2020

Amendments to the Regulations on the Appropriate Type of Education of Teachers and Professional Associates in Primary Schools

Amendments to the Regulations (Official Gazette 75/2020) were published in July 2020. The amendments prescribe the appropriate type of education for teachers and professional associates in primary schools (ISCED 1 and 2) as well as documents that can be accepted as a certificate of fulfillment of the prescribed conditions.

Decisions on curriculum documents for minority languages

From school year 2020/2021 additional 4 decisions on curriculum documents are in place.

The decisions on the curriculum for the subject Hungarian language and culture for primary and upper secondary schools with instruction in the language and national minority in the Republic of Croatia (Model A) as well as the curriculum for the subject Hungarian language and culture for primary and upper secondary schools (model C) were published in the Official Gazette (83/2020).

Furthermore, the decisions on the curriculum for the subject Slovak language and culture for primary and upper secondary schools (model C) and the curriculum for the course language and culture of the Roma national minority in primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Croatia (model C) were published in the Official Gazette in July 2020.

Strategic Framework for Full-Day Classes

At a press conference held in June at the Ministry of Science and Education, the Minister presented a strategic framework for conducting full-day classes. This project was planned for fall 2020, but unfortunately, it was postponed because of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The experimental implementation is planned to start in the fall of 2021 and full implementation in 2023.

Minister presented four strategic goals for the implementation of full-day classes. These are improving the student academic achievement, ensuring equal educational opportunities for holistic development, improving the well-being of students and their families, and increasing the autonomy and responsibility of schools and founders. Moreover, discussion points for further analysis and improvement were addressed.
Amendments to the Regulations on Promotion of Teachers, Professional Associated and Principals in Primary and Secondary Schools

In May 2020 some changes were introduced in regard to conditions for teacher promotion. The most important changes to the Regulations are in the subcategory ‘Lectures, workshops and training’. It is necessary to collect 30, instead of the previous 40 points and more points can be earned by creating and publishing teaching materials. Furthermore, the application deadline is extended by one month, applications are now accepted until 1 April for the current school year.

Ordinance on Amendments to the Ordinance on State Matura Examination

On 9 May 2020, the Ordinance on Amendments to the Ordinance on State Matura Examination came into force. Ordinance on Amendments enabled exceptionally during the validity of the Decision of Declaration of Epidemic Diseases Covide-19 in the Republic of Croatia to register, change, unregister and pay exams that have not been registered, no later than 8 days from the day of the change of the Exam Calendar.

Decision on Allocation of Funds to Primary Schools for the Purchase of Laptops / Hybrid Computers for Regional Schools

In May the Minister of Science and Education passed a Decision on Allocation of Funds to Primary Schools for the Purchase of Laptops / Hybrid Computers for Regional Schools. This decision approves funds for the purchase of laptops / hybrid computers for 1137 primary regional schools in the total amount of HRK 15 334 000.00.

Amendments to the Ordinance on the Procedure of Determining the Psychophysical State of Child, Pupil and the Assembly of the Expert Committee

These Amendments prescribed methods for determining the Psychophysical State of Child while the Decision of Declaration of Epidemic Diseases Covide-19 in the Republic of Croatia is in force.

Amendments set out the conditions which have to be fulfilled to appoint the president and members of the Expert Committee as well as the procedure for determining the psychophysical state of a child in case of an unfavorable epidemiological situation determined by the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia. Furthermore, the deadlines are extended and specific conditions to carry out the examination remotely are also prescribed.

Preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the comprehensive curricular reform experimental programme 'School for Life'

On 15 April 2020 the Ministry of Science and Education published the exposition on the comprehensive
curricular reform experimental programme 'School for Life'. The document aims to provide an explanation of the process of monitoring and evaluation of the curricular reform experimental programme 'School for Life', as well as the description of the context in which the process is taking place.

**Strategic framework for the digital maturity of schools and education system (2030)**

In March 2020 the Ministry of Science and Education published a [Strategic framework for the Digital Maturity of Schools and Education System (2030)](5).

