

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SLOVENIA IN THE 20TH CENTURY

ABSTRACT

The establishment of public schools in Austria, after the Law on Primary School Education was enacted in 1869 has accelerated the cultural development of Slovenians. But the school continuation possibilities in Austria were provided for boys mainly, especially within the elite middle schools called gymnasiums. Soon after the establishment of Yugoslavia in 1918 the process of Slovenisation of the education system was performed and the first Slovenian University was established. The old Austrian education system, which helped the cultural (literacy) level of Slovenians to be far above the Yugoslav average at that time basically did not change a lot for a longer period, until the Education Law in 1958. In contrast to the old system, which offered a variety of choices only during the compulsory schooling, the new system shifted the time of crucial differentiation from the pupils' age of eleventh years to the age of fifteenth years. Also, it offered majority of youth more opportunities, i.e., to reach at least a medium education level, especially with several newly established medium-level (vocational) schools. So, the once prevailed problems with hard transition within the education system were removed and replaced by an easier access to and with a higher transibility through the education system, which all helped to increase the share of youth within middle schools and in higher education.

Key words: history, educational system, accessibility of education, share of youth within educational process.

The education system in Slovenia during the last period of Austria-Hungary

Despite the fact that, up until recently, the Slovene nation has lived in multinational states in which preference was given in the school system to the language of the majority, the Slovene education system developed at the same speed as - and in some cases even

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more rapidly than that of its neighbouring countries in Central Europe. Compulsory education was introduced in Slovenia when the Law on Primary School Education was enacted on May 14, 1869. This law prescribed eight years of primary school education for all children aged from six to fourteen, but taking into consideration the fact that the eastern and southern parts of the monarchy were more poorly developed, an exception was made for these provinces, allowing them to shorten the compulsory number of school years to a minimum of six. This was also the case with Carniola. The law required that public schools (*ljudska šola*) be established in all districts where there were 40 or more children and situated so that these children would not have to travel a distance of over 4 km to school. Subsequently, numerous new schools were founded and in addition to this, the primary school curriculum was also extended. The reform required an increase in funding for education, so that the respective provinces were obliged to assist the poorer municipalities financially. At this time, school fees could still be introduced. However, this remnant of the old system was abolished after only a few years, as the population objected to it strongly.¹

The demand for raising the quality of education in the schools for teachers constituted another great step ahead. A more thorough education of teachers was provided by teacher training colleges (*učiteljišče*) which were founded in 1870, and which offered four-year courses. In keeping with their levels of economic development, the provinces were required to set a fixed minimum wage, which would enable teachers to devote themselves to their professions fully, without the need to supplement their income with other jobs on the side. With this, the teaching profession became independent of the Church, as the new law prohibited the previous connection between teaching and clerical professions. Teachers' wages were increased regularly along with the wages of all other civil servants and as such, they were also entitled to a state pension upon retirement. The inequality amongst the sexes prevailing at the time was mirrored in the provision which stipulated that female teachers were entitled to only 80% wages. This was justified by the argument that they did not have families to support. In the event of marriage, women were also required to hand in their resignation, as it was considered that the husband would provide for the family.²

The law on primary school education was one of the numerous regulations passed at the end of the 1860s and the beginning of the 1870s by the German Liberals in power at the time, which were in the spirit of the liberal ideas aimed against the Concordat and the privileged position which the Catholic Church held within the state. The new law brought in a new system, supplanting the old one introduced during the reign of Maria Theresa in which there were three different types of schools already at the primary school level, making a more complete education accessible to only a very narrow segment of the school-aged population. The principle introduced by the law in 1869 was that all children had to benefit from a primary school education matching the requirements of a minimum prescribed curriculum.

Table 1

The education system in Slovenia after 1870

1.) From Age 7 to 23

For the sake of comparison, the age of seven was taken as the age at which children began attending school, although in some places, children began going to school already at the age of six, while in the mountainous regions where the climate was harsh, going to school was deferred until the age of eight.

