Address by the Minister Prof. Dr. Simona Kustec

Accompanying thoughts

Preface to the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030

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RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO 2030 (ReNPVŠ30)
Dear academic community, dear students, dear readers,

I am honoured to have the opportunity to address you on the occasion of the adoption of the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030. I am convinced that this strategic document will be an excellent stepping stone on the path towards the knowledge society of tomorrow, because, hand in hand with good overall social and economic development and care for the environment, it offers both answers and opportunities for the many challenges that we will face at home and abroad in the coming decade.

We are living in times marked by many global uncertainties and resulting vulnerabilities which bring great challenges even to a robust knowledge society. These times also raise expectations for producing new knowledge to help find solutions to current daily problems and promote further scientific development. This is the mirror held up to us by the very fresh experience of living with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, of having to deal with the consequences of wars, especially the war on European soil in Ukraine, of
having to make sure there are sufficient food and energy supplies, and, as a consequence of all these trials, of additional social and psychological distress, and of redefined social relations and life paths of each individual.

In such circumstances, it is only possible to build a future by forging links between the best and strongest pillars we have. In a geographically small but knowledge-oriented society, Slovenia can and must build on excellent and competitive knowledge within and beyond its borders. Slovenia must not be an isolated and self-sufficient island, catering only to its own needs, but must co-create knowledge and thus the society of the future, in cooperation with other sectors and with the international community.

We have good universities and study programmes that need to be embedded confidently and decisively in both European and wider global consortia. We need to build on education and research programmes that offer the skills for the present and the future, connect with the wider research landscape and answer the needs of society, the labour market, as well as technological, innovation and economic growth.

Last year, during Slovenia’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union, we unanimously adopted the renewed guidelines of the common European Research Area in cooperation with the wider academic and research community. This year several strategic documents have been adopted that will strengthen the European Higher Education Area and enable Slovenian higher education institutions to establish even stronger links with European and other international partners and consortia. In parallel to this process, the new national strategy for higher education was also prepared with the same expectations and commitments, and is presented in this publication under the title “Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030”.

This Programme is, of course, important in its own right, but the way in which it was drawn up is equally important. This was an integrative, inclusive and collaborative process. It brought together the key players in the field of higher education and stimulated their commitment and dedication to the further steps needed to ensure that the contents of this Programme can be implemented, day by day. We started working on the present Programme at the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia in the spring of 2020. It was drawn on the basis of the starting points of the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, in dialogue with the scientific and research community and other
stakeholders, and in close cooperation with the Expert Group set up for this task. The Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 finally saw the light of day when it was formally adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia on 23 March 2022.

The Slovenian National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 is based on the following principles and guidelines:

1. Development,
2. Excellence,
3. Competitiveness,
4. Social, economic and environmental co-responsibility of knowledge,
5. Close integration and collaboration within the academic community and beyond, and
6. The power of the digital transition.

The aim of our country’s new national higher education programme is both straightforward and challenging in terms of work and expectations for all involved:

• Academic institutions and their staff must be given the best possible conditions and opportunities for excellence and progress,
• The highest quality knowledge that our country has to offer must be provided to each generation of students.

I am convinced that with such approaches we will manage to enable both the academic and the student community, and thus our society and country as a whole, to grow in terms of development, employment and, above all, to actively engage in responsibly tackling the great challenges of our times.

Finally, to all of you who have lived and enriched the words in this document and will continue to do so with your work and achievements in the years to come, my sincere thanks and best wishes for every success.

Prof. Dr. Simona Kustec
Minister
The knowledge society we strive for places knowledge at the center of its development and understands it as a key factor of production that contributes a decisive share to its development. At the same time, the development of new knowledge also enables rapid technological progress and brings a growing dependence of an individual’s daily life on technological solutions. However, technological development alone does not guarantee the achievement of the goals we set for the future as a society. Therefore, it is important that in the next decade in our society, we establish as soon as possible the functioning of the society in such a way as to achieve the objectives according to the principles of Society 5.0 (technological humanities progress) and thus in higher education to place greater emphasis on social sciences, humanities and arts. Slovenian society, as a full member of the European Community, must share its ambition for global competitiveness. In this sense, it is essential that Slovenian higher education is comparable in Europe, both in the field of legislative solutions, integration into the international area and the internationalisation of curricula, and long-term stable funding.

The Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 follows the guidelines for the development of higher education in the European area for the next decade. The set goals and planned measures clearly highlight the need to further improve the quality of higher education, the need for integration into the European Higher Education Area, especially through European University Initiative projects, intensive opening of Slovenian higher education in the international arena, European comparable internationalisation, digitalisation and green transition. It is up to all of us to achieve the set goals and achieve an important development leap on the path to the knowledge society. Greater trust of the wider community in the socially responsible conduct of Slovenian universities and respect for and recognition of the autonomy of their activities will certainly be of great help.
The Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 states in the introduction that Slovenia will be a successful and knowledge-based society on a global scale, which it will achieve with excellent higher education and research activity at universities and research institutes, as well as with responsible academic, institutional and economic autonomy. The National Programme is a key document for the further development of the Slovenian academic space, which, in addition to educational and scientific research activities, also includes direct knowledge transfer to society. It is important to focus primarily on achieving high quality, this should be the fundamental criterion, not the number of higher education institutions. We have had good strategic documents with good development goals in the past, but usually they were never fully implemented. In this document, we have a clear commitment that the Ministry responsible for higher education will set up a system to monitor the implementation of the programme and will prepare an analysis of the achievement of the strategic goals every three years of the strategic period in cooperation with experts from abroad. The National Programme is a strategic document and its implementation must be the responsibility of all governments in the development period to 2030. In the coming years, the international integration of universities in Europe will continue, joint European universities will be established, which clearly shows the distinct international character of universities and the need for exclusively international comparability. I would like to emphasize that universities will work according to the principles of Society 5.0, which is based on balanced technological and humanistic development. I sincerely thank all members of the expert group for their constructive cooperation.

Prof. Dr. Igor Papič
University of Ljubljana
It has always been the case that the success of any society is almost directly proportional with the ability to predict what the future holds based on “here and now”, and then with the courage to direct our activities in accordance to these predictions. Science together with the higher education system with its role of passing scientific findings to younger generations is perhaps the place where these predictions and orientations are most faithfully reflected. Today, we are overwhelmed with an endless multitude of problems, conflicts, open questions. Searching for solutions, we hope that science and higher education will once again come to the rescue.

The Resolution on National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 carries a forecast of developments in the field of higher education until 2030. It contains a precise definition of open problems and issues and indicates the direction in which Slovenia should be moving forward in order for its higher education to be of high quality and excellence in the widest international context, and thus move above the European average. Only in doing so Slovenia can expect global success in a world where knowledge is proving to be the main defining element.

In the coming years, all stakeholders in higher education need to live by the goals set forward in this document, for it is precisely a successful implementation of these goals that will shape the future of our society.

Prof. Dr. Klavdija Kutnar
Rector of the University of Primorska
and President of the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education
The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 as a political document. It defines in principle the strategic goals, the bases for legislation, funding, quality, internationalisation and digitalisation of higher education in Slovenia, but has no legal effect. The implementation will follow and will involve other expert groups, which will be drafting sectoral action plans. It is important to point out that the Programme is, as a political document, also the result of compromise and overvoting.

The drafting of the action plans as the reference for concrete legal acts will therefore, in addition to the analysis of the state of art of higher education in Slovenia for 2022, also have to take into account global quality standards, which are confirmed in international competition. As well, it should follow the principles of the Bologna Process not as the unique act but as a permanent process, with special emphases on the principles as autonomy with responsibility of higher education institutions, compatibility, mobility of students and staff, de-etatisation, employability of graduates, relevance and rationalisation of education. Also, it is important to consider the real national interests, free from ideological, local or other prejudices. In particular, the principle of equal rights and opportunities of students, teachers and researchers and public and private entities, should be taken into account. It is crucial that the quality is determined by the equal standards of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and confirmed trough open competition, in terms of relevance demonstrated by the employability of graduates, concerning education, and trough results of the implementation of innovations, concerning the research. As well rationalisation of education and research is a precondition for quality confirmed in the international competition.