The Framework for the Digital Maturity of Schools defines five areas and five levels of the digital maturity of schools. It is being developed as part of the e-Schools pilot project and is coordinated with the European Framework for Digitally Competent Educational Organisations. Furthermore, the Framework is the basis for a common understanding of the digital maturity of all the stakeholders in the educational system.

**Action Plan for the Prevention of School Violence**


The action plan has been drawn up by a committee of 23 members, with representatives of unions, professional associations, pedagogues, psychologists, school representatives and principals, including students and a UNICEF representative. A total of 6 objectives are outlined, including a partial change in the legislative framework, systematic data collection and improvement of the quality of programs implemented in schools in relation to violence prevention.

For the period 2020-2024, a budget of 27 million HRK has been allocated for the implementation of the activities, with the possibility of obtaining additional EU funding.

**Public consultations on the proposal of the Regulations on the number of students in regular and combined classes in primary school**

Ministry of Science and Education opened public consultations in February 2020 on the Regulations on the number of students in regular and combined classes in primary school (ISCED 1 and 2). Education staff employed in schools was consulted and the result of the process is 367 suggestions.

**Public consultations on the Draft of Decision on curriculum documents for the Spanish language**

At the beginning of 2020, the Ministry of Science and Education opened a public consultation on the Draft of Decision on curriculum documents for the Spanish Language for primary schools (ISCED 1 and 2) and upper secondary general education (ISCED 3). Public consultations were open until the end of January 2020.
2019

Teachers’ strike for salary increase and additional instruction due to lost teaching days

The strike of employees in primary and secondary schools and student dormitories began on 10th October 2019 with a request to increase job complexity coefficients which affect the amount of salaries. The demand was to increase the amount of salaries by 6.11%. The strike was initially carried out circularly in different counties, and since 19th November, it has begun with frontal implementation in almost all schools. The strike lasted for 36 working days in total and students lost 16 days of instruction (more than three weeks). The increase in salaries was requested for teaching and non-teaching staff. Higher education staff also provided support.

The strike ended on 2nd December following the agreement between the unions and the Government. The Government offered a 3% increase in coefficients form 1 December 2019 (the increase will be visible for the January 2020 salary). The second increase of 1% will be implemented from 1st June 2020 and the third increase from 1st January 2021. It has been decided that the Government will amend the Regulation on job titles and job complexity coefficients in public services on 5th December 2019. For teachers the coefficients will be changed in the Regulations and the salary for the non-teaching staff will be increased through allowances which will be included in the separate agreements.

Additionally, schools will need to make up for the teaching days when the instruction was not held due to the strike. According to the relevant regulations, teaching year lasts for at least 175 teaching days, or 160 teaching days for the last grade in upper secondary education.

According to the Ministry, not all schools in Croatia are in the same situation regarding the strike. The state as of 28th November 2019 is as follows:

1. 34 primary schools and 28 upper secondary schools fully provided instruction.

2. 274 primary schools and 139 upper secondary schools provided instruction partially, in which case they do not have to compensate for the teaching days, but only for the lost lessons.

3. 441 primary schools and 163 upper secondary schools did not provide instruction at all during the strike, but there was no data on possible compensation of the instruction time (multiple possibilities for compensation, see below).

According to the legislation the schools which did not provide instruction at all during the strike will have to compensate for the maximum of 15 teaching days (information as of 29 November 2019). According to the Ministry of Science and Education, some schools have already compensated some days during Saturdays of non-teaching days.

For students in the last grades of upper secondary education, the teaching year would be prolonged for one week (until 29th May 2020). In order to carry out State Matura exams in planned time, the Ministry will amend relevant regulations for students to take State Matura exams before the end of the teaching year. The aim is to keep the timetable with State Matura exams stable in order not to delay the deadlines for enrolment in higher education institutions.
Depending on their specific situation, each school will be able to autonomously decide how to fulfill the legal requirement of 175 (160) teaching days. There are several options for schools to fulfil their requirements:

1. Schools may plan to change non-teaching days into teaching days to compensate for the lost instruction time.

2. Schools can hold lessons on Saturdays.

3. Schools may deviate from the deadlines set for vacation with all necessary approvals.

4. Schools may extend the teaching year with all necessary approvals.

Schools will receive 91 thousand tablets for teaching as a part of the curricular reform

The delivery of 91,641 tablets starts in December, for which a total of HRK 101.2 million has been approved from the European Social Fund. In this way, a part of the digital transformation of schools is taking place. Further aim of the tablets is that their introduction contributes to the dynamic of teaching and the motivation of students. The purpose of the introduction of digital tools is to support pedagogy and methodology. In the next years, this process will be repeated so that tablets are secured for all students involved in the curricular reform.

