

Croatia: Public Employment Services & Job Search Preparation

Providing easy access to information and guidance regarding the search for employment.

CISOK (Career Information and Counselling Centres), an initiative of the Croatian Employment Service (CES), actively carries out career guidance and counselling activities for secondary school students in Croatia. Activities begin in the second and third years of secondary school (ages 14-16), where workshops try to encourage students to think more intensively about future steps after secondary school. Through interactive questionnaires, exercises and discussions, students are encouraged to become more aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses, short and long-term goals as well as professional interests. Activities also focus on information regarding entering the labour market, finding suitable employment, compiling the necessary documentation (job applications, CVs, and cover letters), and preparing for an interview with the employer.

Students nearing graduation also receive practical information about transitioning to life after secondary school, such as applying for health insurance, applying to the CES and finding their first job. They are introduced to the types of documentation used when applying for jobs and advised on how to contact an employer on their own initiative.

CV writing/editing

An aspect of career preparation particularly stressed by CISOK is the importance of CV writing/editing. In Croatia, in most cases, secondary school students participate in practical work experiences every year as part of their school curriculum. Therefore, CISOK recommends that young people construct a CV as early as their first year of secondary school (ages 13-14), to be better prepared for seeking out external practical work experiences with employers.

Typically, representatives from CISOK visit schools, where they conduct presentations, lectures, and seminars on how to fill out job applications and create a CV or cover letter. Students are also encouraged to visit their local CISOK to receive more personalized guidance. Here, students are presented with examples of successful applications, receive feedback and guidance on their portfolio, and are assisted in the writing and editing process. Often times, the most economically disadvantaged young people do not own a personal computer, so their local CISOK provides them with access to their computers so that they may work on their CVs.

In aiding young people build their first CVs and/or cover letters, CISOK often recommends and walks them through using [EuroPass](#). EuroPass is a free website funded and created by the European Union, where students can enter their basic information, skills, qualifications and experiences, and it will build them a CV and/or cover letter. After a EuroPass CV is created, it is saved online to be retrieved and possibly modified later. An added benefit for young people is that they can easily convert their EuroPass CV to any of 24 official languages of the European Union, helping to increase opportunities for young Croatians.