

Educational and Occupational Gender Segregation in Care Sector

Boys in Care: Country Report – Slovenia

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1. Introduction

In comparison to other EU countries, Slovenia has acquired a few positive advantages in the field of women's position in society during its socialism period that have persevered through political and economic transition of the 1990's. Key role in preservation of these advantages is to be ascribed to feminist movement and civil society: universal, public and high quality network of kindergartens and primary schools along with an adequate scheme of parental leaves and financial compensations at childbirth; it is what enables a high proportion of women participating in the labour market on a full-time basis; pay gap is the lowest in EU; the right to freedom of choice on child birth is enshrined in the Constitution, hence abortion and contraception are legal and included in healthcare system. During the time of economic crisis that onset in 2008, neoliberal politics gained momentum strongly, directing current 'economisation' of welfare state and thus endangering past achievements and acquisitions in the field of women's equality. Current changes refer mainly to individualisation of poverty risks to which women are more exposed to than men, limitations of worker's rights, changes in retirement system abolishing positive measures for women, reduction of support for families with children, ignorance of the population ageing, austerity measures in healthcare, etc. Inclusion of women in decision-making processes in politics and economy is increasing quantitatively, but a higher proportion of women in leading positions does not ensure substantive changes in strategies and policies. Despite a long-lasting tradition of equal inclusion of women into the labour market, gender based horizontal professional, sectoral and educational segregation of labour market remain strong, especially in care professions where the level of segregation is among the highest in the EU, and are not decreasing.

In this report, based on secondary sources (research reports and governmental documents), existing national statistical bases and statistical data gathered through own inquiries, we will present the situation in the field of gender equality (across dimensions of labour market, care work in the family, education and decision making) and situation in the field of gender based horizontal professional, sectoral and educational segregation. Moving on, we will present the system of professional counselling for children and existing national studies on inclusion of men/boys in care professions. In conclusion, we will summarize our findings. The main chapter will be dedicated to an overview and analysis of existing strategies, projects and methods established with the intention to direct youth into choosing gender non-traditional educational and professional paths.

2. Situation outline in the field of gender equality

Gender equality institutional framework: Before 2012, the field of gender equality was under the responsibility of the Office for Equal Opportunities which was operating as a relatively independent government professional service. With re-organisation of the government, tasks of the Office became the responsibility of the Equal Opportunities and European Coordination

Service operating within the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. In 2013, the Ministry was renamed into the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities while tasks from the field of gender equality were taken over by the Equal Opportunities Department. In 2014, the Minister established an Expert Council for Gender Equality to act as a special advisory body of the Minister on issues from the field of gender equality. It needs to be noted, that cessation of the Office for Equal Opportunities and the inclusion of its work field into the framework of responsible Ministry represents a deterioration in institutional positioning of the body responsible for coordination of politics in the field of gender equality, because such positioning implies limitation of gender equality only to the sphere of work of the Ministry and not to promotion of the principle of equality integration implementation in all policies. Although Ministries do include coordinators for equal opportunities of genders who have advisory, coordinating and promotional-supervisory role, their contribution in designing line policies is not detectable.

Division of care work in the private sphere: In Slovenia, childcare was institutionalised into universally accessible, unified, public kindergarten network, which consist of 91% of public and 9% private kindergartens with concession. 78% of children between the age of 11 months and 5 years are included into the public kindergarten network, thus only a small share of families decides on family care, especially with children aged between 1 and 3 years, which takes place within the realm of intergenerational reciprocity. Public kindergarten network is financed mainly by the public means of municipalities and partially from the financial contribution of parents which is determined based on income and assets census. For the second child, parents must pay 30% of the price and for each dependent child after the second kindergarten is free of charge. Within the system of compulsory primary school, the state ensures a free of charge childcare for school children aged up to 11 years with organisation of extended stay and morning care for children in schools. Inheritance of socialist system is also a high-quality scheme of parental rights and financial compensations, i.e. rights that enable parents to care for their child in its earliest period of the first year after birth. Parental leave lasts 1 year; 105 days belong to the mother exclusively while 260 days can be shared between both parents. Compensation for parental leave, covered by the state, not the employer, is 100% of the income from work (in 2012 it was decreased to 90% due to austerity measures) and parental leave is also fully included in the pension qualifying period. In 2003, this scheme was supplemented by 15-day non-transferable paid paternal leave with the intention of encouraging inclusion of men in child care. In 2014, the government extended the 15-day paid paternal leave to a 30-day paid paternal leave (Hrženjak, 2016).

Organisation of public institutional childcare in 1970's and 1980's followed socialist principles of economic independence and full social citizenship of women through enabling their full employment. And as a matter of fact, the rate of women included in full-time employment in Slovenia is one of the highest in Europe since the 1970's, including the transition period. In 2004, however, based on an argument of easing work-family balance and introduction 'women friendly policies' Slovenia introduced a measure that enables parents to work reduced working time until child's age of 3 or second child's age of 6.¹ Since then, the

¹ Right to reduced working time due to parenthood can be exercised until the child's age of 3 and in case of more children until the end of the first year of primary school of the youngest child; one year of exercising the right to reduced working time is non-transferable for both parents. Reduced working time consists of at least half of the weekly working obligations, the employer ensures the right to salary according to actual working time while the state ensures the payment of social security contributions from the proportionate share of minimal wage to full working obligation (The Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act, ZSDP-1, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 26/14 and 90/15).

share of women working reduced working time is witnessing a constant increase: while it was 6% in 2006, it was 15.8% in 2015.²

Despite socialisation of child care, pluralisation of family forms and loosening of traditional gender and generational roles, especially in younger generations, traditional type of family where care for children and dependent family members and housekeeping is the realm of women while men “help” occasionally, is prevailing in Slovenia. This can be observed in data on parental leave, reduced working time due to child care and absence from work due to care for a sick family member. Sick leave due to care for a family member is mainly utilized by women. In 2005, women utilized 85.3% of all sick leave days for care of sick family members, in 2012 the rate was at 82.2%. In 2014, 13.6% of women utilized the possibility for reduced working time due to child care (the share of all women working reduced working time was 13.7%), men were at 4.4% (the share of all men working reduced working time was 6.8%) (Proposal of the Resolution on Family Policy 2018 – 2028).³ Gradually, we are witnessing the establishment of the type of family which includes men in child care more equally while housekeeping work is still in the realm of women. Resolution on National Programme for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2015–2020 (ReNPEMŽM15–2)⁴ reports on following data. In 2005, 15 days of paid paternal leave was utilized by 11,308 fathers, in 2013 it was utilized by 16,625 fathers. More and more fathers also utilize non paid part of paternal leave; in 2006 1,441 fathers used this right while in 2013 it was 3,141 fathers exercising this right. An increase was observed also in the number of fathers that utilize the right to parental leave, from 921 in 2006 to 1,496 in 2013, however, the share is still extremely small being that on average there were around 21,000 men and women per month entitled to parental allowance in 2013. According to data of Workforce Survey (2010), 15-day paternal leave for the youngest child in the household was utilized by 75% of fathers. While child nursing and care leave was used only by 7% of men and 93% of women. Fathers that utilized child care and nursing leave did not stick to it for long; two thirds of these fathers utilized up to three months of it, while only one third of them used 7-12 months of parental leave. European survey on quality of life has shown a vast difference between genders in number of hours of (paid and unpaid) work with 17.3% of men and 41% of women working more than 70 hours per week (Eurofound, 2012). Employed men spent 15 hours per week for child care, while employed women spent 25. For housekeeping and cooking men spent 10 and women 14 hours per week (Eurofound, 2012). Compared to 2007, the number of hours spent by employed women and men for childcare has decreased, in women for 1 hour and in men for 4 hours. In women the number of hours spent for housekeeping and cooking decreased for 2 hours, while in men time for such tasks increased for 1 hour (Eurofound, 2007, 2012).

Key, yet slow and politically under-prioritized governmental strategies for surpassing traditional patterns of care work division between men and women are elimination of gender stereotypes connected to care work, prolongation of paternal leave and establishment of communal public care services, not only for childcare but also for elderly care, which left to the family is acting towards (economic) inequality of women. To enhance employers social responsibility for work-life balance, Slovenia introduced a project enabling companies to acquire a Family Friendly Company Certificate in 2007. Since, more than 190 companies and organisations employing over 68,000 people became Family friendly company certificate holders (ReNPEMŽM15–2).

² Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

³ http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/druzina/RDP_-_predlog_zajr.pdf

⁴ <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO108>

Education and educational segregation: In the period of 2005-2013, according to ReNPEMŽM15–2⁵ educational level of women and men increased, the share of university graduates in the age 30 to 34 increased in women and in men. The share of men increased by 10.1 per cent (from 19.4% in 2005 to 29.5% in 2012) while the share of women increased for 19.5% (from 30.1% in 2005 to 49.6% in 2012). Among women, there were over 40% of those with university degree diplomas (EU 2020 strategy goal) already in 2010, while men are for about 10.5 per cent behind. Less change is seen in share of women across fields of education as they remain the same. Women continue to engage in education mainly in the following fields: education, arts and humanities, social sciences, business and law, health, social work and services. Extremely low is the share of women in the field of engineering, manufacturing and processing technology and construction (25.05% in 2012). Evident improvement was observed in the share of women in the field of science, mathematics and computer sciences with an increase from 33.4% in 2005 to 41.0% in 2011 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). Therefore, Resolution says:

"One of the key challenges will be to fight gender stereotypes in the education and career choices. Young women tend to choose "typically female study programmes" and outnumber men in teaching, humanities, social science, health and social work study programmes, while young men are in the majority in natural science and technology programmes; a new system must be established to provide youth with information about potential non-traditional choices and promote further training in programmes and professions with gender underrepresentation and in the future professions in demand on the labour market. Special attention will be devoted to study programmes of particular importance from the perspective of the knowledge-based society of the future to contribute to overcoming stereotypes in the industries with high development potential, which is also underlined in the Europe 2020 Strategy, such as new information technologies and energy management. The information and communication industry (ITC) contributes a quarter of the EU's total growth and 4% of its jobs, but there is a shortage of qualified staff. Research shows that women are more amenable to energy-efficient technologies, yet do not take up jobs in energy-related industries. Hence, it is very important to encourage young people, particularly women, to participate in high-tech courses; increased participation of women in the labour market to ensure a resource-efficient Europe remains a challenge (ReNPEMŽM15–2)."

Equal opportunities policies recognize as a problem of gender segregation in education mainly gender traditional choices of education in girls in highly skilled fields and in new technologies, while gender segregation in boys that is present in low-skilled jobs and care professions is not recognized as a problem.

Labour Market. According to *Accessibility of Labour Market for Women and Men* survey⁶ employment rate of women aged between 20 and 64 was 64.7 % in 2015 in Slovenia, a bit over the average of EU-28, while the employment rate of men (20-64) was 73.3 %, which is a bit under the EU-28 average. Gender gap increased from 7.5 to 8.6 per cent in the period 2010-2015. The smallest gender gap (4.9 %) is characteristic of the youngest part of active

⁵ Resolution on the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2020 <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO108>

⁶ Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela, Samo Uhan, Slavko Kurdija, Jasna Mikić, Tina Vovk (2016): Dostopnost trga dela za ženske in moške (Engl.: Accessibility of labour market for women and men). Final report. http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/enake_moznosti/RaziskavaTrgDela.pdf

working population, while the biggest (12.1 %) reflects in the oldest part of it (55-64). In Slovenia, the share of women working reduced working time is significantly lower (15.1 %) than on average in the EU (31.5 %); and this form of work is less present also in male population (8.4 %). Slovenia is one of the EU countries that have the highest rate of fixed-term employment. In 2015, 13.5 % of men and even more women (15.9 %) were in fixed-term employment. The rate of self-employed is significantly higher in men (16%) than in women (8%). Gender analysis showed that men are significantly more exposed to inclement time flexibility than women as 31 % usually work shift work (25 % of women), 23 % of men work evening shifts (11 % of women), 16 % work nightshifts (5 % of women), 27 % of men work on Saturdays (21 % of women), 20 % work on Sundays and public holidays (16 % of women) and less men (57 %) have an ordinary morning working time than women (67 %) (Kanjuro Mrčela et al., 2016: 58).

