagement of external professionals.

c) In relation to guidance on self-directed learning:

- about the types of study materials;
- about the types of learning contents chosen;
- about the number of lessons;
- about the reasons for enrolment in self-directed learning;
- about the interest of adults in the learning contents; and
- about the satisfaction of adults (with the work of employees and external professionals, study materials, organisation of activities, learning environment).

All of the above data is entered into a computer application prepared and maintained by the SIAE. Pursuant to the AEA-1, evidence with the above data are kept for five years from the entry of data.

The obtained data is the basis for making qualitative and quantitative analyses of guidance in AE and for ongoing monitoring of guidance in AE as well as for self-evaluation and external evaluation. Every year, AE public service providers prepare a plan and a report on the provided guidance in AE.

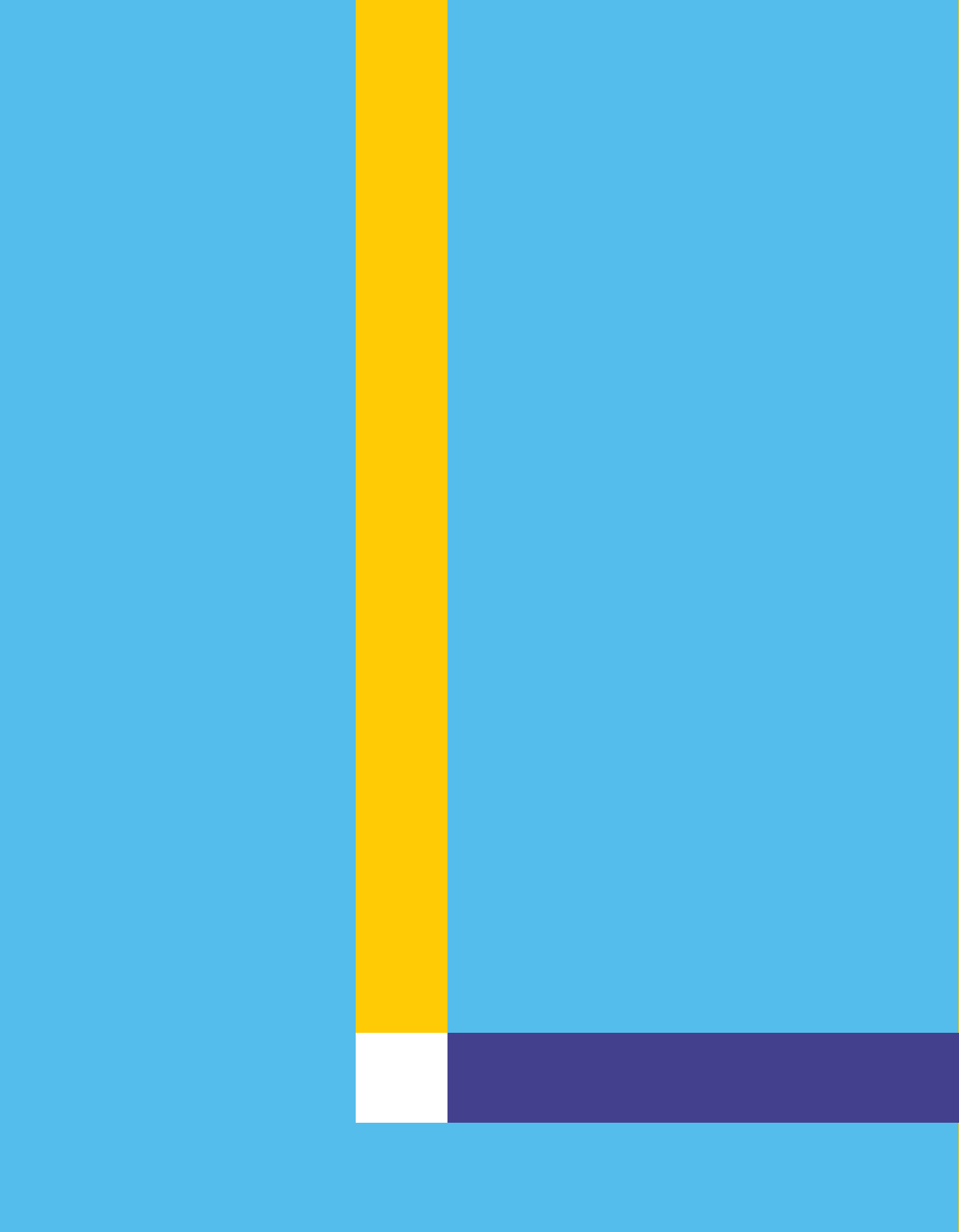
7 EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUALITY OF GUIDANCE IN AE