- 2.) *While some children attended junior secondary schools, most of the children at the same age attended higher public schools (višja ljudska šola). For this reason, the data on attendance at school are often deceptive (e.g. the combined data on the number of grammar school students and the like) and do not give a realistic picture of the percentages of children in the various age-groups who attended school.*

The adoption of the new primary school legislation marked the end of the school reform which began in the revolutionary year of 1848, when the new Ministry of Education in Vienna proposed the introduction of unified primary schools for the first time in history in a draft law of the fundamental principles of public education. Yet the revolution was over before it succeeded in completing its educational reforms.³ In contrast with the primary schools, where the efforts in remodeling the old system were behind schedule, the reform of the secondary school education system was completed in 1849 and took shape in the grammar schools in a system which was to remain in use for the next hundred and ten years.

The grammar school (*gimnazija*) as the main form of secondary school providing a general education became an eight-year school, divided into a four-year lower level and a four-year higher level. With this, it also definitively ceased to be a Latin school and instead of Latin, preference was given to living languages and scientific subjects. A school-leaving examination at the end of the eight years was introduced, qualifying pupils for university entrance, and in 1850, the first examination of this nature was conducted. The more demanding curriculum in the new grammar schools also called for more highly qualified teaching staff and teachers were now required to have university degrees. Many of these were also achieved by graduates at the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts.

The grammar school (*gimnazija*) became the school for the elite. In addition to it, there were also grammar schools (*realka*), which in 1867 had seven-year programmes, with a four-year lower level and a three-year higher level. These schools placed greater emphasis on technical subjects and qualified pupils for matriculation at technical colleges. The lowest level of secondary school education was provided by the lower secondary schools, which provided three-year courses (*meščanska šola*). These were founded in cities and their curricula were adapted to the needs of the crafts and trades in the schools' surroundings.

The problem with the Austrian education system, which was inherited by the first Yugoslavia was this early differentiation amongst the children, as pupils had to decide already at the age of 11 which schools they would attend. In the rural areas, this was mostly the higher public school (*višja osnovna šola*), in the larger towns, the lower secondary schools (*meščanska šola*), whereas the most gifted and also the most well-to-do attended the lower grammar school (*nižja gimnazija*). This was also the only school which qualified pupils for the higher level grammar school (*višja gimnazija*) and the final examination, which enabled one to matriculate in all university courses. The final examination upon completion of the grammar school (*realka*), qualified one only for certain technical universities, while the lower secondary school was intended more for mastery of a trade or employment in the commercial sector. Yet, owing to the poor state of development of professional education in Slovenia, there were few lower secondary and secondary professional schools (*strokovna šola*) up until the collapse of Austria-Hungary.

The Austrian education system gave access to all universities to men only. Already after the fourth grade of public school, girls were barred from enrolling in the lower grammar school. Of all the options open to women, the most easily accessible one was teachers' training college (*učiteljsiše*). It was not until the end of the 19th century that women were allowed entry into the grammar schools, and this initially only as "private" and not regular students. Slovenia saw its first female students graduate from the grammar school as late as the beginning of the 20th century. As a result of this, women began entering the teaching profession in greater numbers already during the time of Austria-Hungary. Thus, over a third of the primary school teachers in the Austrian part of the Monarchy before its collapse were female and in some of the Slovene provinces, this percentage was even greater. In Carniola, which was the most Slovene province of

Austria, female teachers were already more numerous than their male colleagues, making up 56% of the total number of teachers in 1913.⁴

The law on compulsory schooling effected a rapid increase in literacy amongst the Slovene population. Naturally, the new legislation could not bring immediate results, as its implementation was hampered by financial difficulties, the remoteness of many of the mountain settlements and also the backward conviction of people, that one does not need an education to do the simple tasks required for survival. In 1880, decades after the introduction of compulsory schooling, 39% of the population aged 10 and over were still illiterate. A decade later, however, the figure had dropped to 25%, and by the beginning of the century, all the way down to 15%. The last population census in Austria before the First World War revealed that in 1910, the number of illiterate in the provinces where the Slovene population was the most numerous (i.e. in Carniola and Styria) still amounted to 12%, whereby more than half the population aged 70 and over were still illiterate, while amongst the younger generation, the illiterate amounted only to 3%.⁵

By the First World War, the Slovenian provinces had achieved an enviably high level of literacy - one hardly less than in the most highly developed regions in the German and Czech provinces of the monarchy.