In Slovenia, pay gap is reducing faster than in other EU countries: in the past two decades (1995-2015) it was reduced by 11 % in Slovenia, while in the EU it reduced only by 1 %. According to EUROSTAT, in 1995 pay gap was at 14 % in Slovenia, in 2005 it was at 8 % and in 2015 2.9 %. However, more detailed data show a different picture. General pay gap in income between men and women was 12.8 % in 2014 in Slovenia, in the EU it was 41.1 %. On annual level the difference between average annual gross salary of a man and average annual gross salary of a woman was 18 % (11 % in public sector, 13 % in private sector) in Slovenia, in EU it was 32 % (24 % in public sector, 30 % in private sector) (Robnik, 2016: 75). Although women outnumber men in healthcare, social security and education (they represent approximately 80% of all employed in these sectors), their gross salaries are on average 24.3 % lower than the salaries of men in the same sectors. The reason for this is evident in different staff structure where higher positions (doctors, university lecturers) are held mainly by men while women work in other non-leading positions. The opposite situation is shown in construction, traffic and warehousing, water and waste management where women would have higher average gross salary while they are in minority numerically in these lines of business. Average gross salaries have shown less difference between genders in real estate business (Kanjuro Mrčela et al., 2016).

In Slovenia, gender segregation, professional (25.8 %) and sectorial (19.9 %), is above the EU average and remains the same for the past decade (Kanjuro Mrčela et al., 2016). Depending on the profession, the rate of women was higher than the rate of men among experts (60.2 %), in official positions (56.2 %), services and sales (61.9 %) and low-skilled jobs (57.7 %), while in non-industrial professions the rate of women is the lowest (10,3 %). Among the employed across the branches, women dominate in the field of healthcare and social security (80.8 %), education (78.9 %), hospitality (64.1 %), while they are in minority in the field of construction (11.7 %), traffic and warehousing (17.1 %) and electricity, gas and steam supply (20.5 %). In the field of information and communication industry the share of women is 29.9 % (ReNPEMŽM15-2).

The Employment Office data show that in the period of 2010-2015 more men were registered as unemployed, but in 2015 the rate of women's unemployment was again higher than the rate of unemployed men. In unemployment, age plays a significant role in both genders (most of the unemployed are from the age group of 50 or more), but among the registered unemployed men the share of older men is significantly higher than the share of other age groups, while in registered unemployed women different age groups are more equally represented. The educational structure of the registered unemployed reflects the structure of active working

population according to education and gender. There are more women with higher education unemployed than men. There is twice as many women with social sciences and humanities education registered unemployed as men with the same education, while in the field of engineering, manufacturing and processing technology and construction there are three times as many men unemployed as women (Kanjuro Mrčela et al., 2016).

Decision-making in politics and economy: Slovenia has witnessed an improvement in women's representation in politics in 2005-2013 period. After the introduction of the so-called gender quota the share of elected women has gradually increased in elections to the National Assembly, to the European Parliament as well as to city and municipality councils in local elections. In 2011 in snap elections, the share of women elected to act as MPs in the National Assembly has risen significantly: candidate lists had 43.15 % of women, and out of those 29 candidates or 32.22 % were elected. With this, Slovenia exceeded the 24 % EU average. In 2013, Slovenia elected its first female Prime Minister. In the 2014 early elections to National Assembly 32 women were elected, and thus women represented 35.6 % of all elected MPs which is the highest rate to date. The rate of female councillors in city and municipal councils has also increased. At the 2010 local elections there were 23.26 % of female councillors elected, whereas in 2014 elections there were already 31.8 %. In 2009-2014 mandate of the European Parliament gender representation of Slovenian MPs was balanced. Slovenia was represented by 4 women and 4 men and thus significantly exceeded the average representation of women in the European Parliament. In current mandate of 2014-2019, Slovenia has 3 female and 5 male representatives. Low share of women remains in elected mayors: in 2010 for 208 mayoral posts only 10 women were elected which is 5 %, in 2014 16 women were elected to 212 mayoral posts which is 7.5 % (ReNPEMŽM15-2).

Although they attain higher educational level than men, the share of women holding the highest and best paid professional positions is lower (higher officials, managers, legislators). In 2012, the share of women in such positions was 39.0 %. Compared to 2005 (34.2 %) this share has increased a little bit. The share of women in decision-making positions in economy, however, remains low and the progress in this field is slow. A 2011 Office for Equal Opportunities survey on representation of women in decision-making positions showed that only 21.8 % of almost 800 largest companies in the country had women on the highest decision-making position. And those were predominantly from the field of finance and insurance and trade and manufacture. Only 2.8 % of the companies had an internal act or measure in place to provide for gender balance (ReNPEMŽM15-2). The 2015 data show that only 10 % of 20 largest companies listed on stock exchange had Chairwoman of the Board (in EU-28 in 614 largest companies this share was 7 %), 22 % had female members of the Board (EU-28 21 %), 15 % had female general managers (EU-28 4 %), 24 % had female executive directors (EU-28 14 %) and 22 % had female non-executive directors (EU-28 22 %) (Robnik, 2016: 64).

3. Occupational counselling system

Slovenian educational system consists of:

- Primary public, free of charge and compulsory education for all children: with the age of 6, children are enrolled in the first grade of primary school. Nine-year schooling is divided into 3 three-year periods. Successfully concluded primary school education enables pupils to proceed with their education at any secondary school.
- Secondary education is divided into vocational and professional education (secondary technical and professional education, secondary vocational; vocational-technical, lower vocational) and high school (*gimnazija*) or general secondary education (general and vocational upper secondary school). Secondary education takes place in vocational schools, secondary professional schools and in general upper secondary schools. Vocational schools implement different sorts of vocational and professional programmes which differ in contents and difficulty levels and are completed with a final examination. Pupils who complete compulsory primary education and those who conclude at least 7 out of 9 grades, or complete primary education with adapted curriculum for pupils with special needs can further their education in a lower vocational school. In these programmes, education lasts two and a half years usually and is completed by a final examination. Leaving certificate enables employment and enrolment into the first year of any secondary educational programme. Secondary vocational education is implemented in vocational schools that prepare pupils to enter certain occupation and last 3 years. In some vocational schools, pupils can choose the so-called programme +2 in which with two additional years they attain title of technician of certain field. Three-year programmes can be enrolled by pupils that completed primary school successfully. Education can be implemented by a vocational school independently or in cooperation with a potential employer in a dual system. Education is completed by a final examination. Certificate of completion enables employment and enrolment into further education in vocational-technical programmes. Four-year professional or technical schools are intended for pupils with developed learning habits, relatively good grades in primary school and an interest for the chosen programme. Programme is completed with vocational matura examination. Pupils can decide on completing the education with general matura examination, but for that purpose they must complete an additional subject in their fourth year and in the general matura examination. High school (*gimnazija*) or general upper secondary schools are enrolled by pupils with the best achievements and very good learning habits. These programmes offer general knowledge which prepares pupils for enrolment in higher vocational colleges or faculties. After the completion of upper secondary school education, they attain title of grammatical school graduate and usually do not enter an employment right away.

- Higher professional education is a part of tertiary education and is a short-cycle higher education, study programmes are set very practically.
- Higher education has three levels: first level consists of higher professional study programmes and university study programmes, the second level consists of master's study programmes and the third level consists of doctoral study programmes.
- Adults can attain education in special educational programmes for adults or in usual programmes for youth which are implemented in public educational organisations for adults, public schools and private organisations for education of adults.

Vocational counselling process. Key role in vocational orientation is in the hands of school counselling service. The work of school counselling service is performed by professionals, such as psychologists, pedagogues, educational counsellors, remedial teachers that are employed in primary and secondary schools. Their work is defined in Guidelines for School Counselling Services (1999), adopted by relevant ministry, with vocational counselling being one of the fundamental tasks. The field of vocational counselling stipulates standards providing a minimal standard of vocational counselling to all pupils, regardless of the specifics of certain school, ensuring equal opportunities for all. School counselling service along with pupils, parents and school management helps pupils to choose and plan their educational and vocational path. Primary school cooperates in this process with the Employment Service of Slovenia. Vocational orientation is a process that, based on Guidelines for School Counselling Services (1999), consists of the following activities that are implemented by primary school counselling service:

- informing of pupils (on further education, vocations and possibilities of employment),
- diagnosis,
- vocational counselling,
- vocational guidance,
- placement,
- representation,
- feedback informing and monitoring.

Intensive process of vocational orientation begins in penultimate (eight) grade of primary school (at the age of 13-14) when school counselling service in cooperation with the Employment Service of Slovenia performs a test of pupil's abilities (multi factor battery test – MFBT measuring mathematical, logical, verbal and spatial abilities) for vocational counselling. In the last grade (ninth, at the age 14-15) Survey on vocational choice and Test of vocational interests is performed (in cooperation with the Employment Service of Slovenia).

In Slovenia, Holland's Self-Directed Search is used in vocational orientation. Holland envisaged six basic personality types connected to certain vocations:

- Realistic personality type (in good physical form, practical, honest, persistent, developed motor skills). This personality type is suitable for practical vocations (mechanic, car service provider, mechanical engineering technician, agronomist...).

- Investigative personality type (intellectual type, rational, analytical, critical, independent, precise, like to investigate and looks for connections, information). For this type the following professions are suitable: archaeologist, historian, computer programmer, mathematician, physicist.
- Social personality type (extraordinary verbal capabilities, collaborative, social, understanding, patient, empathetic). This type of personality is ideal to become teacher, counsellor, educator, social worker.
- Conventional personality type (adaptable, methodological, responsible, precise). Suitable for vocations, such as: accountant, secretary, librarian.
- Enterprising personality type (extraordinary leadership and verbal capabilities, energetically strong, convincing, domineering). This type performs very easily the tasks of director, manager, principal, they are good in public relations, in marketing.
- Artistic personality type (artist, creator, extraordinary talents, open, independent).

It is not completely clear, however, who evaluates these tests according to what principles and how the results are utilized.

In the last year of primary school individual and group counselling discussions are performed, presentations of secondary school are organized, promotions of vocations are held, lectures and discussions with outsourced experts (such as Employment Service counsellors) are coordinated. Two days are reserved across the whole country for information day when primary school pupils can visit potential secondary schools of their interest with their parents where programmes and the course of educational process of the school is presented to them. The school organizes and performs lectures on the role of parents in vocational development and decision for the parents of primary school pupils (at least two lectures; at least one in penultimate year and one in the last year of school) and when needed individual vocational counselling is offered. Children usually have one conversation with the school counsellor about their vocational interests. Counselling service ensures all the necessary information on the process of enrolment into the school of choice, which in Slovenia is a quite complicated process, and entertains the proceedings of enrolment of pupils of the ninth grade into chosen secondary programmes.

Enrolment in the secondary school of choice depends on the number of points pupil can reach with educational achievement in the last three years of primary school. General upper secondary schools and vocational secondary schools with a high proportion of enrolment candidates limit the enrolment with a number of points achieved. Among these schools are also secondary schools of nursing and physiotherapy and secondary preschool education schools, because pupils and their parents expect that for these vocations there will be a demand in the future. As the learning achievements of boys in primary school are lower than that of girls, the limitation of enrolment with achieved points presents an obstacle for enrolment of boys in these schools.