New curriculum for the Serbian language (Model A)

The curriculum for the subject Serbian language for primary and upper secondary schools with instruction in the language and Cyrillic script of the Serbian national minority in the Republic of Croatia (Model A) was published in the Official Gazette in 2019. This decision replaces the decision from 2010.

For the first time best teachers were awarded

On the World Teacher’s Day in 2019, 510 best teachers were awarded. The basis for the award is the Regulations on Rewarding Teachers, Professional Associates and Principals from 2019. The Ministry allocated HRK 5.1 million from the state budget. Each awarded teacher was awarded recognition and a financial reward in the amount of HRK 10,000.

Guidelines for the development of the Network of School Institutions and Education Programmes

In 2019, the Minister of Science and Education issued Guidelines for the Development of the Network of School Institutions and Education Programmes. The guidelines are instructions for the founders to facilitate their drafting of the Network. The guidelines define the direction in building an effective and sustainable education system that will meet the needs of all stakeholders. The aim is also to support and improve
educational work and to enable the continuous improvement of quality at all levels and in all segments of education.

The network of schools defines school institutions with all facilities in which education activities are performed and also defines education programmes. The Network of schools is structured to meet the needs expressed by systematic monitoring and prediction of demographic, economic and urban development in the country, to meet the requirements of accessibility and rational organisation of enrolment areas and to meet the conditions and standards prescribed.

### Criteria for eligibility for a scholarship for the members of the Roma national minority

The Ministry of Science and Education has published the Decision on Criteria and Manner of Exercising the Right to a Scholarship for High School Students Members of the Roma National Minority for the School Year 2019/2020.

Students who are eligible for the scholarship in the school year 2019/2020:

- first time enrolled in the first grade
- enrolled in higher grades in upper secondary education
- changing their education programme for the first time
- continue their education for the higher level qualification in the full-time student status
- students who are repeating the grade.

### Implementation of the curricular reform School for life in the school year 2019/2020

The curricular reform is progressing in the school year 2019/2020 and is implemented in first (ISCED 1) and fifth (ISCED 2) grade in all schools and all teaching subjects, while in the seventh grade (ISCED 2) only for Biology, Chemistry and Physics in all schools. In upper secondary education (ISCED 3), it is implemented in the first grade of general education (gimnazije) in all subjects and in vocational schools in general education subjects.

The pilot phase of curricular reform is implemented in second (ISCED 1) and sixth grade (ISCED 2) of primary schools and in the eight (ISCED 2) grade for subjects Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In upper secondary schools (ISCED 3) it is implemented in second grade in all subjects in general education and in vocational schools in general education subjects. Implementation in all schools for the mentioned grades is expected in the school year 2020/2021.
New Law on Libraries and Library Activities

New Law on Libraries and Library Activities (Official Gazette 17/2019) was published and replaced the old Law from 1997.

The purpose of the Law is to:

- ensure the performance of library activities of public and private libraries as a public service
- encourage the development of library activities in order to promote and develop literacy, culture, education, science and excellence and to preserve national literary, artistic and scientific works
- ensure the availability of library materials and information in order to strengthen the competences for the development of democracy, economy, science and participation in the information society
- ensure the protection and preservation of library material which has the character of a cultural property
- determine ways of financing library activities.

New Regulations on Rewarding Teachers, Professional Associates and Principals

New Regulations (Official Gazette 53/2019) were adopted on the basis of the Primary and Secondary School Education Act and they define conditions and ways of rewarding teachers (ISCED 1-3), professional associates and principals in primary and secondary schools and dormitories. Regulations determine criteria for evaluation, conditions to form a Commission for rewarding, the way in which the call for rewarding should be published and conditions for rewarding education staff working in experimental programmes.