Emeritus Prof. Dr. Ludvik Toplak
Alma Mater Europaea - ECM
I was invited to participate in the expert group appointed to draft the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 as a representative with extensive experience in industry as well as in business through my cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, and as the Dean of an independent and private higher education institutions. My key tasks were the co-creation of the new National Programme of Higher Education and the contribution of the necessary “extensions” to the Programme, which would enable cooperation between science / higher education and the industry. I estimate that we in the expert group managed to reconcile, often conflicting opinions and dilemmas, and that in the current Programme the industry has its own weight and validity. The adopted Programme gives due importance to the industrial development and takes into account that one of the key goals of higher education is to support the economic development, which is also a prerequisite for the continued competitiveness of our economy and society as a whole. This is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the even faster development of higher education in Slovenia. We will achieve a sufficient condition when all those involved in this process understand the importance of strong cooperation, in which we must not question who is more important for development. We are pointing out that it is all about the development of our Slovenia.

In Slovenia, we have an extremely well-developed network of public universities and public higher education institutions, which, however, cannot fully follow all the needs of the environment. Therefore, I advocate the position that the network of public higher education institutions needs to be upgraded and supplemented with private and independent higher education institutions that enrich the Slovenian higher education landscape. In doing so, the quality criterion must apply to all, both public and private higher education institutions. Therefore, it is important that we have ensured in this Programme an important role to measuring the quality of the implementation of higher education, which will continue to be carried out by the independent Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency.

In the perspective of 2021-2030, we will have to continue to cooperate intensively internationally, ensuring that our study programmes and their implementation are attractive not only to Slovenian but also to foreign students.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Blaž Nardin
Dean of Faculty of Polymer Technology
Knowledge is becoming an increasingly important asset of the developed world, so higher education institutions (HEI), whose primary mission is to acquire, disseminate, and apply knowledge, will only strengthen their position in the future society. Despite digitalisation, which is unstoppably penetrating all segments of our lives, humans will continue to maintain their central position in generating knowledge - at HEI, primarily in the roles of researchers, teachers, and their other coworkers. In order to achieve innovative, pedagogical, research, and artistic excellence as well as global competitiveness, it will be necessary to provide HEI employees with a competitive, stimulating, and safe working environment in which they will joyfully create and disseminate scientific knowledge. In contrast to the abundance of ‘instant information’, the production of scientific knowledge is a ‘long-distance run.’ So a fundamental challenge in the future will be maintaining a stable working environment in an increasingly changing world. Experiences from the industry demonstrate that survival and growth in dynamic environments require a change of the business models, supported by a high level of digitalisation. These may also significantly contribute to lowering the administrative burden of HEI staff and redirecting their capacities towards scientific and artistic activities. By considering local specifics and opportunities, the competitiveness of higher education also requires strong integration into the global environment, where the challenges of preserving national identity and language will continue to persist. Outlines of higher education in the Republic of Slovenia in 2030 may be foreseen in the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030. However, it will probably be necessary to endure quite a few social and technological upheavals until then. Higher education in the Republic of Slovenia, the journey to the destination of 2030 will be full of known and unknown challenges, but it will be anything but boring. Good luck!

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gregor Polančič
Education, Science and Culture
Trade Union of Slovenia
We do not know how many more twists of the world order will happen by 2030, how many times we will transvaluate our values in the meantime. It is certain, however, that we will be even more dependent on complex knowledge and awareness of the interdependence of technology, natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, and last but not least, the arts. The present National Programme of Higher Education lets the arts remain in autonomy to other fields, even if it keeps gaining an important role in cooperation with the spheres of research and technological development. The synergies of these three spheres have proven to be crucial for dealing with unpredictable changes in the world and their consequences: it is artists who ask unbearable but urgent questions, present visions and open fields of the unthinkable. Such deeply interdisciplinary innovation can bring significant cultural, social and technological progress – or perhaps slow it down, before we plunge into a technological dystopia of (media) wars and pandemics, environmental and information extractivism. For an in-depth understanding of modern paradoxes, we also need literature, philosophy, history and other fields of the humanities, as well as critical social sciences. Therefore, in this decade, Slovenian higher education will focus on the competencies of in-depth understanding, production management and, last but not least, critical reflection on technologies upon which our society depends increasingly - but which we also design and use. Both in education and generally in life. Rather than accepting that corporations and regimes force upon us instant solutions to more or less deliberately created problems, we shall create an image of the world (and ourselves in it) as well as ask the right questions ourselves. In the end, we take responsibility for realising such an image and finding answers to these questions!