Other vocational orientation institutions

Employment Service of Slovenia (ZRSZ; Engl.: ESS)

One of the fundamental tasks of the Employment Service of Slovenia is vocational orientation. It is implemented for adults and for the youth that are seeking for advice and assistance in their vocational decision. Programme of vocational orientation is performed by vocational counsellors at the local and regional Offices of Employment Service and in the

Vocational Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS; Engl.: VICC). Duties of vocational orientation performed in cooperation with schools are:

- team consultations at schools (addressing intentions of pupils in transition to secondary school);
- lectures for parents (informing parents on the labour market and career development);
- performing ability tests;
- preparation of publication for pupils *Poklicni kaŝipot* (Engl.: *Vocational Signpost*);
- questionnaire on vocational path for primary school pupils;
- individual vocational counselling and informing;
- organisation of the programme *Drugače o poklicih* (Engl.: *Vocations differently*) (pupils can watch videos and afterwards companies present the vocations to pupils).

Employment Service also offers a web service eSvetovanje (Engl.: eCounselling), which leads pupils to independent planning of their vocational path. There is more than one way to use the web service: users can start with the Self-evaluation section with assistance of which they can learn out about their interests, personality traits and motives, test their competencies and from there they can proceed to the Employment goals section. There they can find out about different vocations, get to know them better and based on the self-evaluation decide on those that fit all their characteristics (interests and competencies). The transition from educational system into the labour market is a new challenge for youth. Assistance in this process of transition can be found in the third section on the Employment search competencies where they can get an advice about where and how to look for work, how to prepare a good application for a vacancy, a CV and how to prepare for an interview at with an employer. Last section is dedicated to the Labour market offering information on demand for vocations and educations of interest to the user. Service also offers a possibility of “communication” with an e-counsellor within the web service.

Vocational Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS; Engl.: VICC) offer:

- informational materials: beside a brochure with the information about schools, users can also see videos on diverse occupations and descriptions of them in their premises.
- counselling assistance: usually users can talk to vocational counsellor either in a form of quick counselling intervention (assistance) with the psychologist or they make an appointment for a more thorough counselling session.

The National Education Institute Slovenia in cooperation with the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres and the Employment Service of Slovenia prepared the manual *Poklicni kaŝipot* (Engl.: *Vocational Signpost*) to assist pupils before the end of their primary school education in their decision on further education. The latest published manual *Poklicni kaŝipot* (Engl.: *Vocational Signpost*) was for the school year 2007/2008 and presented the possibilities for further education through possibilities for work and employment. In this publication, that was available in every primary school in the country, parents are listed as the first in line that can help pupils with these decisions.

In vocational counselling are included also commercial counselling companies with special projects. Apart from primary school process of vocational counselling, the use of other forms of counselling depends on initiative of parents and children.

4. Data on vocational and educational segregation

In Slovenia, vocational and educational segregation is not monitored systematically. Data show that state authorities started to monitor gender based data more systematically only in recent years. In the section that follows we will overview definitions of some care vocations and consider the data on gender segregated education and employment in care vocations.

Definitions of vocations and current situation of employment quality.

With the term **nurse** following holders and performers of health care are described: state enrolled nurse, medical technician, registered nurse / registered medical technician (also specialist), head nurse / head medical technician (also specialist), professor of healthcare education, (registered) midwife, university degree organizer of work and other nurses with faculty education. Registered nurse, head nurse is a person with completed twelve-year general and/or professional education and attained higher (upper) professional education in the field of health care and was awarded, by a relevant authority, the right to perform duties in healthcare independently. This person is trained to fulfil the needs in healthcare and nursing, it has competencies for healthcare education, for organisation of work and developmental research activity. A nurse helps healthy or sick individuals in those activities that help to preserve health, gain back health or peaceful death and would be implemented without help if the individual would have a will, strengths and knowledge to do so. In this field head nurse is an expert and has the right to initiative and control. A head nurse is a part of realization of diagnostic and therapeutic programme that is initiated by a doctor. A head nurse is a member of wider healthcare team in which they participate in planning and implementing the whole health care of a patient. According to the Health Services Act a head nurse must be registered as an independent performer of health care and must hold an applicable licence (Železnik et al., 2008: 8).

Healthcare technician, medical technician, a nurse is a person with completed secondary school professional programme for health care and is trained to perform a series of professional activities in the field of health care of the healthy and the sick in all periods of life and environments. They are a member of the nursing team and are performers of proceedings and interventions in the process of health care based on the instruction of head nurse. According to the Health Services Act they must complete a six-month traineeship and a professional examination and must be registered as a performer of health care to able to perform duties independently (Železnik et al., 2008: 8).

Nursing assistant is a person with completed three-year vocational educational programme in the field of assistance and care. Nursing assistant offers help to the client in those life situations which the client cannot perform independently and needs assistance of another person. Nursing assistant is a part of the nursing team. According to the Health Services Act they must complete a traineeship of six months and a professional examination to be able to perform duties of assistance and care independently. In the List of occupations in healthcare, nursing assistant is positioned among healthcare workers (Železnik et al., 2008: 8).

In the context of post-socialist countries, Slovenia belongs among those countries that kept major part of the healthcare system in public sector. According to 2011 data of the Statistical

Office of the Republic of Slovenia⁷ the share of men in the field of nursing reached 12.4 % of all employed and is in increase. Men have on average 6 % higher salary than women. Most of men employed in nursing (70.4 %) are of the 20 to 29-year-old age group, while most of the women (57.1 %) are of the age group of 30-49. The field of nursing is confronted by the problem of ageing of this occupational group. Educational structure in the field of nursing with older workers is secondary, while the younger employees have university education due to the upgrading of standards of education for work in nursing care in the past decade. In 2015, the Employment Service of Slovenia had 1,300 registered unemployed nurses and medical technicians and 300 registered nurses, and approximately 50 head nurses find employment abroad annually, especially in the neighbouring Austria and Italy. Compared to other post-socialist countries, Slovenia is not encountering a deficit in qualified nursing personnel but rather an excess of supply (Hrženjak, 2017).

Occupation of home-based **social carer** consists of: (1) housekeeping assistance (delivery or preparation of food, dishwashing, basic cleaning and waste removal, bedmaking and basic maintenance of bedroom); (2) assistance with maintenance of personal hygiene (help with dressing or undressing, with washing, feeding, with performing elementary life needs, maintenance and care of personal orthopaedic appliances); (3) assistance with maintenance of social connections (establishment of social network with the environment, volunteers and relatives, accompanying client at necessary errands, informing relevant institutions about the state and needs of the client and preparation of the client to institutional care) (Lebar et al. 2015). In Slovenia, service of home-based care was first implemented in 1991 within public works programme for long-term unemployed women with lower education. Ten years later service was professionalised with adoption of knowledge and skills standards for the occupation of social carer (Hlebec et al., 2014). For performance of this work completed primary school and vocational qualification for social care is demanded. Despite professionalisation and prevalently standard employment (full-time and permanent), most of the social carers remain to be women (96.9%)⁸. Studies (Hrženjak, 2018) show that for home-based care and assistance a great disproportion between difficulty of work and payment is characteristic. According to the collective agreement, their work is evaluated to be rewarded with the minimal wage, meaning that social carers in public service do have standard employment but they are also among the employed poor. With the low income they are also overburdened, because with the increase of clientele instead of new employments their work is intensified.

Work of a **kindergarten teacher** consists of preparation, planning and implementation of teaching work, work with parents and cooperation in organisation of life in kindergarten. It is important that planning of activities is based on fundamental knowledge and understanding of child's development and their needs. A kindergarten teacher chooses adequate contents, forms and methods of work. Educational process is lead directly by her/him, (s)he organises and implements activities for children and prepares didactical materials. (S)he motivates and encourages children, directs them and plays with them. Due to monitoring of child's development kindergarten teacher observes children in different activities and circumstances. While implementing the programme (s)he offers professional assistance to her/his teaching assistant who takes care of preparation of educational means, toys, playing tools and didactical materials as well as the functional and aesthetical space setting. An assistant

⁷ Accessible at <http://www.stat.si/StatWeb/glavnanavigacija/podatki/prikazistaronovico?IdNovice=4681> (12.12.2016).

⁸ http://irssv.si/upload2/Izvajanje%20PND%20za%20leto%202016_3.pdf

oversees adequate timely division and forms of performance of daily chores, feeding, hygiene, rest and outdoor activities. Kindergarten teachers are permanently updating their professional skills. They are a part of common kindergarten tasks in accordance with their annual work plan and have to prepare a final report on executed tasks in the previous year.⁹

Work of the **kindergarten teacher's assistant** entails cooperation with the kindergarten teacher in planning, implementation and preparation of educational work as well as implementing other tasks connected to activities of the kindergarten. The kindergarten teacher's assistant assists with implementation of educational process and independently implements individual tasks agreed upon with the kindergarten teacher. They help with the use of didactical materials for children's activities, take care of preparation of educational means, toys and tools and are responsible for adequate spatial functionality and aesthetics. They are responsible for adequate timing and form of daily chores, such as feeding, hygiene, rest and outdoor activities. They participate in common kindergarten activities that are based on annual work plan and cooperate with the kindergarten teacher in compilation of the final annual report on realisation of tasks in the previous year.¹⁰

The system of public child care remains to be a gender segregated field of employment (98 % of all employed are women). Employees have secondary and higher education. Although in recent years part-time fixed-term employments are in increase, most of the employees do work full-time in permanent employments. Kindergarten teacher's income exceeds an average salary in Slovenia, while the income of kindergarten teacher's assistant is extremely low; it is close to the minimal wage. While kindergarten teachers implement and coordinate educational activities, their assistants are responsible for routine care work, such as personal hygiene, feeding, tidying, putting the children to rest etc. This points to the hierarchisation of work where the closer the content of work is to education the higher is its value and the closer it is to routine care work to ensure basic hygiene and feeding needs the more it is economically devaluated.

Accessible data – education

The Ministry of Education and Sport collects gender based data systematically since the school year 2010/2011. The data from years prior to that are not completely comparable with current data due to changes in school programmes.

The 1991 Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia includes data on enrolment for each available programme in the school year 1990/91 according to gender, which shows that the College for Health Care Workers enrolled 513 persons, 68 men and 445 women (13.3 % men). In the Faculty of Medicine which offers potential for more prestigious occupations the share of men was higher (36.1 % men): out of 1,069 students 386 were men and 683 were women. The share of men enrolled in the Faculties of Education was 11.6 % or 450 out of 3,877 students (Antončič, 1991).

The 2001 Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia reveals that ten years later things have not changed much. Gender based data on enrolment in the school year 2000/2001 show

⁹ https://www.ess.gov.si/ncips/cips/opisi_poklicev/opis_poklica?Kljuc=599&Filter=

¹⁰ https://www.ess.gov.si/ncips/cips/opisi_poklicev/opis_poklica?Kljuc=600&Filter=

that 2,479 persons enrolled in the College for Health Care Workers and out of that 305 were men (12.3%). Enrolment in the Faculty of Education shows a total of 7,432 students, out of which 977 (13.1%) were men. Comparison of enrolment into Ljubljana and Maribor Faculty of Education reveals a significant gap between both faculties; in Ljubljana only 8.1 % of students were men, while in Maribor there were twice as many (16.2 %) (Antončič, 2001).