New Regulations on Promotion of Teachers, Professional Associated and Principals in Primary and Secondary Schools

New Regulations (Official Gazette 68/2019) replaced the old ones from 1995. This Ordinance puts more emphasis on pedagogical competences and work with students, but also includes evaluation of work on projects in the education field and work on improving the education system.

These regulations introduce the position of excellent teacher adviser (izvrstan savjetnik). Through their careers, teachers can be promoted in the positions of teacher mentor, teacher advisor and excellent teacher advisor. Teachers can be promoted in this new position if they satisfy the following conditions: successfully completed competitive examination, at least 15 years of work in appropriate positions in education, continuous professional development (at least 200 hours in the last 5 years), at least 5 years served in the position of a teacher advisor and other conditions defined by the Regulations. Teachers can progress into the position of an excellent teacher advisor after changes in other laws. These Regulations also enable the promotion of principals and define the conditions for promotion.

Amendments to the Regulations on Methods, Procedures and Elements of Student Evaluation in Primary and Secondary Schools

Some changes were introduced in the school year 2019/2020 in regard to student evaluation in primary and secondary schools. The most important changes are the abolished indicative timing of written examination (prior to these changes, every school was required to have an indicative
framework for written examination), longer and shorter written tests no longer differ, all teachers are required to schedule an appointment for individual briefings (information on appointments should be published on schools' websites), teachers independently determine evaluation methods and parent meetings and individual discussions with teacher are not organized in the last two weeks of the school year. Furthermore, every written test/examination should be announced one month prior.

**Decisions on curriculum documents for different subjects and cross-curricular topics**

From school year 2019/2020 all new decisions on curriculum documents are in place. Citizenship Education, Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development, Personal and Social development, Learning How to Learn, Use of ICT and Health are all cross-curricular topics for which new curriculum documents are implemented in school year 2019/2020. This also applies to subjects: Croatian language, Mathematics, English language, German language, French language, Italian language, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Nature and society, Geography, History, Art education, Music education, Technical education, Physical and health education, Latin language, Antic Greek language, Ethics, Philosophy, Logic, Psychology, Politics and economy, Sociology, Orthodox religious education, Islamic religious education and Catholic religious education.

**Public consultations on the proposal of Regulations on promotion and rewarding of teachers**

Ministry of Science and Education opened public consultations at the beginning of January 2019 on the Draft of the Regulations on Promotion and Rewarding of Teachers, Professional Associates and School Heads in Primary and Secondary Schools and Dormitories. During the drafting process a new approach was used. Education staff employed in schools was consulted and the result of the process is 1.385 suggestions.

**New Regulations on the Appropriate Type of Education of Teachers and Professional Associates in Primary Schools**

New Regulations on the Appropriate Type of Education of Teachers and Professional Associates in Primary Schools ([Pravilnik o odgovarajućoj vrsti obrazovanja učitelja i stručnih suradnika u osnovnoj školi](https://www.glavna-pravilnica.gov.hr/), Official Gazette 6/2019, in Croatian) were published in January 2019 (entered into force on 26 January 2019). The Regulations prescribe the appropriate type of education for teachers and professional associates in primary schools (ISCED 1 and 2).

**Proposal of the Strategy on digital maturity of schools and education system**

Ministry of Science and Education opened public consultations on the Proposal of the Strategy on Digital Maturity of Schools and Education System. Public consultations were closed in early 2019.

The Strategy records results of the process of strategic planning of informatization of the education system in the Republic of Croatia started in 2015, culminated in 2018 with the work of Commission for Drafting the Strategy on Digital Maturity.

The process of strategic planning was initiated in order to direct policies, activities and projects in the technology implementation area in schools and in the education system by 2030, ensuring long-term
sustainability and impact of initial investments. Furthermore, the objective is also recognizing the work and role of teachers, school heads and employees in education agencies in the process of integrating ICT in the education system.

**Public consultations on the Draft of Decision on curriculum documents for History and Physical and Health Education**

In February 2019, Ministry of Science and Education opened public consultation on the Draft of Decision on curriculum for History and Physical and Health Education for primary schools (ISCED 1 and 2) and upper secondary general education (ISCED 3). Public consultations were opened because proposed documents are significantly different from the versions for which the public consultation process had already been carried out.