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Peter Purg
Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
As students in the role of representatives of key participants in pedagogical and research processes, we believe that together with all stakeholders we have prepared a document that will provide guidelines for the operation of higher education in Slovenia in the coming decade. The document itself could lead us to the development of higher education from improving the higher education system, financing and increasing its quality, to a greater degree of internationalisation and achieving the highly necessary digital transformation, which consequently and in the long run leads to the development of society. It could lead us to a brighter future, stating the could, for the strategy should also be followed by smart and effective operational measures for its successful implementation.

We would like to highlight, what is in our opinion, the key element of higher education, which is also extremely important for preserving the value of tertiary education, i.e., its quality. The higher the quality of the study, the more the opinion of students, the greater is the value of graduates. Study programmes need to be designed in a way that will successfully employ key knowledge and competencies to students, in such a way to emphasize critical thinking as the skill that distinguishes higher education from other levels of education. By defining the importance of learning goals, vision and broader goals, it should be possible to review the implementation of programmes and use data from student surveys to determine whether individual higher education teachers, departments or higher education institutions actually design the study process in such a way to reach those goals. Surveys among students should gain validity in shaping the study process, as only in this way can student-centered education, which is the foundation of Bologna studies, be realized.

Omar Smajlović
Slovenian Student Union
In order to achieve excellence in research at public research institutes in Slovenia, a constant and uninterrupted influx of top staff from the national talent pool is crucial. At the Jožef Stefan Institute, we cannot imagine functioning without close cooperation with Slovenian higher education institutions, especially in light of the challenges of the green transition and digital transformation, which can only be addressed by skilled researchers with extensive knowledge in the increasingly overlapping fields of science. On paper, the newly adopted strategy offers significant progress and operational framework more in line with proven European models. However, the strategic plans will need to be implemented efficiently. Unfortunately, we have underperformed in this respect with the strategy of the previous decade. The adoption of the new Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030 coincides with the adoption of the new Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia (RISS). These remain two separate documents, although both demonstrate the awareness of the academic, research and economic spheres of the need to establish a single system for the effective transfer of existing and emerging knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole. The new National Programme raises the expectations of the research sphere in the fields of internationalisation and faster introduction of new and adaptation of study programmes to newly emerging technologies. Together with the new RISS, we may find the path of development breakthrough. This should bring us closer to a state where we will no longer struggle in the distribution of cohesion funds, as we will no longer be entitled to receive these funds for the sweet reason of overperformance.

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Zalar
Director of Jožef Stefan Institute
In the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030, the approach to the design of modern study programmes that will follow the needs of economic practices and further development of the Slovenian economy is particularly important, including the professions of the future, especially those addressing the European green deal, digital transformation of society and transition to a sustainable economy, which will ensure high employability and competencies of graduates. It is important that the planning and development of study programmes, including with the participation of business representatives, be based on professional forecasting models, such as career platforms, and that an effective system of monitoring the employability and career paths of individual study programmes be established.

Dr. Andrej Friedl
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
Preface to the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030

The ReNPVŠ30 provides strategic guidelines for the development of higher education in Slovenia while ensuring the level and quality of higher education, increase the responsiveness to the needs of the society and to the development of the country as a whole, the flexibility and attractiveness of the higher education system, to strengthen its international integration into the environment, improve the accessibility of education and possibilities for continuous education and lifelong learning throughout Slovenia, increase the intensity of research and innovation and improve the transfer of knowledge to the environment.

Key milestones in the drafting process of the ReNPVŠ30:

• 9 April 2021: The Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education approves the Baselines of the NPVŠ 2030;
• 19 April 2021: The Expert Group is set up with the task to prepare the NPVŠ 2030 proposal;
• 13 January 2022: The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopts the Motion for the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030;
• 23 March 2022: The National Assembly adopts the Resolution on the National Programme of Higher Education to 2030, which is published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia on 8 April 2022.

By September 2022, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, in cooperation with stakeholders in the field of higher education and research, shall prepare sectoral action plans for the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30. The plans shall define the activities in the framework of the measures, persons responsible for its implementation, the time schedule and envisaged mechanisms and sources of funding.