The 2011 Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia shows that the number of enrolled students into higher professional schools according to standard classification of education fields (ISCED 97) increased in the field of health care: out of 9,436 there were 2,001 men and 7,462 women (21 % men) enrolled in the school year 2010/2011.

For the needs of further comparison, we have asked the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport for data. Table below shows data on secondary education (enrolment) across the whole Slovenia for school years 2010/2011 and 2015/2016; based on gender; men in %:

	School year 2010/2011			School year 2015/2016		
	TOTAL	MEN	M (%)	TOTAL	MEN	M (%)
Nursing assistant	604	166	27,48	586	174	29,69
Health care technician	1076	291	27,05	0 (programme cancelled)	0 (programme cancelled)	0 (programme cancelled)
Health care	3388	972	28,69	4092	1159	28,32
Health care (VTE)	104	32	30,77	201	63	31,34
Preschool education	1923	133	6,92	2372	257	10,84
Preschool education (VC)	33	2	6,06	67	7	10,45

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia.

In researched school years some of the programmes changed. The difference between secondary school programme of health care and health care VTE (vocational-technical education) in the table above is that the latter is a programme of vocational technical education (3+2) that lasts 2 years + a vocational matura at the end. In these (VTE) programmes only those students are enrolled that have already concluded a SVE (secondary vocational education) programme but want to attain upper secondary level of education. Similarly, there is a difference between the secondary programme of preschool education and the programme of preschool education (VC). The latter are programmes of vocational courses that last 1 year and are concluded with vocational matura – these programmes are enrolled by students with concluded four years of general upper secondary school that do not wish to take

the matura examination but rather wish to re-direct and attain their first vocation. Hence, for instance, they re-direct from general upper secondary school programme to programme of Preschool education (VC) and after the completion of one-year programme they attain the same education of Kindergarten teacher as if they would have completed technical secondary education programme of Preschool education.

Comparing enrolment in school years 2010/2011 and 2015/2016 a slight increase in the number of men is evident. Programme of preschool education has almost 4% increase, while the nursing assistant programme enrolment of men increased for 2%. The share of men enrolled in health care is around 1%.

Data on completed education in the same school programmes.

	School year 2010/2011			School year 2015/2016		
	TOTAL	MEN	M (%)	TOTAL	MEN	M (%)
Nursing assistant	93	18	19,36	146	43	29,45
Health care technician	515	127	24,66	0 (programme cancelled)	0 (programme cancelled)	0 (programme cancelled)
Health care	New programme	New programme (not concluded yet)	New programme	620	171	27,58
Health care (VTE)	22	6	27,27	52	13	25,00
Preschool education	118	2	1,70	190	20	10,53

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia.

Gender based data change slightly when we look at the completion of education in the same programmes. In some cases, there was a change of educational programmes introduced – for instance: health care technician programme was cancelled and a new health care programme introduced. Among accessible data a significant deviation in the share of men who completed nursing assistant programme is evident with only 19% (enrolment was at 28%), which points to a substantial early school leaving.

Accessible data – employment

In 1996, European Commission set a goal of reaching a 20 % share of men in preschool education (Vlašić, 2010: 143). In Slovenia, the share of men employed as kindergarten teachers or kindergarten teacher's assistant has increased for 1 % in the past decade, but still has not reached 3 % of all employees. Pedagogical personnel in the preschool period (in kindergartens) consists predominantly of women. In the school year 2013/14, the share of men among professional workers working with the age group of 1- to 3-year olds was 2 % and with 4- to 5-year olds also 2 %. In 2016, there were 10,901 kindergarten teachers and kindergarten teacher's assistants, and 98 % of them were women. Pedagogical personnel on the level of primary education is also dominated by women (88 % in 2013/14). In EU-28 in the school year 2012/13, the share of women in primary education was the lowest in Greece and Spain (69 %) and the highest in Latvia (89 %) (Vrabič Kek et al., 2016).

In 1995, the field of »health and social care« employed 47,000 persons out of which 10,000 (or 21 %) were men. In 1999, »health and social care« employed 45,000 persons out of which 9,000 (or 20 %) were men (Labour Force Survey).

In 2016, home-based care and assistance services were performed predominantly by female social carers (96.9 %). Programmes of personal assistance (assistance for persons with disabilities) employed 392 persons in 2015; three thirds (300) were women and 92 were men (Smolej et al., 2016).

Employment structure in the whole system of long-term care reveals that with 88.1 % women perform a clear majority of care. Since the data we received does not enable us to get an in-depth overview of the employment structure according to genders across individual vocational profiles, we can only mention that gender structure of the employees in personal assistance and in private occupational activity centres does deviate slightly from the average with both »types« of long-term care providers consisting of one fifth of men (in personal assistance 23.5 % and in private occupational activity centres 21.2 %). Private patronage service does not employ any male caregivers. Existing data, however, do not include employees in housing units in the field of mental health.

The 1991 Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia reveals following gender based data:

- Workers in education (1990): total = 35,631; out of which 26,485 women (meaning 74 % women and 26 % men)
- Workers in health care (1990): total = 35,606; out of which 29,456 women (meaning 83 % women and 17 % men)
- Workers in social care (1990): total = 20,172; out of which 17,885 women (meaning 89 % women and 11 % men) (Antončič, 1991).

Ten years later (2001) Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia cites following data:

- Employed personnel for care and education (1990/1991): total = 6,950; out of which 6,889 women (meaning 61 or 0.9 % men)
- Employed personnel for care and education (1999/2000): total = 7,329; out of which 7,272 women (meaning 57 or 0.8 % men)

- Professional workers in schools (1990/1991): total = 14,655; out of which 12,358 women (meaning 2,297 or 15.7 % men)
- Professional workers in schools (1998/1999): total = 15,140; out of which 12,820 women (meaning 2,320 or 15.3 % men) (Antončič, 2001).

The 2010 and 2015 data comparison showed:

- In 2010, a total of 12,758 persons were employed in occupations of »health care professionals, professionals of medical biology, life or biotechnical sciences« with 4,515 men (or 35,4 %); in 2015, the share of men dropped significantly with only 5,063 men out of total of 21,714 persons to 23.3 %.
- In the field of »education professionals« the percentage of employed men decreased only by 1 % between the years 2010 and 2015; in 2010 there were 8,778 men employed (or 19.4 %) out of 45,287 persons, while in 2015 out of total 46,485 persons there were 8,429 men (or 18.1 %). In 2010 there was a total of 9,640 kindergarten professionals employed with only 165 (or 1.7 %) men. The percentage of employed male teachers in the first and the second triad of primary education remains practically the same: in 2001 there were 5,282 persons employed as teachers with only 160 (or 3 %) of men. In 2010, the number of female and male teachers increased to 6,366, but the percentage of men remains almost the same at 2.8 % (with 178 men). In 2014, the share of men remains the same (2.8 %), although the total number of employed increased even more to 6,826 (with 193 men).

5. Analysis of material for occupational orientation/vocational education

In Slovenia, the presentation of different occupations is not included systematically in curriculum of last grades of primary school, it is rather observed either within some subjects, in the hours with class teacher or within out-of-school activities. The topic of occupation and paid work is a part of the curriculum within the subject of Civic education and ethics in the 8th grade of primary school. However, the chapter encompasses principally the aspect of economic value of work, ownership relations, public goods and taxes, income, labour market, employment and unemployment. In addressing occupations emphasis is put on old–new vocations dichotomy (as for instance, computer science) which is a consequence of technological progress. These changes impose demand for new occupations and even more so a recognition that it is necessary to be educated for groups of vocations not just for one individual vocation (for instance, law studies enable performing vocations in prosecution, courts, notary service, companies, etc.) (Ule Nastran et al., 2001).

An overview of sources on vocational orientation and training showed that there are none to encourage boys to enter care vocations in Slovenia. In general, materials are intended for the whole population of pupils of final grades of primary school, parents, for professional services and teachers. The materials presented below are representative for the national context. Two

sources that address gender and occupation directly were selected for analysis from the available materials. One of the two was a booklet *Dan za punce* (Engl.: A day for the girls) and the other was a project titled *Tkalnica poklicev za fante = punce* (Engl.: Vocational weaving mill for boys = girls). The first source encourages girls to take on technical, natural science and computer related vocations, while the second one addresses girls and boys regarding their decision on vocational orientation.

For this vocational orientation analysis 6 sources have been selected which were further divided in two groups. First group includes official strategies in the field of vocational orientation and present representative sources of the field in Slovenia, while in the second group we gathered mostly sources that present projects, mainly locally oriented one-time activities and a web site on learning tools.

First group: Official strategy – national level

- Booklet *Dan za punce* (Engl.: A day for the girls) is targeting girls regarding their vocational path decision.
- Web site *Moja izbira – Spletni servis za poklicno izobraževanje* (Engl.: My choice – Web service for vocational education) represents a source of information on occupations, programmes and schools and it is intended for pupils, their parents and counselling services.
- *Poklicna orientacija v 7. in 8. razredu osnovne šole. Priročnik za strokovne delavce.* (Engl.: Vocational orientation in 7th and 8th grade of primary school guide. A guide for school workers)

Second group: Projects – local level

- Project *Tkalnica poklicev za fante = punce* (Engl.: “Vocational weaving mill for boys = girls”) project is addressing boys and girls and draws attention to gender based stereotypes that can influence their decisions on vocation of choice.
- DVD *Moja soseska* (Engl.: My neighbourhood) – presentation of diverse occupations, among other also the vocation of kindergarten teacher.
- Web site of a private company www.otroci.org – an example of worksheet on occupations.

A day for the girls booklet

A day for the girls booklet (<https://www.zds.si/si/publikacije>) is a product of the project »Spodbujanje in motiviranje mladih žensk pri odločanju o poklicni karieri« (Engl.: Encouraging and motivating young women in their decision on vocational career), implemented by the Association of Employers of Slovenia in cooperation with the Economic Interest Group (GIZ) Podjetnost, and co-financed by the European Social Fund in years 2010 and 2014. Key activity of the project was organisation of an event called ‘A day for the girls’ during which girls from the final grades of primary school could get acquainted with companies in the field of natural science, technics and information technology. Event was organized in 2012, 2013, 2014 and again in 2017. On the web site www.danzapunce.si it says that this event is intended for girls of 7th, 8th and 9th grade of primary school that are deciding

on their future vocation and explicitly encourages them to consider vocations in the field of natural science and technology.

A day for the girls booklet (58 pages) was published by Association of Employers of Slovenia in 2014 in 4,000 copies. It is also available on the Association of Employers of Slovenia web site (<https://www.zds.si/si/publikacije>). It is intended for girls of final grades of primary school, addressing them directly in a motivational, encouraging manner, to not be stopped by gender stereotypes and divisions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' occupations in considering their future vocation.

»Despite stereotypes and divisions of masculine and feminine occupations, professional from the field of science and technology prove that girls can master any vocation« (ZDS, 2014: 7).

Booklet structure is divided in sections encompassing:

- Basic information on employment trends and high potential industries emphasizing technical vocations (engineering, mechanical engineering and electro engineering) and the field of computer science. Occupations in construction (simple construction jobs), metallurgical industry, electro mechanics, carpentry and hospitality are also put forward. Emphasis is put on the labour market demand in *»traditionally masculine vocations in which also girls can excel«* (ZDS, 2014: 8).
- Recommendation for girls to consider their own wishes regarding their further education and future vocation and not be bothered by gender stereotypes.
- Presentation of stories of three women that made their careers in the field of science and technology.
- Presentation of the *A day for the girls* project and a list of all companies that collaborated in the *A day for the girls* events from 2012 until 2014.
- Presentations of some occupations from the field of science and technology, including respective educational programmes: electrotechnology, the media and multimedia, computer sciences, engineering, logistics, construction, carpentry and wood and furniture industry, chemistry, car industry and biology. Presented fields include also stories of successful women in these fields enriched with photographs of those women.
- In conclusion there are links to search for additional information on employment and education (for instance, to the Employment Service, My Choice web portal, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport with further links to lists of secondary schools, Centre for vocational counselling etc.).