**Implementation of the pilot phase of the curricular reform**

In the school year 2018/2019 the pilot phase of curricular reform is in progress. Experimental programme “School for Life” (Škola za život) is implemented in 74 schools which were selected for participation out of which 48 primary schools (ISCED 1 and ISCED 2) and 26 secondary schools (ISCED 3). Ministry of Science and Education conducts the curricular reform. The Experimental programme is being implemented in the school year 2018/2019 in first (ISCED 1) and fifth (ISCED 2) grade in all teaching subjects, while in the seventh grade (ISCED 2) only the following subjects are included: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In upper secondary education (ISCED 3), the Experimental programme is being implemented in the first grade of general education (gimnazije) in all subjects and in vocational schools in general education subjects. The curricular reform is financed from the State Budget, European Social Fund and European Commission Structural Reform Support Service.

The aim of the Experimental programme is to verify the applicability of new curricula, new teaching methods and new teaching tools in order to increase students’ competences and their satisfaction with education and to increase teachers’ motivation. In September 2019, the implementation of the pilot phase of curricular reform is planned for second (ISCED 1) and sixth grade (ISCED 2) of primary schools and in the eight (ISCED 2) grade for subjects Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In upper secondary schools (ISCED 3) it will be implemented in second grade in all subjects in general education and in vocational schools in general education subjects. From 2019/2020 curricular reform will be implemented in all schools (in first and fifth grade of primary schools, in seventh grade for subjects Biology, Chemistry and Physics and in first grade in upper secondary schools - ISCED 3).

**Second phase of the e-Schools programme**

The e-Schools programme is carried out through several projects aimed at introducing ICT into the school system and raising the level of digital literacy. The implementation of the second phase of the project is planned in the 2019-2022 period and it will be based on the results of the pilot project. The e-Schools programme aims to achieve a complete digital transformation of schools in the Republic of Croatia with the general objective of contributing to student preparedness for the labour market or further education. The project includes all schools in the Republic of Croatia, thus ensuring overcoming the digital divide. The project will provide e-services and e-contents, as well as ICT equipment and education of teachers and other school staff who will use all of the materials provided.
in the project. In the second phase of the programme, results of the research and the evaluation carried out through the pilot project are took into account, thus ensuring that activities are designed in a way which will have the best possible impact on the work of schools and the highest efficiency in terms of spending financial and human resources.

2018

Regulations on Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries

Regulations on Teaching Assistants and Professional Communication Intermediaries [10] (in Croatian, Pravilnik o pomoćnicima u nastavi i stručnim komunikacijskim posrednicima, Official Gazette 102/2018) were adopted at the end of 2018 in order to equalize the opportunities of students with disabilities and to ensure their equal participation in the education process.

These Regulations for the first time establish methods of involvement, the manner and the content of training and performing the work of teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries in schools and other public institutions providing education services, the conditions which have to be fulfilled as well as the procedure for providing this kind of support to students with disabilities.

Regulations set out the procedure for determining the need, financing, procedure and decision-making process for the right to support. Furthermore, qualifications and conditions to become teaching assistants and professional communication intermediaries are also prescribed.

Public consultations on the Draft of Decision on curriculum documents for specific teaching subjects

At the end of 2018, Ministry of Science and Education opened public consultation on the Draft of Decision on curriculum documents for specific teaching subjects which will be the basis for implementing the curricular reform as of school year 2019/2020. Public consultations lasted until the beginning of January 2019 and were open for subjects Croatian Language, Mathematics, English Language, German Language and Physical and Health Education.

New Regulation on technical conditions and documentation for students on exchanges

Technical conditions for appropriate student accommodation and documentation which needs to be submitted for a temporary residence permit for the purpose of upper secondary education within the framework of student exchange programmes lasting more than 90 days are determined within the new Regulation. The Regulation ensures implementation of the Directive (EU) 2016/801 [11] of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil
exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing. New Regulation is available in Croatian language (*Pravilnik o načinu utvrđivanja tehničkih uvjeta za primjeren smještaj učenika i dokumentacij koju je potrebno priložiti zahtjevu za odobrenje privremenog boravka u svrhu srednjoškolskog obrazovanja kroz programe razmjene učenika, Official Gazette* 99/2018 [12]).