To monitor the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30 and its action plans, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport shall set up a system of external evaluators. Every three years, an analysis of the achievement of strategic goals, identified risk factors and their management will be prepared. According to the findings of the evaluations, the ministry shall prepare an update of the action plan.
Members of the Expert Group appointed to draft the proposal of the National Programme of Higher Education 2021-2030:

- Prof. Dr. Zdravko Kačič, University of Maribor (Head),
- Prof. Dr. Igor Papič, University of Ljubljana,
- Prof. Dr. Klavdija Kutnar, University of Primorska,
- Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko, University of Nova Gorica,
- Emeritus Prof. Dr. Ludvik Toplak, Alma Mater Europaea – ECM,
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Blaž Nardin, Faculty of Polymer Technology,
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gregor Polančič, Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia,
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Peter Purg, Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education,
- Omar Smajlović, Slovenian Student Union,
- Prof. Dr. Boštjan Zalar, Jožef Stefan Institute and
- Boštjan Gorjup, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (alternate member: Dr. Andrej Friedl).

Technical, logistical and analytical support for the successful and continuous work of the Expert Group was provided by the Higher Education Division, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

Prof. Dr. Franc Janžekovič
Director-General
Higher Education Directorate
Introduction

»Green and creative development of higher education activity based on excellence and openness for the benefit of the wider society«¹

Clearly set goals for action within the EU will make Slovenia a successful and knowledge-based society on a global scale, which it will achieve through high-quality higher education and excellent research work in higher education institutions and research institutes and through responsible academic, institutional and economic autonomy. This will ensure the production of competitive and quality human resources for the needs of the labour market, primarily in Slovenia but also more widely in the EU.

Slovenian higher education will create conditions and be able to respond to the accelerated dynamics of changes in society’s development and the need to effectively address challenges from its environment, taking into account the freedom of scientific and artistic creation and the needs of harmonious regional development in Slovenia. It is to be distinguished by innovation, teaching, research and artistic excellence, growing quality on an international scale, stimulating working and study conditions, high standards of academic culture and ethics, responsiveness to current and future needs of the economic and non-economic sectors and social environment in general, respect for institutional autonomy, social responsibility, integrity and trust, equality and non-discrimination, dignity, justice and inclusiveness, and commitment to the comprehensive and effective creation of conditions for the welfare of society. At the same time, it will maintain ecosystem

diversity at the strategic level by deepening the pluralisation of disciplines, promptly coordinating them with other strategies and systems, such as the smart specialisation strategy, the European Green Deal, and the transition to a sustainable society and open innovation. In addition, it will preserve its basic role in the autonomous development of criteria of knowledge.

The higher education system will establish a high level of cooperation between all stakeholders in higher education and will implement development that is boldly strategically set but gradually implemented with a clear goal of improving quality and achieving excellence. In doing so, it will ensure the involvement of the entire national higher education community and society as a whole or its component parts (social and regional involvement in the academic process), along with marginal disciplines, research and creative ideas, themes, concepts, and aesthetics.

Higher education will continue to be a public good and a public responsibility guaranteed by clear legislative rules and control over their observance and by sufficient funding from public funds to prevent shifting the financial burden to students.

Modern, internationally comparable development-oriented legislation will be implemented uniformly, regulating the implementation and funding of educational, research, artistic and support activities in higher education, providing a stimulating work environment for all those active in the implementation of higher education, research and artistic work, and defining the methods and forms of transfer of knowledge to the environment in order to enable universities and independent higher education institutions to carry out their mission and make a key contribution to more successful development of society as a whole. The law will regulate the internationally comparable lump sum funding of universities and independent higher education institutions by defining all the key mechanisms and instruments related to it. It will also determine lump sum funding of basic and research infrastructure.

Higher education will achieve an internationally comparable high quality and excellence above the European average. It will be widely accessible and internationally integrated and will have developed instruments of internationalisation in Slovenia and study programmes that will also be conducted in a foreign language. Slovenia will have legal frameworks in place that will enable higher education institutions to establish mechanisms and instruments for quality assurance, and these will be the basis for internationally integrated and comparable implementation of student-centred education based on profession, research or artistic work, basic research and transfer of knowledge to the environment in line with the local, national and global higher education mission.