This shows that the problem of bringing literacy to the masses was solved amongst the Slovenes already before First World War, as the bulk of the illiterate was comprised of those members of the older generation who were already in the autumn of their lives. Regular enrollment in primary schools encompassed approximately nine tenths of the young, who spent a minimum of six years in the public schools. This statistic applies to the smaller townships in Carniola, where the school buildings harboured only from one to three classes at the most. In Istria, in addition to the compulsory six years of education, supplementary evening classes were also prescribed, while in the Goriza region, the right of the province to shorten the eight years of education prescribed by law to six was applicable only under exceptional circumstances and not as a rule. The region of Styria, being the most highly developed of all the Slovene regions, was even waived the right to shorten the compulsory term of education and the full eight-year public school course was mandatory in this province.

For the majority of the young, school ended upon completion of the primary school level. Slovene teenagers formed the majority at only six grammar schools (*gimnazija*) in Carniola and Styria, while elsewhere in these provinces, the majority of pupils were German, with the exception of the Trieste region, where Italian pupils predominated. Approximately one half of the pupils in the grammar school in Goriza were Slovene and in places where the Slovene population is predominant today (e.g. Koper, Kočevje and Ptuj), the percentage of Slovenes attending secondary school was even surprisingly low.⁶

Only a small number of pupils graduated each year from the eleven grammar schools offering the full eight-year programme on the territory of Slovenia before the First World War. In the first decade of the 20th century, the total number was 2,404 (the first seven of these being female), making an average of 240 per year.⁷ Thus, a complete

secondary school education, rather than being the rule, was very much of an exception, as a lot of young people already gave up before the final exams. Particularly in the smaller towns, more than half the pupils were exempt from paying school fees, owing to their poor economic backgrounds - a fact indicative of the problems with which most of the pupils of lesser means had to contend with. In fact, these pupils were faced with similar difficulties as they continued their studies, as many of them were unable to enroll in or complete university courses, as at that time, excepting the four-year clerical seminaries (škofijsko semenišče), there were no universities in Slovenia and studying in Vienna, Graz or Prague and other university towns where Slovenes enrolled in somewhat larger numbers required far more funds than many a high-school graduate had at his disposal.

The Slovene Education System in the First Yugoslavia

The education system did not change much in the first two decades of the first Yugoslavia. The authorities in the Slovene part of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had much to do at the outset with the Slovenisation of the education system and with adapting the functioning and internal structure of the several types of schools to the education systems in the other parts of the country, and therefore did not undertake the task of altering the already existing system comprised of four years of elementary school, followed by the next four years of either higher primary school, junior high school or lower secondary school, (which, in the meantime, had also become a four-year school), and in which it was far easier than before to change from one school to another. Only a few years after the emergence of the new state, equal rights to education for both sexes were ensured by law and the percentage of women enrolling in schools at the secondary and university level began to increase. Another important factor was the founding of the University of Ljubljana (Univerza v Ljubljani) in 1919, enabling numerous secondary school graduates to continue their studies at the university level. This effected an increase in the number of secondary school pupils and university students, although the majority of Slovenes still ended their educations upon completion of the compulsory eight years of primary school.

The Slovene nation was on a considerably higher level of cultural development when it entered the new state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, as a result of which the meeting with their new countrymen was not without culture shock. While only a tenth of the population were still illiterate in the Slovene part of the state, almost two fifths of the population in what had been the Hungarian parts of the Monarchy (Croatia and Vojvodina) were illiterate, while only one tenth of the population in the Moslem parts of the state (Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia) was literate. In other words, the same country spanned regions of 90% literacy where the majority of the population had completed eight years of primary school, and regions where just as great a part of the population (90%) was, on the other hand, illiterate.⁸

Table 2
The Education System After 1930

- 1.) *Officially, we still have public school (ljudska šola), but the term primary school (osnovna šola) is coming increasingly into use.*
- 2.) *The lower secondary schools (meščanska šola) became four-year schools in 1925 and the grammar schools (realka) were abolished by the legislation adopted in 1930. Already before this date, the majority of grammar schools were re-shaped into new, eight-year grammar school (realna gimnazija): a combination of science-oriented grammar schools (realka) and humanistic grammar schools (gimnazija).*
- 3.) *At the university level, there were still clerical school and the Academy of Music, which was founded in Ljubljana in 1939.*