Visually, the booklet is equipped with photographs of women in working environments (for instance, in laboratories, at construction site etc.) and with their portrait photographs:

- in presentation of successful women working in the fields of science, technology and computer sciences;

- in presentation of diverse occupations in science and technology, and
- in short stories of women working in these vocations (for instance, media technician, researcher, wooden jewellery designer etc.).

The cover of the booklet is based on a photograph of the first Slovenian female pilot Kristina Gorišek, with a quote of hers from 1932 when she first single-handedly piloted a plane:

»I accelerated and for the first time rose into the space between the sky and the earth. I was overwhelmed with joy and felt incredibly happy in my heart«.

There was a comic style text bubble added to photography, with a note *»use your own head!«*.

Cover of the booklet *A day for the girls*



Source: Association of Employers of Slovenia (2014): Dan za punce.
<https://www.zds.si/si/publikacije>

In several places in the booklet the existence of masculine and feminine occupations is emphasized, however, it is not defined what is meant by 'feminine' or 'masculine' occupations and the usage of terms is not discussed. It is evident from the publication that both terms refer to numerical predominance of either women or men in certain occupation or industry.

The narrative is encouraging. It addresses girls directly and encourages them to self-reflect, reflect on their wishes, on what they want to do in their lives vocationally, what their interests are, and to make these wishes come true regardless of social expectations, social gender stereotypes and fields of work:

*Become what you want to be!
Use your own head!*

It is girls who are addressed throughout the whole text and occupations presented in which usually men predominate, but we also found information on feminised occupations in which women prevail but also men can find success (ZDS, 2014: 14):

»There are deeply rooted notions present on »masculine« in »feminine« vocations, but they usually do not reflect the reality. Women can be equally successful or even better in most of the occupations that are thought to be masculine occupations, and vice versa. And men can also be very good in occupations in which we are used to seeing women. Therefore, think outside the box! Consider your own wishes and talents and not expectations of those around you.«

Photographs depict mainly women in active roles in work environments and portraits in the context of presentation of women in vocations in the field of science, technology and computer science. In active roles are presented also girls that participated in the *A day for the girls* events (such as, visiting a company, in a workshop etc.). Beside photographs we can also find illustrations of six girls that are positioned in the booklet as additional visual material, for instance as introduction to presentation of the *A day for the girls* project, beside lists of cooperating companies, etc. Girls in illustrations seem fashionable and passive, except for the first illustration in the introductory part of the text where the illustrated girl addresses girls directly with a question: »What are you going to be when you grow up?«. The question seems to be a bit childish for the teenagers that are supposed to be targeted and it would perhaps be more appropriate to ask: »Have you thought about in which vocation you could work?«. In all six illustration girls are dressed fashionable, wear makeup, act relaxed and seem to put importance on their looks. In none of the illustrations eyes of girls are visible, two wear sunglasses, one has long hair that cover her eyes, and two of them evidently closed their eyes, which is a bit surprising considering the encouraging narrative and direct addressing of girls regarding their decision on their future vocation. Girls in illustrations are static and act passive in contrast to photographs that express movement, action and activity (in work environments). Use of illustrations and photographs in the booklet shows inconsistency of visual materials from the perspective of empowerment of girls in their decision on educational and vocational path.



Source: Association of Employers of Slovenia
(2014): Dan za punce.
<https://www.zds.si/si/publikacije>

Photographs depict prevailingly young women; middle aged women are in minority although they are presented as successful women and entrepreneurs etc. Men can be seen only in two places and in both cases together with women in work environments (for instance, at construction site). Intersectional dimensions, such as ethnicity, migrations, religion are not present. The language is characterised by symmetrical binarisms: ‘*masculine*’ occupations – ‘*feminine*’ occupations, ‘boys’ toys’.

Throughout the text women present their educational and vocational paths along with their success in individual fields of vocational activity and thus address girls to decide on vocations regardless of their male predominance or their depiction as ‘*masculine*’ occupations. Occupations in the field of science, technology and computer sciences are presented as vocations with prospects and a big demand on the labour market. In presented stories women are represented as equally competent as men in these vocations. Language and the content are designed to encourage empowerment in vocational orientation based on own interests and wishes and without gender role stereotypes and divisions to ‘*masculine*’ and ‘*feminine*’ vocations. Booklet uses the terms ‘*masculine*’ and ‘*feminine*’ vocation as a fact, without interpretation of what ‘*feminine*’/‘*masculine*’ occupation means and without problematisation of such binary divisions. Visual materials except for illustrations do achieve the purpose and the message of the booklet.



Web site My Choice

Web site *My Choice* (*Moja izbira*) (www.mojaizbira.si) is on-line service for vocational education provides current information on vocations and educational programmes and schools. *My Choice* includes information from data bases of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, the Chamber of Craft of Slovenia and the Employment Service of Slovenia. The data on secondary schools are updated by schools themselves. Web site is managed by Centre for Vocational Training of Slovenia. It is intended for pupils and students, their parents, schools, especially their counselling services, career counsellors and life-long learning counsellors.

The web site was put on-line in 2008 and in 2014 it was recast within a project financed by European Structural Fund. Information on the web site are organized in a structured manner and the site enables access to current information and information about vocations, schools and programmes, advice, tools (for instance, diverse games, such as game about vocation etc.) for counselling services, pupils and their parents. There are 476 vocations, 367 schools and 278 programmes presented on the web site. Presentations of some of the occupations are enriched with short videos.

Description of individual occupation includes a short presentation of the work that it entails, information on work tools, the final product or service, what the interests of those who decide on the occupation should be, dangers and risks connected to performing in the occupation. Web site offers also other information (news on events, projects), including on-line games with help of which a young person can check their own vocational interests. Occupations are visually presented also with the Occupational cards which depict a person performing certain vocation and the name of the vocation in Slovenian and English language. The name of the vocation in Slovenian language is written in masculine form.

Information and data on vocations presented on *My Choice* web site were contributed by the Employment Service of Slovenia.

For this analysis two vocations were selected, both related to care work, home-based care and assistance performer and preschool teacher.

Home-based carer

Description of the occupation says that it is care work for the elderly, the sick and people with disabilities. It is performed in the home of the person in need of care and consists of housekeeping assistance, personal and social care. It is stated that the product or the service offered is assistance to the person that needs care. For those who are deciding on this occupation it says it is important to have *»a positive attitude towards people and ability to establish an adequate relation with the service user«*. Presentation includes also description of potential dangers, such as stress situations, occupational burn-out syndrome, back injuries, etc.

Cover illustration for the occupation of home-based carer:



Source: <http://www.mojaizbira.si/poklic/oskrbovalec-negovalac-na-domu>

Above the textual presentation of the occupation there is an illustration of a young man with a smile on his face – a doctor in doctor's clothes and with a stethoscope. The young man is shown four times in this illustration and each time it looks like he is waving to say hello. In the background there are curtain walls on the wheels as well as a table and chair both also on wheels, which gives more a feeling of a hospital or health care centre environment than of a home environment. The illustration is missing the person that needs care, therefore the illustration does not give even a basic information about the occupation: care work and the relation of caregiver and the person who needs care. The use of this illustration is completely inadequate for the presentation of occupation of the home-based carer, because it illustrates the occupation of a doctor which is highly hierarchised and to a considerable extent an occupation dominated by men in contrast to feminised and unqualified care work in home environment.

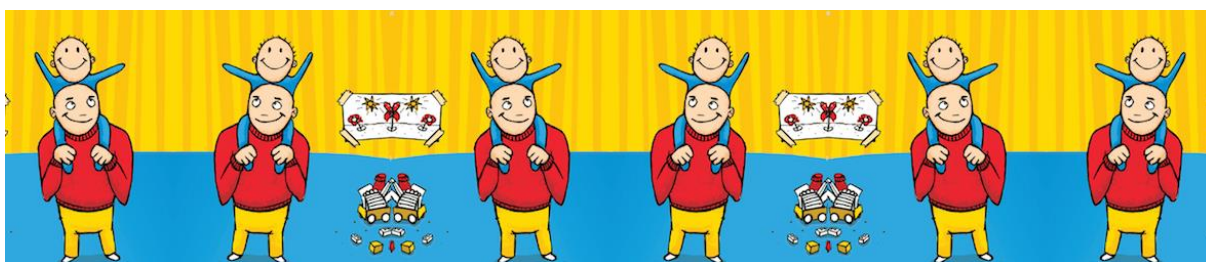
The same illustration can be found in the Occupational Cards for description of the occupation of a nursing assistant. Occupation presentation does not offer a video presentation.

On the level of content and language masculine grammatical gender is in the role of gender neutral language. Other social signifiers, such as age, ethnicity, etc. are not present in the text. The illustration does not represent the occupation of a home-based carer because of what the content and visual material are inconsistent. Hence, presentation of this occupation is inadequate which can have significant consequences from the perspective of making a decision on future vocation.

Kindergarten teacher

On the web site, the page presenting the occupation of kindergarten teacher entails an illustration and a textual presentation of occupation. For this occupation personal characteristics, knowledge, competencies and skills are emphasized as follows: *»motivation for teaching children is based on love and joy in working with kids. You need to have well developed personal characteristics, such as creativity, communication, sensibility, empathy – ability to understand the world of children and of parents, and of group guidance«.*

Cover illustration for the occupation of kindergarten teacher:



Source: <http://www.mojaizbira.si/poklic/vzgojitelj-predsolskih-otrok>

Illustration depicts a man with a smile on his face – a teacher holding a small child on his shoulders – a boy who is also laughing and has his hands wide open, indicating playfulness, activity and the relation between them. In the background there are toys (play cubes, cars) and a child-drawn picture on the wall, activity is set in an in-door space, a playroom. The illustration gives a happy impression and basic information on the occupation – work with kids is fun. However, the illustration encompasses just that, the fun part of this occupation, but not the tasks referring to care and hygiene part of the work which represent less fun and more routinized yet equally important part of the occupation. From the perspective of gender equality this illustration communicates an important message with showing a man in care role, however, it does display only the nice part of the preschool teacher's occupation. It is unusual for markedly feminised vocation, such as preschool teacher, to be presented in a male role. It seems as if the fundamental approach of encouraging boys for care work is based on emphasizing it as 'fun with kids' occupation and not as a serious, responsible and care occupation.

The illustration is followed by a short description of the occupation which is written in feminine form: »Preschool teacher takes care of an integrated development of the child. She creates and ensures opportunities for development of child's physical and mental capabilities. She develops child's independence, initiative, curiosity, communication, thinking, creative expression and positive self-image«. The rest of the text is written in masculine form. On the level of language, the use of masculine and feminine form works inconsistently and ambivalently. In the brief description of the occupation written in feminine form, the child and supportive role of the teacher in ensuring conditions for the best possible development of the child are put in front, while in the rest of the text the emphasis is on active role of the teacher teaching the children and working with parents. Teacher plans, organizes and implements educational work with children, cooperates with teacher's assistant and engages in additional trainings.