The internationalisation level of Slovenian higher education system will be comparable to that of the best European universities. Mechanisms for so-called brain circulation and permanent care for the development of the Slovenian language and professional terminology
in higher education and science will be established. The amended legislative framework will create a flexible and responsive higher education environment that will provide attractive conditions for studying and working with the aim of internationalising education, research and art and attracting highly qualified staff from abroad.

Higher education will take into account and co-shape the trends of digital transformation in teaching, learning, research and innovation, which will have a significant impact on the operation of higher education institutions. The National Programme of Higher Education will follow the commitments and vision of the European Commission for 2030 in the field of providing professionally qualified human resources for the digital transformation of society.

The set goals of global success of the Republic of Slovenia arising from a knowledge-based society can only be achieved by rapidly and strategically raising quality and excellence to the level of the first third of EU countries in all three categories of indicators of higher education institutions: teaching quality, scientific excellence and efficiency of knowledge transfer. This will be referred to as the target quality level in the rest of the document. Higher education has a key role to play in this progress, and achieving these challenging goals requires many radical changes and great progress in these areas. Therefore the entire document must be interpreted from the aspect of raising quality and excellence to the target quality level, which will create the conditions for comprehensive and effective achievement of the welfare of society.
The key goals are to raise the level and quality of higher education in Slovenia while ensuring the quality of education and excellence in research, increase the responsiveness, flexibility and attractiveness of the higher education system in view of the needs of the economic and non-economic sectors and society as a whole, strengthen its international integration level, improve the accessibility of education and possibilities for continuous education and lifelong learning in higher education throughout Slovenia, increase the intensity of research and innovation, and improve the transfer of knowledge to the social environment.

Based on the analysis of the situation of higher education activity in Slovenia in 2020, the ministry responsible for higher education shall prepare sectoral action plans for the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30 within six months of the adoption thereof; the plans shall define the plan of activities in the framework of the measures, persons responsible for its implementation, the time schedule of the implementation and envisaged mechanisms and sources of funding.

The ministry responsible for higher education shall establish a system for monitoring the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30; every third year of the strategic period, it shall prepare, in cooperation with experts from abroad (peer cooperation), an analysis of strategic goals and identify risk factors, their management and measures to reduce negative consequences of risks. If necessary, depending on the findings, the Ministry shall also prepare an update of the action plan for the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30.
Social development and the higher education system

Education, science and arts are key areas for the sustainable development of society and green and digital transition and the most important sources of solutions for the responsibly planned development of the society of the future.

Strategic goals in social development and the higher education system

G 1.1. Improving the international comparability and disciplinary pluralism of the higher education system

The higher education system will be pluralistic in terms of disciplines, and all important basic and applied areas will be represented at the state level. With interdisciplinary orientation, it will strongly support new forms of cooperation and knowledge combinations, which will enable the achievement of the target quality level. In this process, the higher education system will be closely intertwined and harmonised with the field of research. Research work at higher education institutions will be carried out at an internationally comparable level and will reach the target quality level during the implementation of the ReNPVŠ30; it will bring key initiatives and be included in important European research and development programmes, cover a wide range of topics and challenges, and achieve the leading position in the European space in individual niche areas, which will be in line with the national strategy for the development of society and the economic and non-economic
sectors. The same applies to academic artistic work, which, while maintaining a top level of achievement and connecting with international trends, will be also open to in-depth collaboration with other disciplines and enter both critical and innovative interactions with other social stakeholders. The higher education system will also enable closer internal cooperation and cooperation of higher education institutions with research institutes and the economic and non-economic sectors. Collaboration networks of higher education and research institutions will be established with the aim of improving quality and achieving excellence, and mechanisms for their implementation will be developed. Art will remain autonomous compared to other disciplines but will gain an important place in intensive cooperation with the fields of research and technological development.

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**G 1.2. Definition of public service in the field of higher education activity**

The public service in the field of higher education will consist of educational, research, artistic and support activities that are equal and inextricably linked. Accreditation of activities within the public service in the field of higher education will include accreditation of educational and research activities. The public service in the field of higher education will be provided by accredited higher education institutions in the context of implementation of accredited study programmes and related professional, research and artistic activities. The library public service in the field of higher education activities will be provided by higher education institution libraries.