Between the two wars, approximately 90% of all the youth in Slovenia completed the entire compulsory eight years of school. The missing percentage was caused by the remote hilly and mountainous regions and the poorly developed regions on the fringe of the Pannonian Plain. In these regions, the number of pupils who dropped out of the four-year public schools (ljudska šola) was also the greatest: sometimes even over a half the generation, while in 1939/40 - the last full school year before the Second World War, approximately 22% of the pupils did not complete the first four classes of primary school. Although the number of drop-outs decreased in the later stages of education, it was still noticeably high. In the same school year, for example, 13% of the pupils did not complete the four higher grades of primary school, while 15% of the girls and boys

attending the 51 four-year lower secondary schools did not pass the final exams and in the 14 grammar schools (*gimnazija*) operating at the time, 12% of the pupils failed at the end of the year.⁹

The progress made in raising the level of education since the reform of the old Austrian system was evident at the second four-year level (pupils from the age of 11 to 15) in the rapid development of the lower secondary schools (*meščanska šola*) in the major towns and larger townships. These schools had three different programmes: agriculture, trade and industry, and commerce. The secondary professional schools (*strokovna šola*), however, still failed to fill the needs of the country's rapid economic development, as the various schools of this type, e.g. for agriculture, home science, health-care, commerce and so forth, in most cases still offered only one or two-year courses and did not provide adequate secondary school education. Of the total amount of secondary professional schools, only three offered a full four-year course. (Two of these were academies of trade and one was a technical secondary school).

Between the two wars, the majority of the population still went no further than the eight compulsory years of primary school. However, the number of young people successfully completing secondary school continued to increase. Only one tenth of the pupils who completed the four-year primary schools went on to study at the schools offering complete courses of secondary school education such as the grammar schools, teachers' training colleges and a number of the professional schools, and even these did not all get to the end of the schools that they had chosen as the starting points for their future professional lives. The number of pupils attending the Slovene grammar schools almost trebled, increasing from less than 5,000 in the school year of 1918/19, to over 13,000 just before the Second World War. A similar increase was also recorded in the number of secondary school graduates.

In addition to the more equal position of the sexes ensured by the law, the increase in the number of female secondary school pupils can also be attributed to the Catholic institutions which opened a number of private girl's teachers' training colleges (*učiteljišče*) and lower secondary schools (*meščanska šola*). In 1940, almost one third of all the pupils in the grammar schools were female, while female pupils made up over one half the generation that year in the lower secondary schools and 60% of all pupils in the teachers' training colleges.

The founding of the University of Ljubljana made it possible for secondary school graduates to continue their educations in their own country. We do not know how many Slovenes set out to study at the universities of Slovenia's neighbouring countries before WWI, yet there is no doubt that the number of students increased markedly with the founding of the first Slovene university. Until this date, many of the pre-war graduates and holders of higher academic degrees, had remained abroad and only a few of them came home to the regions where there were not enough job vacancies for such highly skilled experts. The founding of the university and the growth of new national cultural institutions, however, attracted many Slovene and foreign experts. Thus, numerous Slovenes figured amongst the first professors of the university. Until 1918, these experts had lectured at other European universities.

In the first academic year of the University of Ljubljana (1919/20), a little under 1,000 students enrolled in its five faculties and before the Second World War, this number had increased to over 2,000. The number of professors lecturing at the university had also more than doubled during this time. The percentage of female students, which was hardly noticeable during the first few years after the university opened, began increasing more rapidly towards the end of the 1920s, when the first generations of women had completed their grammar school educations - which they were now able to do, owing to the law on equal rights to education. Before the Second World War, every fifth student matriculating at the university was female.¹⁰

Changes in the Education System in the Second Yugoslavia

The Communist rule following the Second World War brought in new views on education. The new government promised changes in the education system which would make it easier to change from one type of school to another and to make at least secondary school education more accessible to the young from working-class and farming backgrounds by opening new secondary schools. Yet it was not until the 50's that a more thorough educational reform took place.