Presentation is, beside textual description, enriched with five videos in which main protagonists are female teachers (accessible at <http://www.mojaizbira.si/poklic/vzgojitelj-predsolskih-otrok>). The first video staged as a sketch is done with professional actors. Main protagonist is a preschool teacher – a woman, while the kids are played by male actors. The other four videos show female teachers who through short statements describe their work and their occupational path and explain how they decided on their vocation. Videos show daily

happening in kindergarten, arrival of kids, breakfast, diverse games in the playroom, activity on the playground, lunch and afternoon rest. In one of the videos two young men in the role of teacher's assistant can be seen helping with breakfast, afternoon nap, but they are not seen in an active role (for instance, they do not actively participate in interview). Beside work in kindergartens, videos show also studying at the Faculty of Education with a female professor and female students in a lecture room. Students give short statements on why they decided to study at this faculty and what knowledge and skills should a person teaching in kindergarten have. One of the videos shows occupations of preschool teacher and a primary school teacher. It starts as a cartoon in which two kids (boys) are fighting over a toy (airplane) when a female teacher enters, sets them apart, sits them at a table and helps both to make their own paper airplane. The video continues with a scene in classroom where a teacher again calms two kids, again boys, calls one of them in front of the classroom where he must answer a question. In the next scene there is a teacher in kindergarten who gives a short statement on why she became a kindergarten teacher. The video is concluded with a statement of the principal of Secondary preschool education school and Gimnazija Ljubljana who presents the occupation of preschool teacher's assistant as a prospective occupation due to slight increase in birth rate and from the perspective of possibilities of further education.

In visual material daily happening in kindergarten is shown mostly in in-door space, in playrooms. In one of the shown games where a group of girls is taking care of teacher's hairdo while a group of boys is engaged in a game of table football the scene works quite gendered: girls - passive, external appearance, boys - sport, active. Out-door scenes of kindergarten life, where kids are seen playing in sandbox, running around, but no apparent direct role of a teacher indicated, are significantly less present in the videos.

The whole text presenting the occupation is written in masculine form with an exception of a short description that is written in feminine form. Except for the illustration showing a male teacher, whole visual presentation is dominated by female protagonists in roles of kindergarten teachers, kindergarten cooks, students and lecturers at the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana. Women in videos represent a homogenous group of women, young and middle aged. Gender and youth act as two dominant social signifiers. In the only video showing also two young men - teacher's assistants, they do not have an active role in presentation of the occupation which is a lost opportunity for addressing also boys. From the perspective of gender equality and encouraging boys to engage in care vocations this video presentation would communicate an important message if they had an opportunity to speak out. In such case, representation of care work and gender would be completely different, because direct relation between care work and women and men in preschool education would be set. But this visual material rather established a relation between women and childcare work, thus reproducing existing stereotyped gender roles. Emphasized are personal trades that are in general context usually described as 'feminine' trades, such as compassion, empathy, communication etc. Knowledge, skills and competencies are presented in a gendered way in visuals – representation of exclusively women as communicative, creative, compassionate that work as kindergarten teachers while the role of men is completely absent or reduced to

the role of teacher's assistants. Other social signifiers (for instance, ethnicity, migrations, sexual orientation) are not present in materials.

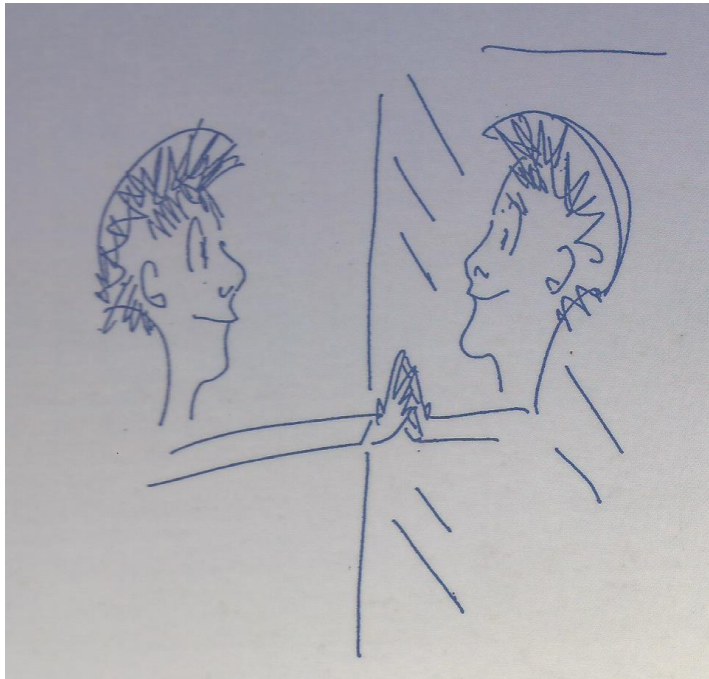
Vocational orientation in 7th and 8th grade of primary school guide. A guide for professional workers

The guide for professional workers encompasses a programme of work with pupils of 7th and 8th grade of primary school and their parents. It was authored by two counselling workers from two different primary schools and is based on their work, knowledge and experiences in implementing the programme of vocational orientation with pupils and their parents. The guide is intended for professional services and counselling workers. It consists of programme presentation, instructions for implementation of exercises with pupils that can be implemented in different school situations, such as class hours, substituted classes, extra-curricular activities, cultural days, individual conversations with pupils and parents etc. Namely, topics on vocational orientation are not included in curriculum systematically; therefore they are implemented in diverse school activities. The authors also noted: »Programme is based on active cooperation of pupils and parents in the process of vocational decision« (Pregelj Arčon and Skrt Leban, 2000).

The guide is structured in chapters. Authors first present an overview of the programme of vocational orientation for 7th and 8th grades of primary school, which distributes activities for work with pupils and their parents monthly throughout the school year. This is followed by content sections for 7th and for 8th grade of primary school and a section for work with parents, including attachments and presentations (for visual presentation with a projector). Content sections are divided into chapters on educational system (secondary schools, subjects, etc.), on occupations and self-evaluation/self-examination of interests and curiosities regarding the future vocation. In the latter, a great emphasis is put on self-presentation of pupils presenting themselves based on key notions, such as interests, abilities, temperament, character and learning habits. In the section on vocations, numerous exercises are foreseen for thinking about the reasons for vocation choice, groups of occupations, occupations performed by family members, including exercises that encourage considering personal trades that people should have to perform certain occupations. With going through these exercises pupil creates a personal folder.

The guide is written in masculine form. The exception is only an exercise on sorting occupations into groups where in the list of 54 occupations all but two are written in masculine form (for instance, medical technician, primary school teacher, cook, ballet dancer, chimney sweep, pilot, electro technician, psychologist, salesman, journalist, leather dresser, baker, shoemaker, architect, nursing assistant, etc.). The only two occupations written in feminine form were seamstress and kindergarten teacher, which seemed unusual and inconsistent.

Cover of Vocational orientation in 7th and 8th grade of primary school guide. A guide for professional workers:



Source: Pregelj Arčon and Skrt Leban, 2000.

Visual material is represented in illustrations depicting a young boy with messy hair in diverse activities enacting different occupations and figures that represent diverse occupations.

Descriptions of occupations and characteristics that a person should have to perform in certain occupations are gendered. In picture, there are three figures, two male and one female, and accompanied by lists of personal trades. Pupils must define what occupations or industries are presented. The question goes: »In what occupations would a person with these trades be successful in your opinion?«



V likih imaš navedenih nekaj lastnosti. V katerih poklicih bi osebe s temi lastnostmi po tvojem mnenju lahko dobro uspevale? K posameznim poklicem navedi tudi poklicna področja, v katera jih lahko uvrstiš.

poklici	področja

poklici	področja

Source: Pregelj Arčon and Skrt Leban, 2000.

In figures of men in which one is representing a cook and another a person working in the field of engineering, descriptions emphasize personal trades, such as: a sense of aesthetics, precision, physical and hand skills, persistence in finding errors, an interest in production and reparation or for engineering in general, spatial imagination. Visualisation and presentation of these trades in masculine form makes these trades gendered. With female figure the list of personal trades consists of: emotional stability and warmth, physical and hand skills, communication, creativity, clear and distinct speech, interest for work with children and developed sense for aesthetics. Again, with presenting these trades with a female figure these trades become gendered. Occupational fields are therefore presented in a gendered way: care for others as a feminine occupational field, hospitality (baker, cook) and engineering as masculine occupational field. Such visualisation of occupations and personal trades thus reproduces existing stereotyped gender roles as well as fields of occupational engagement.

Project Vocational weaving mill for boys = girls

The project *Vocational weaving mill for boys = girls* (*Tkalnica poklicev za fante = punce*) (<http://www.fundacija-prizma.si/index.php/en/novice/2-staticni-prispevki/330-tkalnica-poklicev-za-fante-punce>) was implemented by Prizma Foundation with the financial support of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in 2016. As stated in the presentation of the project, the project *»aims to overcome gender stereotypes impacting key decisions of pupils of final years of primary schools regarding their educational and vocational paths«*. The key idea is for young people to decide on their further education and vocation choices based on their own wishes, interests and not according to their parents' and societal expectations. The purpose of the project is to contribute to gender equality in vocational choice and in labour market, and to elimination of discrimination based on gender. Project activities included interactive workshops for pupils, parents, counselling services in four primary schools in Štajerska region, a public contest for pupils to express in an art form the notion of *»Women in engineering, why not? / Men in preschool education, why not«*, and a final conference.

The project recognizes that women in masculinised occupations and men in feminised occupations are confronted with gender stereotypes. It also warns that gender differentiation starts already with secondary school enrolment, where girls numerically dominate in general programmes, such as textile, economy, healthcare, education, social sciences, culture and personal services, while the share of boys is predominant in programmes, such as forestry, carpentry, construction, printing and graphic design, electro techniques, computer science, engineering and mining.



Source: <http://www.fundacija-prizma.si/index.php/en/novice/2-staticni-prispevki/330-tkalnica-poklicev-za-fante-punce>

On the levels of content, language and visuals the project remains within binary gender frame ('masculine' – 'feminine' occupations). In visual materials in their brochures women and men are numerically equally represented, including two women presented in technical engineering occupations and two men in kindergarten teaching and elderly care occupations. Beside gender, also the social signifier of age is present, however, there is a presence of relative homogeneity in age of men as both are presented as young, whereas in women there is more age heterogeneity there with one depicting a younger woman and another a middle-aged woman. In visual representation of occupation, incoherence was identified as both women were presented with name and surname by which we find out they are publicly known persons, but cannot find out anything about their occupations or what they think about the vocations they are engaged in. That could be important information from the perspective of motivation of girls deciding on these occupations. On the other hand, the situation with both men is different, as there is their testimonial for both occupations, but we do not know who they are. Also, the occupation of kindergarten teacher is once again presented through playing with children, but information-wise we only find out that there are very few male kindergarten teachers in Slovenia. Regarding the care for the elderly the young man emphasized organisational, technical skills, competencies and professional knowledge necessary for this occupation, while the ethics of care is completely absent in his testimonial.

DVD My neighbourhood

My neighbourhood (Moja soseska) DVD is a product of a project implemented by 23 Institute and My Neighbourhood Institute in 2007. The project was financed by the European Union Community initiative programme Slovenia-Hungary-Croatia of Interreg IIIA Programme.

In *My neighbourhood* DVD following occupations are presented: tourist animator, driver, cook, carpenter, mechatronics technician, air space controller, kindergarten teacher, informatics engineer, ecological farming engineer, physical therapist, engineer of electrotechnics, construction engineer. Each occupation presentation includes a video presentation, brief description of occupation and education system, employment possibilities and other additional information.



Source: *My neighbourhood* (2007): Occupation presentation.