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**G 1.3. Providing free study to all in all three cycles**

The higher education system will continue to consist of public universities, public independent higher education institutions and private higher education institutions. The
core of the higher education system will be state-funded public universities and public independent higher education institutions. The public network of higher education institutions will be complemented by private higher education institutions, which will implement concessionary and non-concessionary study programmes and scientific and research or artistic activities in order to maximise support for the development goals of balanced development at the local and national levels. The higher education system conceived in this way will allow free study for all EU citizens in all three study cycles, regardless of social status, gender, sexual orientation, age, political or other beliefs, religion, ethnicity or nationality, family status, disability, or any other personal circumstance of the individual.

G 1.4. Closer links between higher education, research and technological development

G 1.5. Establishing constructive cooperation between public research institutes and higher education institutions

Mechanisms will be established to better connect public research institutes and higher education institutions in order to make better use of research equipment, create better research teams, and ensure greater involvement of researchers from public research institutes in the teaching process and greater involvement of higher education teachers in research.

G 1.6. Upgrading the quality and efficiency of the higher education system in line with the principles of the Bologna Process

Higher education will operate as a sustainable, internally diverse, self-renewable and resilient ecosystem responsive
to external and internal changes; as such, it will be able to respond to the rapidly changing needs of society, offer attractive and up-to-date study programmes and recognise the prospects of a wide range of students as active co-creators of modern society. Higher education will take into account the principles of the Bologna Process, such as coherence, mobility, quality, employability, competitiveness and relevance, to become comparable to European development trends and promote the exchange of knowledge and the internationalisation of higher education. Higher education institutions will actively contribute to the progress of society in the areas of their missions: education, research, arts, professions, the transfer of knowledge to the environment, and contributing to social and economic innovation. They will implement high-quality student-centred education based on research, professional or artistic work; they will achieve internationally comparable excellence and the target quality level in the field of research work, and together with independent research institutes they will be the agents of basic research in Slovenia; they will achieve an internationally comparable level of excellence in the field of the arts; comprehensive transfer of knowledge will significantly contribute to the strengthening of the society as a whole and the increased competitiveness of Slovenia’s economy. Undergraduate study programmes will introduce sufficient practical education comparable to other European countries and provide appropriate practical knowledge, which will facilitate the labour market entry after graduation.

G 1.7. At least 50% of Slovenian citizens aged 30 to 34 will complete one of the levels of higher education by 2030.

Slovenian higher education system will achieve the goals of the share of the population with completed higher education in accordance with EU acts.
G 1.8. Operation of higher education institutions according to the Society 5.0 paradigm

Higher education institutions will follow the principles of the Society 5.0 paradigm (technological and humanistic progress) and will be the main promoter of Slovenian society’s activities according to these principles. In higher education, they will provide high-quality, inclusive, diverse, decentralised and sustainable activities that will bring long-term personal and social security and opportunities for intellectual development and creativity, i.e. create goods in accordance with the needs of Society 5.0. Science and research will be open to intertwining or interdisciplinary connections with artistic fields, which will take place on the basis of strategic and experimental, even courageous, combining of disciplines, different skills and knowledge. The fields of the arts, together with the humanities, will be adequately represented and balanced with other academic fields, although it is to be expected that social tendencies will focus on technological, technical, natural and some social sciences or professional skills. The realisation of the potential of social and economic innovations from the intersection of art, science and technology will be systematically regulated. The complementary effects of these three areas will be systematically supported.

G 1.9. Active involvement of higher education institutions in the development of the Slovenian language and the preservation and development of national cultural heritage and identity

Higher education institutions will actively contribute to the development of the Slovenian language, the preservation and development of national cultural heritage, and the research of identities in the national space and in general; at the same time, the Slovenian higher education system will be strongly integrated in the international higher education community.
G 1.10. Increasing the openness of higher education institutions and their openness to the international community

Higher education institutions will improve study conditions for the European and wider area and offer quality jobs with state-of-the-art equipment and a stimulating, sustainably oriented work environment for junior experts, faculty assistants, higher education teachers and researchers, which will enable career planning and implementation of professional, scientific research and artistic work.