The first steps which could be made at all in a country partly destroyed by war were made very soon after the war ended. In 1945, all the lower secondary schools (*meščanska šola*) were abolished and partly reconfigured into lower grammar schools (*nižja gimnazija*), greatly increasing the number of students who could continue their educations at the higher grammar schools and then later at the university level. During the first school year after the war, in 1945/46, 22 full-course grammar schools (*gimnazija*) and 43 lower grammar schools (*nižja gimnazija*) opened their doors. True, in some of the grammar schools didn't have all of the eight classes at once, but the missing higher classes have were opened within the next few years. Yet in the year 1945 alone, in addition to the re-shaping of the lower secondary schools into lower grammar schools, Slovenia gained 7 more full-course and 12 lower grammar schools.¹¹

Then followed years of unsuccessful experimenting, in which minor changes were introduced in the education system each year, which remained in use only for a few years at the most. The worst blow was dealt to the Slovenian education system by the Yugoslav law on compulsory seven years of education, which was passed in July 1946. Although this was a big step ahead for the majority of the Yugoslav republics, to Slovenia, which already had an effectively working eight-year education system, it meant the opposite. The eight-year compulsory education was reintroduced in 1950.¹²

The fact that the first Yugoslavia did not succeed in smoothing out the differences between the various regions of the state is evident from a population census made in 1948. At the time, 25% percent of the population in Yugoslavia was still illiterate (15% of these being male and an entire 34% of these female - a discrepancy due to a great extent to the Moslem regions). Of the Serbian population, 28% were illiterate, while figures ranged from 24% amongst the Montenegrins, 18% amongst the Croats, 54% of

the Muslims and an entire 74% of the Albanians, while in Slovenia, illiteracy had dwindled down to 2% of the entire population.¹³ Slovenia was well ahead of the other republics also according to other statistical indicators, such as the percentage of students amongst the entire population, the percentage of the budget that went towards education and culture, and the educational structure of the population.¹⁴

Every attempt by the Yugoslav government to unify the education system and the culture of the country's several republics brought stagnation to the cultural development of Slovenia, alongside with any advantage it may have brought for the other republics. This triggered off severe criticism against Yugoslav centralism in the most developed and westernmost republic of Yugoslavia.

Even before the introduction of the educational reform, the Slovene government had begun to open the doors to further education to a greater number of young people by prescribing that the curricula of the second level of the four-year schools (for children aged from 11 to 15), should correspond with those of the lower levels, as well as by introducing new regulations which made it easier to enroll from one school to the other, regardless of type. During the first post-war years, attendance in primary schools skyrocketed to 95% of the youngest generation, which meant that, with the exception of physically or mentally challenged children, the severely ill and those living in the remotest of regions, almost all the children aged seven and over were now included in the education process. The number of children who, upon conclusion of the four-year primary school continued studying along the programme of the lower grammar schools (*nižja gimnazija*), tripled during the first decade after the war. This programme was offered not only by the grammar schools, but also by the so-called "osemletke" i.e. eight-year primary schools, which had separate classes for each grade and no combined lessons.

The effect of reducing the differences in the school programmes at the higher four-year level of the eight compulsory years of education could be felt also in the secondary schools, as the network of schools began to expand with the addition of the new full-course grammar schools (*gimnazija*) and four-year secondary professional schools (*strokovna šola*). Of the latter, for example, there were only three in 1939, while in the school year of 1946/47, there were already 14 and by 1950/51, a total of 28. This was a significant increase, even though these schools began decreasing in number as the demand decreased, or as they began to unite with other secondary schools in the same towns to form larger centres for vocational training.¹⁵ Similar developments can also be observed at the university level, as the five faculties of the university and the single academy existing before the war were joined by new institutes for tertiary education which offered both two and four-year courses. However, as these united and separated several times during the following years, and only achieved a stable configuration after 1960, the data on their numbers do not give an accurate picture of their development. This also greatly increased the number of students who had access to the highest levels of education. After the war, 2,629 students matriculated at the various institutes of tertiary education. Five years later, in 1950, this number had grown to 6,342, and by 1957, the total was 8,063.

The percentage of secondary school students in the generation aged from 15 to 19 and the percentage of students in the generation four years older than the former began to increase already in the beginning of the 1950s. The real turning point, however, was reached after the education reform, which laid the foundations for the new education system, did away with the discrepancies at the second four-year stage of education and by means of increased investment in the construction of schools, did away with the discriminatory differences inherent in the old education system already at the compulsory primary school level.