**Initiative on the new law on textbooks**

As a precondition for the implementation of curricular reform in all schools in the school year 2019/2020, the new Law on Textbooks and Other Educational Material for Primary and Secondary Schools has been proposed. With the new Proposal the prices of textbooks are regulated (in relation to the instruction time and number of subjects in the school year) as well as the weight of the textbooks having in mind digital possibilities for new textbooks and quality of the textbook content. Compulsory basic textbooks are separated from other working materials in the proposal, such as workbooks. The use of interactive digital textbooks in the teaching process is possible within the proposal. Clearer processes of the approval of textbooks and of the selection of textbooks for use in the teaching process are prescribed.

Public debate on the Law was held from 30 August to 29 September 2018 and the first reading of the Law was held in the Parliament.

**Amendments of the Decision on establishment of the Network of schools**

In September 2018 the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Decision on Amendments of the Decision on Establishment of the Network of School Institutions, Student Dormitories and Education Programmes (*Odluka o izmjenama i dopunama Odluke o donošenje Mreže osnovnih i srednjih škola, učeničkih domova i programa obrazovanja, Official Gazette* 86/2018 [13]). Network of schools defines school institutions with all facilities in which education activities are performed and also defines education programmes. The Network of schools is structured to meet the needs expressed by systematic monitoring and prediction of demographic, economic and urban development in the country, to meet the requirements of accessibility and rational organisation of enrolment areas and to meet the conditions and standards prescribed by the State Pedagogical Standard (Official Gazette 63/2008 [14], 90/2010 [15]) for primary and lower secondary education. With the Decision on Establishment of the Network of School Institutions, Student Dormitories and Education Programmes the abolition of schools is not anticipated. On the other hand, needs of the founders for establishing new schools, education programmes and introducing other changes are expressed.

**Compulsory Informatics in lower secondary education (5th and 6th grade)**

Based on Decision on Curriculum for Subject Informatics for Primary and General Secondary Education in the Republic of Croatia (*Odluka o donošenju kurikuluma za nastavni predmet Informatike za osnovne škole i gimnazije u Republici Hrvatskoj, Official Gazette, 22/2018*) adopted in March 2018 subject Informatics is compulsory for all pupils as of school year 2018/2019 for ISCED 2 level of education, for grades 5th and 6th (for grades 7th and 8th the subject Informatics is optional). Subject Informatics will be optional for all pupils for grades 1st to 4th (ISCED 1) as of school year 2020/2021 and for ISCED 3 it is compulsory for all pupils in general education in one stage of their education. In
general secondary education schools Informatics is compulsory for the first grade, and for other grades it is optional. In general secondary schools with emphasis on languages, as well as the general secondary schools with emphasis on classical languages (ISCED 3) Informatics is compulsory in second grade and optional in other grades. In general secondary schools with emphasis on natural sciences and mathematics the subject Informatics is compulsory in all grades (but with two proposed programmes which differ in amount of instruction time dedicated to the subject). The curriculum is published for all three ISCED levels even though for ISCED 1 it will be implemented as of 2020/2021.

Generic competences which the subject Informatics tends to develop are:

- creativity and innovativeness by creating digital works and algorithms
- critical thinking and evaluation of technology and sources of knowledge
- problem solving and decision making with the help of ICT
- information and digital literacy by understanding and constructive communication on concepts in the field of Informatics
- personal and social responsibility by considering ethical questions
- responsible and efficient way of communication and collaboration in the digital environment
- active citizenship as readiness and courage for publicly and responsibly expressing opinion and acting with mutual respect in a digital environment
- managing education and professional development by learning through ICT, distance learning, video conferencing, virtual walks, access to online databases etc.

In subject Informatics pupils will also develop different techniques for solving problems which are useful in other fields.