In video presentation of preschool teacher occupation main protagonists are two middle-aged kindergarten teachers. We follow their working daily routine, beginning in early morning hours and all the way through to the end of their day when children are picked up by their grandparents or parents. The video starts with morning preparation for the children's arrival, serving breakfast and a programme of diverse games. Then we can see lunch time and teachers serving food to children, followed by preparation for the afternoon rest time where the aspect of gentleness, physical contact with children with motherly role of a teacher in the group of the youngest children (lulling the children, by caressing and cuddling) stands out. Video is concluded with the final thoughts of both teachers and a scene of 'playfulness' of

one of them swinging on a swing beside a child. Her thoughts on why she works at a kindergarten were: »The best thing in this occupation is that you get to spend your day in a circle of honest, laughing and unresentful beings«. Beside presentation of a working day in a kindergarten, video also shows fragments of studying at the Faculty of Education with statements of female students on why they decided for this occupation, and a lecture of one of the female professors. In the rest of the presentational materials with information on education and employment possibilities the text is written in masculine form in function of gender-neutral position. The occupation is presented as a favourable prospect with an increasing demand for employment due to retirements and growing rate of children in kindergartens in years to come.

The representation of kindergarten teacher occupation is gender homogenous – all protagonists are women: from younger students and professors, to middle-aged kindergarten teachers and cooks. Men are absent from the video which has a validating effect to the notion that the field of preschool teaching is intended for women and it is a field where exclusively women are vocationally successful. And by doing this, girls are encouraged to engage in this occupation, while boys are rather discouraged by it. Stereotypical trades of female kindergarten teachers are emphasized in several points throughout the video, especially through games that are partially passive and are being played only in-doors and in moments of expressing ‘motherly role’ of teachers, for instance with caressing, cuddling, etc. Such scenes would have a completely different message if male kindergarten teachers and assistants were included in diverse tasks (such as, feeding the children, playing with them, lulling/comforting them, etc.) as it would establish a relation between men and care work.

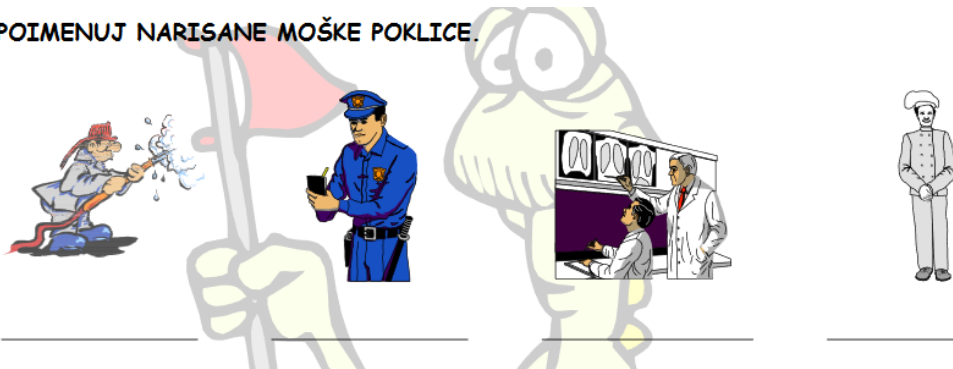
Web site www.otroci.org – an example of worksheet on occupations

The www.otroci.org web site is intended for parents, children and primary school teachers. It is managed by a private company which by marketing diverse suppliers (for instance, foreign language learning for children, sports shoes, etc.), as they say, enable content free of charge. There are worksheets and different other contents for preschool children and pupils of primary school available in an on-line shop. Worksheets for diverse subjects of all nine grades of primary school are available free of charge, whereas additional worksheets are available in the on-line shop.

For the purpose of analysis, a worksheet for the subject of Slovenian language for 4th grade of primary school titled Occupations was selected. There were three assignments on the worksheet:

- In the first assignment, four different occupations are presented in illustrations: firefighter, policeman, doctor and a cook. The assignment goes: »Name illustrated male occupations«. Under each illustration there is a dedicated space for the pupil to put in the answer.

1. POIMENUJ NARISANE MOŠKE POKLICE.



Source: Worksheet for the subject of Slovenian language for 4th grade of primary school titled Occupations. Available at: https://www.otroci.org/4r9/Poklici_1.1.pdf.

- The second assignment was: »Give female names to the following occupations«; each occupation is written in masculine grammatical form (salesman, poet, hairdresser, cleaner, cook, driver, writer) and the assignment is to change the occupation performers into female occupation performers.

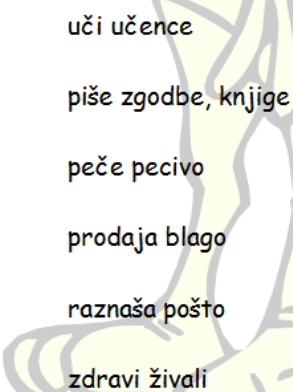
2. POIMENUJ ŽENSKE, KI OPRAVLJAJO NASLEDNJE POKLICE.

trgovec	_____	čistilec	_____
pesnik	_____	kuhar	_____
frizer	_____	voznik	_____
učitelj	_____	pisatelj	_____

Source: Worksheet for the subject of Slovenian language for 4th grade of primary school titled Occupations. Available at: https://www.otroci.org/4r9/Poklici_1.1.pdf.

- In the third assignment pupils have to find connections between an occupation and a task that a person performs in such occupation (for instance, a teacher – teaches pupils, etc.).

3. POVEŽI, KAJ OPRAVLJAJO OSEBE V POKLICIH.



pismonoša	uči učence
veterinar	piše zgodbe, knjige
učitelj	peče pecivo
pek	prodaja blago
trgovec	raznaša pošto
pisatelj	zdravi živali

Source: Worksheet for the subject of Slovenian language for 4th grade of primary school titled Occupations. Available at: https://www.otroci.org/4r9/Poklici_1.1.pdf.

The worksheet divides occupations stereotypically into ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ occupations. First assignment has a direct message that policing, firefighting, doctoring and cooking are ‘masculine’ occupations. The second one with giving occupation performers feminine form again enables an interpretation that listed occupations are those in which women are not numerically strongly represented or successful. More appropriate would be to instruct pupils to put occupation performer in feminine grammatical form. And in the third assignment, again, all occupations were written in masculine grammatical form.

On the level of language, all occupations were written in masculine grammatical form in all three assignments, on visual level four occupations in illustrations are represented by male figures. Representation of occupations would be significantly different if illustrations would include also female figures, and a reformulation of assignments would also be necessary. In illustrations stereotypical characteristics are used: activity, strength, control, except in the illustration of cook all occupations are depicted through activity of firefighter holding the water hose, policeman writing something down and the doctor (older, with grey hair) examining an x-ray image with a younger colleague - male doctor.

Men are linked to occupations directly connected to power, control, activity – with gendered trades. Women are in this worksheet represented as side-actors in occupations that are traditionally represented as occupations in which men are successful (especially in the first assignment).

Key findings and recommendations

There are no materials on vocational orientation focusing directly on boys and encouraging them to decide for care occupations in Slovenia. In the analysis, we have focused on three sources that were representative for Slovenia and were products of public institutions, ministries and interest groups. The analysed materials include the publication *A day for the girls*, a web site *My Choice* and a guide for professional workers in the final grades of primary school. We have also included into the analysis three materials important on the local level and representing smaller-scale projects, such as *Occupational weaving mill for boys = girls*, *My neighbourhood* DVD and a private company web site with learning tools.

The analysis showed that visualisation of occupations and personal trades ascribed to certain occupations often reproduce existing gender stereotypes and related occupational activities (for instance, child care – female kindergarten teacher; power, control, dynamics – male doctor). We have encountered incoherence between content, language and visuals. On the level of language, use of masculine grammar form in the function of gender neutral form predominates, which feels artificial and has a rather negative effect on the youth from the perspective of gender equality and encouragement to decide for an occupation when they are not directly addressed. The only exception was *A day for the girls* publication addressing girls directly and written in feminine grammatical form. In video materials, visualisation of occupations from the field of preschool education, for instance, was gendered as kindergarten teachers were represented only by women and for which gendered personal trades of compassion, empathy, communication and relational skills relating to motherhood are emphasized. Whereas in visual materials depicting men in the role of kindergarten teacher's assistants the relational, emotional and routine aspects of care work are completely absent while the fun part of the occupation – playing with children – is put to front. In elderly care we also saw the absence of this relational aspect with male performers of the occupation, therefore technical organisational and professional aspects of occupation were stressed. It seems that feminised occupations, such as preschool education and elderly care are presented in euphemistic way by emphasizing certain aspects of performing such occupations, while other aspects, mainly care and nursing, are omitted.

In occupation presentations that are intended for encouragement, for instance, of girls to enter occupations in the field of engineering, science and computer technology, and boys in the field of care and assistance, it is always stressed that these occupations have favourable prospects due to expected future increase in employment demand. However, the materials with their occupation presentations work mostly descriptive and detached from real social situation. We do not find out enough about what performing an occupation entails in practice from these presentations (for instance, occupation of home-based- carer is not even presented in a video form), there is not enough information on conditions of employment, possibilities or work-life balance in these occupations etc.

An effective approach to vocational orientation should, first of all, address girls and boys at the same time without gender neutral use of language and visualisation of both, girls and boys, in all occupations. In relation to men and care work the visualisation should be focused on diverse aspects of care work, from less pleasant ones, routine, to more enjoyable and fun ones. And at the same time, it should be noted that experiences, knowledge, competencies in care work occupations are important for individuals also in their private life. This aspect of

usability of knowledge and competencies in private life should be introduced in presentations of all occupations. In general, in presentation of all care occupations their importance for the society should be emphasized.

In Slovenia, visual (short video clips) and other material (leaflets, manuals, publications for pupils, etc.), including the events that would present and promote care occupations would be necessary in order to encourage boys for care occupations. In all these different forms (video, leaflet, event, etc.) of presenting care occupations also men who are already performing care work should have their voice. In this way they would act as role models for young boys at the beginning of their educational and occupational paths who might decide working in care sector. Such event would be a great opportunity for boys to get to know care occupations more closely and to get to know how the work is performed in practice by visiting kindergartens, homes for the elderly, etc.

7. Existing national studies on men in care occupations

There are no systematic studies on men in care occupations in Slovenia; there are a few minor studies related to specific professions and they are only very recent.

- HRŽENJAK, Majda. Negotiating masculinity in informal paid care work. *Revue internationale de sociologie*, ISSN 0390-6701, 2013, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 346-362.

Theoretisation of informal care markets is in perspective of global care chains focused on feminisation and racialisation of the field. Some contemporary research does include also male migrants, while an inclusion of male non-migrant population remains non-existent. Based on an analysis of ethnographical data, the article analyses how informal male care workers in the field of child care and elderly care confront feminisation and racialisation of this field of work in Slovenia. The author notes that men use the argument of professionalisation and the vision of care entrepreneurship to distance themselves from feminisation and racialisation of the field of work. Inclusion of male non-migrants in informal care economy can thus contribute to gender and race hierarchies dominating in informal care work. On the other hand, however, the ethnographic materials show that an informal care market is a field of establishment of alternative models of manhood which resist hegemonic, stereotyped and racialised constructions of manhood.

- KANJUO MRČELA, ALEKSANDRA, REVINŠEK, JASMINA (2017): Moški, ki opravljajo »žensko delo«: Počasna defeminizacija vzgojiteljskega dela. [Engl.: Men doing »women's work«: Gradual defeminisation of preschool education work.] In: Hrženjak, Majda (ed.) (2017): Prvi spol: kritične študije moških in moškosti. [Engl.:

First sex: critical studies on men and manhood.] Časopis za kritiko znanosti [Engl.: Journal for the Critique of Science], 2017, pp. 171 – 188.