Table 3
The Education System in Slovenia after 1960

- 1.) *A unified eight-year primary school (osnovna šola) curriculum.*
- 2.) *At the secondary level all types of full-course four-year secondary schools formally qualify pupils for enrollment on the next level. In the 60's the teacher's training colleges (učiteljsišče) are abolished and replaced by four-year teachers' training secondary grammar schools (pedagoška gimnazija).*
- 3.) *At some of the faculties and institutes of tertiary education, two-level studies are introduced, enabling graduates of two-year courses in certain fields to continue their studies in the third year of four-year courses.*

In the mid 50's, the authorities in charge of education began making preparations for a thorough reform of the education system. The Committee for the Reform of the Education System which was founded within the Federal Government published a

proposal for the new Yugoslav education system in 1957, which included school curricula permeated with the ideology of the ruling Communist party, and which advocated a unified system of education at the eight-year primary school level throughout Yugoslavia, less rigid regulations limiting the opportunities of students from certain schools to enroll in university studies, and stressed the need to place greater emphasis on increasing the professionalism of the school system in general.¹⁶

The general law on education which brought about fundamental changes in the education system was passed on July 25, 1958 and was modeled on the basic points of the proposals submitted by the Committee for the Reform of the Education System. The new school system introduced great changes on all three levels of education. On the primary level, instead of the previous two four-year periods, the new school system offered only one option for fulfilling the requirement of eight years of mandatory education: the unified eight-year primary school (*osnovna šola*). The reorganisation of the school network began already in the school year of 1957/58, even though the new eight-year primary school in Slovenia was legally in effect only after October 1, 1959. The effect the authorities were aiming at in reshaping the school network was to discourage combined lessons as much as possible and to enable as many children as possible in the higher grades of primary school to attend lessons in the various subjects in separate classes. Subsequently, the number of primary schools began to decrease, as the smallest schools were shut down and their pupils given extra lessons in order to qualify them for the more highly developed primary schools situated in the near vicinity. In the school year of 1962/63, soon after the shaping of the new school network, already 91% of all the pupils in grades 5 to 8 of primary school were able to attend separate classes for each subject. Combined classes are still taught today only in some of the remotest mountainous regions and in areas where the population is dwindling at an alarming rate, i.e. in areas where the authorities maintain schools which, under other circumstances, would long since have been closed. In addition to this, soon after the Second World War, attendance at school was almost a hundred percent.¹⁷

For the higher levels of education, where certain subjects were optional, the educational authorities attempted to shape a system which would be accessible and open to as great a percentage of the country's youth as possible. In addition to the greater compatibility amongst the schools, they sought to achieve this by opening new schools and with them, as many possibilities for enrollment as possible. For girls and boys of poorer social backgrounds, the government made an increasing number of scholarships available. This policy resulted in a rapid increase in the number of students enrolled in the secondary schools and universities - in particular in the technical courses.

On the secondary level, the grammar schools (*gimnazija*), which the communist ideologists labeled as the school of the bourgeois elite, at which there was no room for the working-class and farming youth, lost the dominant role they had played until then. Although some demanded the total abolishment of the grammar schools, this did not occur yet. Within the new system, the grammar schools became four-year secondary schools, as the lower grammar schools (*nižja gimnazija*) had been abolished, or reshaped and united with the primary schools. The secondary professional schools

(strokovna šola) enjoyed far more government support, as the new regulations now enabled pupils from these schools to qualify for university studies. In order to achieve formal equality between the grammar schools (gimnazija) and the professional schools (strokovna šola), the degree of difficulty of the final examination was lowered considerably, as it was the high degree of difficulty of the final examinations in the grammar schools which had until then distinguished them from the other secondary level schools. In this way, the grammar schools and the professional schools were formally placed on an equal level, but in practice, the grammar schools continued to hold their position in the fore, by means of maintaining better teaching staffs and a more difficult programme. The advantages of attending grammar school soon became evident during the first years of university study, as statistical analyses have shown that students from the grammar schools achieved better results at university than those from professional schools.

The institutions of tertiary education also saw great changes - partially through the fact that their doors were now open wide to those who had completed professional schools. The old programmes which for the majority of courses were unified four-year programmes, were replaced by new ones, which introduced in many areas a two-level course of studies (i.e. with the choice between two years of lower tertiary education or a four-year higher course). In addition to this, the faculties began to introduce post-graduate studies as a regular part of the education process. In addition to the four-year higher institutes of tertiary education, many new two-year colleges were established, most of which offered courses in technical subjects. Most importantly, though, these institutes were being founded outside of Ljubljana - mostly in Maribor, where a second strong Slovene centre of tertiary education began to develop. This led to the founding of the second university in Slovenia in 1975. The introduction of two-level studies at the university level made it possible for graduates of the two-year courses to continue their studies without difficulties in the third year of the four-year courses and thus to continue their studies at a higher level if they so wished. Yet the introduction of two-level studies which brought with it a strong curtailment of the scope of the programmes offered by the universities engendered protests amongst the university professors, who maintained that the new regulations diminished the value of university studies by making it far easier to achieve a diploma than in the previous system.