The evaluation and development of quality in regard to guidance in AE is performed in accordance with Articles 67 and 68 of the AEA-1. The quality evaluation is defined as the acquisition and assessment of qualitative and quantitative data on the processes, results and effects of guidance in AE, which is regulated by these Guidelines.

The AE public service provider evaluates and develops quality through ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation and participates in external evaluations.

At the director's proposal, the council at the AE public service provider appoints a commission for quality that plans and coordinates the evaluation and development of quality. The composition, mandate and duties of the commission are determined in an internal act. The AE public service provider appoints at least one representative of AE counsellors to the commission for quality.

Professional bases and guidelines for the evaluation and development of quality at AE public service providers are prepared by the SIAE, which also provides training and consultancy in carrying out quality evaluation.



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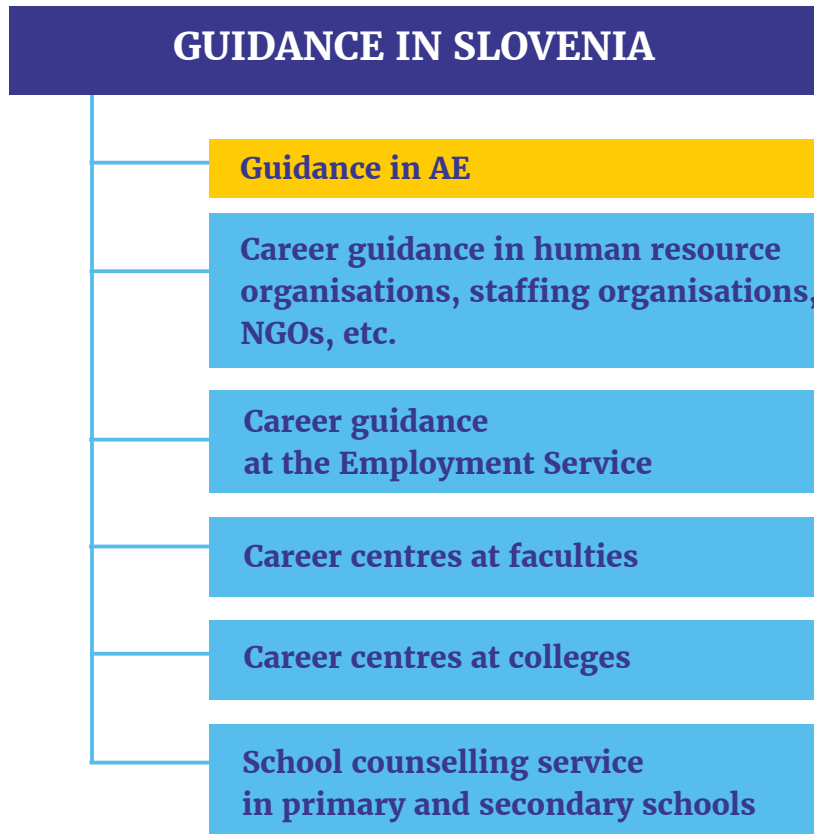
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APPENDIX

Figure: The positioning of guidance in AE in Slovenia²¹



²¹ The names of guidance activities shown in the Figure are in compliance with the use in professional documents and also in practice.



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