Amendments to the Primary and Secondary School Education Act

In the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (Official Gazette, 89/2008, 86/2010, 92/2010, 105/2010, 90/2011, 5/2012, 16/2012, 86/2012, 126/2012, 94/2013, 152/2014, 07/2017, 68/2018) a separate article is integrated which regulates the work of school employees working on EU projects or EU funds if the funds for salaries of those employees are reserved within projects. With the approval of school committee, school heads can allow and enable work of school employees on EU projects and EU funds if it does not negatively affect work processes and teaching activity in schools. School employees working on EU projects and EU funds will have reduced workload equivalent to the time dedicated to working on a project. For school employees working on EU projects and EU funds and not working full-time hours, their weekly assignments can be increased equivalently to project workload. School employees have a right to increased salary (30%) for the time dedicated to working on projects.

Collective labour agreements for primary and secondary school teachers

In May 2018 collective labour agreements for primary and secondary school teachers were signed (Kolektivni ugovor za zaposlenike u osnovnoškolskim ustanovama, Official Gazette, 51/2018; Kolektivni ugovor za zaposlenike u srednjoškolskim ustanovama, Official Gazette, 51/2018). The agreements will be in force until 2022. In comparison to previous agreements, the same level of rights was retained, but with minor changes related to special working conditions (work with pupils with developmental difficulties), material rights for employees who accompany pupils on multi-day activities outside schools and work with children at their home for secondary school teachers.
National curriculum of primary and secondary education

Proposed national curriculum documents for primary [16] and secondary [17] education have both been completed and published on 14th December 2017 after the public discussions.

Both of them are proposed steering documents in the Republic of Croatia for different levels of education. They are the basis for enabling the development of key competences essential in the process of realisation of personal potential, continuation of education and lifelong learning. They are based on educational developments in Europe, in the world and in Croatian educational tradition and documents.

The fundamental values in elementary education derive from the Croatian educational policy oriented towards complete development of students, preservation of the cultural, national and natural heritage and the need to harmonize local and national development with global development.

The fundamental value in primary education is the right to quality education for all students. The fundamental value implies other values such as knowledge, entrepreneurship, identity, respect, responsibility, solidarity, health and integrity. According to the proposed steering documents, primary education in Croatia has four essential objectives:

1. Comprehensive and balanced development of all students’ potential
2. Teaching students the value of continuing education and lifelong learning
3. Relationship between students based on cooperation and respect
4. Active and responsible participation of students in life of their community.

The principles of teaching and learning in elementary education prescribed by the proposed national curriculum documents are following:

1. Complete development and well-being of students
2. Active role of students in learning
3. Connection with life experiences, interests, values and knowledge
4. Encouraging more complex forms of thinking and applying the learned material
5. Focus on cooperation and openness to the community
6. Clear and high expectations
7. Individualisation
8. Stimulating and safe environment.

Secondary education is based upon following values: quality education for all students, equality in access to education in accordance with educational achievements and potentials, freedom of choice and professional autonomy. Other supported values are responsibility, perseverance and diligence, entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, personal integrity, personal and group identity and respect for individual and cultural diversity.

The objectives of secondary education are complete development, thorough general education and quality preparation for continuing education and lifelong learning.

The Ministry of Science and Education published the Public call for applications for the experimental program School for life (“Škola za život”) with the deadline set on 15th March 2018. The subject and the aim of the call is to select up to 80 schools (primary and secondary education), which will then join the experimental implementation of the program in the school year 2018/2019. The experimental
program will be implemented in first and fifth grade in all teaching subjects, while in the seventh grade only the following subjects will be included: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In secondary education, the experimental program will be implemented in the first grade of general education (gimnazije) in all subjects.

Establishing a System for Developing Digitally Mature Schools (pilot project)

The e-Schools programme [18] is carried out through several projects aimed at introducing ICT into the school system and raising the level of digital literacy. Schools included in the pilot project (151 schools) are equipped with a presentation classroom and an interactive classroom. Teachers of natural sciences (chemistry, physics and biology) and mathematics were given hybrid computers, the rest of the teaching staff got tablets and the professional associates got laptops. One of the key activities of the project is the systematic introduction of the ICT into the school learning environment and the development of digital educational content. The objective of the project is the integration of the modern learning and teaching methods into the educational process.

The implementation of the second phase of the project is planned in the 2019-2022 period and it will be based on the results of the pilot project. In the second phase, it is planned that all schools in Croatia are included in the project.

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