- REVINŠEK, JASMINA (2015): Moški v feminiziranem poklicu v predšolski vzgoji. [Engl.: Men in feminised occupation in the preschool education.] Master's thesis (supervised by A. Kanjuo Mrčela). Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences.

Among more current research, in an article titled Men doing »women's work«: Gradual defeminisation of preschool education work, Kanjuo Mrčela and Revinšek (2017) present findings of recent empirical research in Slovenia (101 parents of kindergarten children, 68 ninth-graders of primary school and 18 interviews of kindergarten teachers and principals). In Slovenia, the share of men employed as kindergarten teachers and teacher's assistant was 2.35 % in school year 2015/2016, but the share is in slight trend of increase in the past few years (in 2006 it was 1.25 %). Men in atypical occupations performing feminised work are in a complicated position – in a still androarchal society they are members of the dominant gender but they perform work or vocation which because of its feminisation is valued low in society. Because of that they are confronted with judgement for not being »real men« on one hand, while on the other as outnumbered men among women they also enjoy advantages. In the research conducted for master's thesis »Men in feminised occupation in the preschool education« (Revinšek, 2015), two questions are in the focus: how are male kindergarten teachers accepted in Slovenian kindergartens and how do they feel in markedly feminised occupation. Research was conducted in Slovenian public kindergartens in spring 2014. Based on 101 surveyed parents (73 mothers and 28 fathers) and 18 interviews with male and female kindergarten teachers and kindergarten principals, findings show that parents, kindergarten teachers and kindergarten principals have a positive attitude towards employment of male kindergarten teachers. A bit over half of the parents (55 %) already had an experience with a male kindergarten teacher. A vast majority of parents (83 %) think that there are not enough kindergarten teachers in Slovenian kindergartens. Such is the opinion of more mothers (89 %) than fathers (64 %). Most of the parents (70 %) would choose for their child a gender mixed tandem of kindergarten teachers, while only 10 % of parents would choose two female kindergarten teachers and these are only the parents without previous experience with male kindergarten teacher. None of the surveyed parents would choose an all-male tandem of kindergarten teachers, and 1/5 of parents state that gender of the teacher is of no importance to them. Young men are not interested in care occupations because they think women are more suitable for it. Based on analysis, the authors evaluate the possibilities of defeminisation of preschool education occupation, based on what arguments is defeminisation happening and what incentives would contribute to a bigger presence of men in education and employment in preschool education.

- VLAŠIĆ, SABINA (2010): Moški in zaposlovanje v predšolski vzgoji. [Engl.: Men and employment in preschool education.] Uprava VII (4): 143–167.

In her research, Sabina Vlašić (2010) found that most of parents do wish for a presence of male kindergarten teachers and that they would, if they could, choose a gender mixed tandem of kindergarten teachers, or they do not care about the gender of the teacher. She conducted a survey among 114 employees of kindergartens and users of their services. Results have shown that 94.2 % agreed that presence of more male kindergarten teachers would have a positive impact on education of their children. If parents had a possibility to choose, 57.7 % thought they would choose a gender mixed tandem of teachers, 13.5 % did not care about the gender of teachers at all, and nobody would decide on two men tandem of kindergarten teachers. Most of the surveyed parents (46 %) thought that the low share of men in preschool education occupation is due to scarce motivation of young men in the process of deciding on their occupational path to train for preschool education work. This reason is followed by reasons, such as: because the occupation is not valued enough (17 %); because parents prefer female teachers to male teachers in kindergarten (15 %), because this work is not well enough paid (11 %); because it is a feminine occupation (6 %); and because male kindergarten teachers are not manly enough (4 %).

- KANJUO MRČELA, ALEKSANDRA (2015): Gender Segregation in the Labour Market and Education in Slovenia. Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences.

The main focus of the author was put on the overview of the political agenda regarding the gender segregation and examples of relevant project activities, covering this topic. Decrease in gender segregation at the labour market has been one of the public policy aims in Slovenia. Since 2001 it was envisaged in national programmes of development of the labour market and employment. Government's documents envisaged a dual strategy: equal opportunities principle as a horizontal measure in all programmes and policies and treating women as a special target group in order to decrease both gender segregation and gender pay gap. The Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities 2005-2013 and Periodical plans for implementation of the national programme declared tasks and activities aimed to accomplish goals set by the national policy (as well as funding, responsible actors, time table and expected results of activities) to overturn trends of reproduction of gender segregation. A decrease in vertical and horizontal segregation and the gender pay gap was stated as one of the four aims for equal opportunities of men and women in employment and work mentioned in the Resolution. Among other measures under this objective was envisaged encouragement of women and men to get involved in education and training and to seek employment in those fields where either women or men are underrepresented. The issue of gender segregation of employment and education entered public discussion in Slovenia based on research in women studies at Slovene universities and activities of the national gender equality machinery (in the last decade mainly the Office for Equal Opportunities and later sector for Equal Opportunities at the Ministry for Work, Family, Social affairs and Equal Opportunities); such as discussions

and workshops related to gender segregation (e.g. Women at the labour market: statistics and facts; Women in Science and Research; Abolition of gender stereotypes: Mission Impossible?). Gender segregation has been covered in media occasionally, when employment of women is mentioned (e.g. on Women' Day). Within the project "Girls' day' workshops, seminars and companies' presentations of "typically male" jobs to the girls are organised annually in collaboration of two Ministries, and an employers' organisation in order to equip young women with adequate information when deciding on a professional career. On that day companies open their doors to girls in the last three grades of elementary school, and offer guided tours and attractive presentations of science and technical occupations and workplaces where they would be employed after a successful completion of an appropriate education. Another project (e.g. "Computers and kids") could present two jobs: a "male" and a "female" job, e.g. computer programmer and (pre)school teacher as being similar in many ways (demanding innovation, playfulness, creativity, discipline), as being socially constructed as female and male today (but the history of two professions shows that the first programmers were women ("ENIAC girls") while the teaching profession was at the beginning masculinised); as being team jobs – in which gender balance could be an added value. Such a presentation of two professions could stimulate change in gendered educational and occupational choices of young women and men.

8. Conclusion

In Slovenia, within gender equality policies gender educational, occupational and sectoral segregation is recognized as a problem and is included in resolutions, strategies and action plans on gender equality. However, policies address exclusively women and their participation mainly in new, high-qualified occupations related to new technologies. Despite of high gender segregation in the sectors of social and health care and in education where approximately 80 % of all employees are women, absence of men in these fields is not seen as a problem. Individual low-qualified care occupations, among which home-based social care, kindergarten teaching and nursing, could be stressed as highly problematic from the perspective of gender segregation in Slovenia, are feminised even over 95 %. Markedly feminised are also care occupations with university degree, such as university degree social worker, university degree nurse, primary school teacher, but the share of men in these occupation is growing gradually.

It is important to note that these occupations are performed mainly in public sector and are currently not defined as shortage occupations in Slovenia. This is mainly due to austerity policies of public sector shrinking, limiting the employments in public sector. Unemployment rate of women is constantly higher (except for two years during the economy crisis) than unemployment rate of men in Slovenia, therefore opening of employments for men in care sector can trigger concerns that consequently women could be disadvantaged in employments accessible to them.

According to data of the Employment Service of Slovenia, employers are looking for most workers in following 10 occupations in 2017:

- worker for simple jobs in processing industries,
- drivers of heavy goods vehicles and tug boats,
- salespersons,
- welder,
- tool industry worker,
- cleaner,
- housekeeping assistant,
- builder,
- security worker,
- commercial sales agent,
- cooks.

While housekeeping assistant holds the seventh place, professional workers in health care are on 19th and kindergarten teachers and their assistants are on 16th place of the list of occupations in shortage.¹¹

However, it should be noted that Slovenia is lagging behind the EU strongly in the share of the employed in social care with 42 % of the EU average number of social care employees on 100,000 inhabitants. In Slovenia, 772 people are employed in social care per 100,000 inhabitants, in EU there are 1,851 people employed in social care on average per 100,000 inhabitants¹². At the same time, Slovenia is one of the fastest ageing societies in the EU, meaning that demand for social care services is rapidly growing; therefore it is possible to expect a substantial increase of employment opportunities in these occupations. In BIC project we intend to focus on low-skilled care occupations in Slovenia, because we estimate that gender segregation causes markedly negative social effects on women in these fields: these fields have the lowest incomes that usually do not even reach minimal wage which leads to feminisation of poverty, while at the same time working conditions are getting worse, overburdening is growing and these occupations remain socially low-valued; all of this is a consequence of relating this work to the traditionally unqualified unpaid women's work in the family. Based on the assumption of growing social needs for these occupations we think it is important to include men and thus indirectly deconstruct stereotypes of care, education and nursing work being traditionally feminine work; enable men to develop their care capacities; and strengthen public recognition and strategic power of these occupations.

In Slovenia, vocational counselling for children in their decision on further education is systemically set in primary school education. Children and their parents are systematically informed and engaged in conversations with school counsellors; children perform tests on personal trades, skills and interests; information days are organized in secondary schools;

¹¹ <http://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/to-so-poklici-ki-jih-bodo-iskali-v-prvi-polovici leta-2017.html>

¹² Resolution on the National Social Assistance Programme for the period of 2013–2020. <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=NACP68>.

counselling service directs parents and children through the secondary school enrolment process; parents and children can get additional counselling either personally or on-line with the Employment Service of Slovenia and in the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS) (strategic partner in BIC project). This system can be seen as deficient mainly in the aspect of presentations of occupations for children and the gender-neutral system. Occupation presentation is not systematically included in curriculum but dependent on individual school and individual counselling workers and teachers. Analysed information materials on occupations showed that stereotypes on masculine and feminine occupations in the primary school system are not systematically addressed and problematised. Gender stereotypes on adequate occupations for boys and girls are addressed only in the context of directing girls into masculinised technical and science occupations, and more and more so also into low-skilled technical occupations in shortage. Gender stereotyped occupational choice of boys and the field of gender segregation of care work remain unrecognized topics for now (except for one short-term project in 2016 which among other in passing addressed also boys in care work). BIC project is hence reaching into a completely blank and untouched ground and tackling a completely unrecognized problem in the Slovenian society, which poses as an additional challenge for the project team.

All of this means that in Slovenia we need gender sensitive information materials on care occupations for primary school pupils (for instance, videos, leaflets) as well as education on the meaning and ways of addressing care occupations for boys for school counselling service and all stakeholders involved in the system of occupational orientation in primary school (counsellors in the Employment Service of Slovenia and in the Vocational Information and Counselling Centres (CIPS)). Target groups for trainings should focus on two professional groups: counsellors in the Employment Services of Slovenia and school counselling service. We assume that with the BIC project we will be able to address both fields: in WS2 we will aim at the counselling services, organize trainings and disseminate a guide for them; in WS3 we would like to address children/boys (we are contemplating either a billboard action, an art contest or a You Tube video) to include in their decision on occupational education also care occupations (concretely: kindergarten teacher, caregiver and social carer). With dissemination of the project (organisation of national conference and inclusion of extended field of stakeholders) our goal is for policy designers on national and local levels to include gender desegregation of educational and occupational paths for boys and for the field of care in their future action plans on gender equality.

So far, very rare studies of inclusion of man/boys in care occupations show that where men were included in occupation of, for instance, kindergarten teacher or caregiver, this happened in gender essentialised/stereotyped/binary manner. Such as, men should complement women in these occupations (with bigger authority and physical strength, better organisational and technical skills etc.). Because this means reproduction of gender stereotypes that can make gender inequality in care sector even worse, we assume that it is of utmost importance to deconstruct and overcome such strategy of addressing men in care occupations when designing materials for counselling services.

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