If we were to draw a comparison between the two school systems: the old system, which was partially shaped already in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the new, which was formed at the end of the 1950's and the beginning of the 1960's, we would find that there are noticeable differences between the two. The first offered a broad scope of education only on the level of the eight years of compulsory education and already here created a distinction between the pupils of the higher public schools, the lower secondary schools and the lower grammar schools. The new school system deferred the time of differentiation, i.e. the time at which the pupils had to decide on what direction their further education would take, until the age of 15, and by founding new secondary schools, gave the majority of the nation's youth the opportunity of achieving at least a

secondary school education. Another of the characteristics of the old system was the high degree of incompatibility amongst the various types of schools, which also reduced their accessibility (depending on the initial course of education decided upon), while the new regulations made it easier for students of most of the secondary schools to enroll in university courses. Yet, in addition to the greater accessibility, this also brought with it a number of difficulties. The university professors, in the first ranks, objected strongly to the fact that students who had received poor marks or virtually insufficient background knowledge at their secondary schools in a number of the more demanding subjects taught in university courses, could nonetheless become regular students. As a result of this, they argued, the criteria for tertiary education had been lowered.

Following the reform of primary school education in 1958, the majority of children received a similar basis for their further education. Due to increased investment in the education system and the construction of new and larger school buildings, the number of schools decreased, while the number of departments and teachers increased. The well thought-out and planned campaign of “5 years - 100 schools” carried out from 1969 to 1973 was particularly instrumental in providing numerous towns in Slovenia with new schools. So much so, that the plan indicated by the name of the project was even exceeded substantially. The new schools were built above all in the smaller townships and settlements, and within the framework of the plan, teachers who taught subjects for professions which were much in demand in the more poorly developed regions of Slovenia, received supplements to their wages. Thus, until the increase in inflation set in, the economically poorer developed regions of Slovenia often had better conditions for the development of their primary schools (such as more modern schoolrooms, better paid teachers and less pupils per class on the average, etc.) than the larger cities.

With the decrease in natality amongst the Slovenes and the subsequent decrease in the number of primary school pupils (in 1960/61, for example, these numbered 238,828, while in 1980/81, the number had dropped to 218,310), the number of pupils per class also grew smaller (the school year of 1960/61 recorded an average of 30, while in 1980/81, there were only 25 pupils per class). The higher grades, with only a few exceptions, all had separate classes for the separate subjects taught. In contrast with the previous periods, the majority of children from the 1950s onwards continued their educations and enrolled in secondary schools, leading to a rapid increase in the number of university students, as indicated in the following tables.

The secondary school level saw the greatest increase in the percentage of young people attending the full-course technical and professional schools, while the amount of students registered at the vocational schools which did not provide a full secondary school education, decreased. In the mid-1950s, over 80% of the pupils who had finished primary school enrolled in secondary school. Over half of these opted for vocational schools, which did not offer a complete secondary school education. Twenty years later, already over 90% of the same statistical group of pupils enrolled in secondary schools, whereby the percentage of enrollments in schools offering complete secondary school educations (such as grammar schools, or four-year technical and professional secondary schools) was already predominant.¹⁸

The extent to which children and the young were included in the education process (in percentages).

	1953	1961	1971
Amount of children aged from 7 to 14 attending primary school	90.9	99.7	100.0
Amount of young people aged from 15 to 19 attending secondary school	20.4	28.9	43.4
Amount of young people aged from 20 to 24 studying at university	2.7	5.4	8.9

Source: Slovenia 1945-75. Ljubljana, 1975, p. 153

The number of students increased strongly and suddenly at the end of the 50's and the beginning of the 60s with the founding of more institutes of tertiary education offering two-year courses. This rapid increase, however, was an ongoing phenomenon which had began already immediately after the Second World War, as can be seen from the tables on the number of students and university graduates (from both the two and four-year courses together) depicted in ten-year intervals.

The number of students and graduates of Slovenia's institutes of tertiary education

	students	graduates
1946/47	3,479	69
1956/57	7,203	846
1966/67	15,085	2,975
1976/77	29,279	4,845
1986/87	30,985	5,534

Source: Students in the Republic of Slovenia. The Slovenian Bureau of Statistics, Ljubljana, 1995 (Research Results, p. 644), p. 9

It is evident that an increasing amount of young people, upon successfully completing secondary school, enrolled at tertiary level institutes of education. This was made possible by the number of new university level institutions and the greater number of enrollments at the old schools, as well as by the realization that without education, one cannot progress in the modern world.

A significant part in this progress was also played by scholarships, which were particularly stimulative and numerous for professions in which there was a deficit of

cadres. In addition to this, schools during the time of socialism were very accessible to the multitudes and, barring a few rare exceptions, there were no school fees. Thus, in the 80's, more than half of those who had successfully passed their secondary school final examinations enrolled in university - a percentage which increased to three quarters by the beginning of the 90s and towards the middle of the 90's reached over four fifths. In addition to increasing the possibilities of pre-graduate studies, the education reforms enabled the faculties to expand the scope of their post-graduate studies and an increasing number of Slovenes also acquired masters' degrees or doctorates. As we are coming towards the end of the 20th century, the number of doctorates defended annually in Slovenia is now approximately the same as was the number of successfully passed school-leaving examinations at the beginning of the same century.

NOTES

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2. Vlado Schmidt: Osnovna šola in osnovnošolska zakonodaja pred sto leti (Primary Schools and Primary School Legislation One Hundred Years Ago) In: Osnovna šola na Slovenskem 1869-1969 (Primary Schools in Slovenia from 1869 to 1969), The Slovenian School Museum, Ljubljana, 1970, pp. 9-29
3. Vlado Schmidt: Zgodovina šolstva in pedagogike na Slovenskem III (1848-1870) (The History of Education and Pedagogics in Slovenia III (1848-1870)), Ljubljana, 1988, pp. 7-9.
4. Janez Sagadin: Kvantitativna analiza razvoja osnovnega šolstva... (A Quantitative Analysis of the Development of Primary Schools...) In: Osnovna šola na Slovenskem 1869-1969 (Primary School in Slovenia from 1869 to 1969), The Slovene School Museum, Ljubljana, 1970, pp. 103-104
5. Melik, cf. pp. 53-54
6. Elizabeta Hriberšek Balkovec: Avstrijska statistika in gimnazije na Slovenskem 1881-1913 (Austrian statistics and grammar schools in Slovenia 1881-1913), Šolska kronika (School Chronicle), 3 - XXVII, 1994, pp. 15-22
7. Janez Kmet: Nekaj podatkov o razvoju naše gimnazije. In: Prikazi in študije, III, 1957, št. 9, p. 24 (Janez Kmet: Some Data on the Development of Our Grammar Schools. In: Examples and Studies, III, 1957, No. 9, p. 24)
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11. O delu Ministrstva za prosveto Narodne vlade Slovenije od osvoboditve. In: Naša prosveta in kultura, Ljubljana 1945, p. 9-11 (On the Work of the Ministry of Education of the National

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 13. Statistički godišnjak FNRJ 1954 (*Statistical Year Book of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia for 1954*), Belgrade, 1954, p. 60
 14. Data published in: *Školstvo u FNR Jugoslaviji od školske 1945-45 do 1950-51 godine* (*Education in the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia from the School Year of 1945-45 to 1950-51*), Belgrade, 1952.
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 16. Aleš Gabrič: Temeljne značilnosti šolske reforme 1953-1962. *Šolska kronika - Zbornik za zgodovino šolstva in vzgoje*, 1994, XXVII - 3, pp. 79-89 (Aleš Gabrič: *The Basic Characteristics of the Education Reform of 1953-1962. School Chronicle - Almanac of the History of Education*, 1994, XXVII - 3, pp. 79-89)
 17. Information in more detail on the educational reform available in: Aleš Gabrič: *Šolska reforma 1953-1962* (Aleš Gabrič: *The Educational Reform 1953-1962*), (still in unpublished typescript form).
 18. For the statistical data, see the annual overview issued by the Slovenian Bureau of Statistics for the statistics in the collection: *Rezultati raziskovanj* (*Research Results*).