G 1.11. Ethical and socially responsible operation of higher education institutions in Slovenia

Higher education institutions will be ethically and socially responsible, effectively managed and organised, and responsible for ensuring high-quality educational, research and support activities and will accompany students from enrolment to graduation and employment. They will prepare them for active citizenship and their career and enable their personal and professional development while taking into account the importance of a healthy lifestyle and providing conditions for their physical and sports activities. By promoting lifelong learning, they will additionally contribute to the preservation of a broad range of knowledge and skills at a high level. Reconciling work and personal life will be an important guide in designing and organising work and study processes that support well-being and quality of life and prevent burnout and all forms of violence or exploitation, thus contributing to better mental and physical health of all stakeholders both inside and outside the higher education system.
Measures for achieving strategic goals in social development and the higher education system

M 1.1. Developing a quality and sustainable strategy for improving the employability of graduates

By drafting the strategy, the state will actively influence the employment environment and clearly delineate the responsibilities for career support; the strategy will be open to international partnerships and mutual cooperation of institutions. The needs of the whole of society for highly educated human resources will be determined by comprehensive monitoring and analysis of development trends in the fields of knowledge, technology, environment and society. The planning and development of study programmes will be based on professional forecasting models, such as career platforms and the like, which, in addition to experts in individual fields, involve representatives of the economic and non-economic sectors who plan development in their fields. Such planning will not exclude, but rather encourage, the emergence and establishment of new, especially high-quality interdisciplinary academic fields and on the other hand will allow for the development of a reasonably wide range of basic and non-applied sciences and knowledge. An orderly and efficient system will be established to monitor the career paths of graduates, and the data on their employability will be made publicly available.

M 1.2. Promoting higher education as a space of research where appropriate solutions and models for the future can be tested safely

Higher education will be integrated into all priority strategic areas of social development and will address key social and
economic challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, green technologies, demographic change (the ageing society), health, biotechnology, the environment, agri-food, artificial intelligence, digital transformation, smart specialisation strategy, transition to a sustainable society, and migration and equal opportunities/social equality. In accordance with national and international strategic documents, efforts will be made to establish connections and cooperation among various higher education programmes or fields, including the fields of the humanities and arts. At the same time, higher education will take care of the high value autonomy, which develops according to its own criteria.

M 1.3. Promoting the system of active internationally open human resource policy

Higher education will provide the human resources on which the sustainable development of society will be based. It will particularly emphasise the importance and visibility and constructive contribution of the arts and humanities to economic and social development, taking into account the autonomy of these fields in terms of aesthetic, thought and value goals. Higher education institutions will pursue an active international open human resource policy with high standards of employment quality and an active policy of further development of human resources with clear expectations and provisions regarding the success of the scientific and research or artistic and educational work of employees. Cross-sectoral cooperation and inter-institutional and cross-sectoral mobility will be systemically included in this.

M 1.4. Promoting the systemic strengthening of human resources of higher education institutions and providing attractive research conditions

The strengthening of human resources of higher education institutions will be systematically regulated with the priority
goal of human resource rejuvenation while encouraging long-term active participation of established higher education teachers and researchers. Attractive research conditions will be provided for higher education teachers, researchers and promising young staff members and for visiting higher education teachers and researchers from abroad, who will play an important role in the Slovenian higher education system and make the most of their potential and mutually enrich their knowledge while working in it.

**M 1.5. Promoting a system of transition between the secondary and higher education systems**

The system of vertical permeability of the secondary and higher education systems will be regulated by adapting to the non-automatic vertical permeability system. Conditions will be prepared for vertical advancement from professional secondary school programmes to study programmes, taking into account the necessary previously acquired basic knowledge and skills and practical experience and professional qualifications.
M 1.6. Improving the internal organisation of universities and higher education institutions in order to promote mutual cooperation

A system of internal organisation of universities and independent higher education institutions will be established which will encourage cooperation between departments and/or members and enable a greater number of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programmes, which will also receive additional financial incentives. The creation of these programmes will also be encouraged between different higher education institutions and between regions. Cooperation between public and private higher education institutions is encouraged.

M 1.7. Publicly funded knowledge is openly accessible

Open access to knowledge is ensured through effective integration in the European Higher Education Area, effective management and funding of development and ensuring international coherence of the national open science ecosystem (accessibility of infrastructures and databases), introduction of modern methods of evaluating activities in accordance with open science principles (e.g. DORA, Leiden Manifesto and ERAC Guidelines), ensuring compliance of scientific research results with FAIR principles (“Findable”, “Accessible”, “Interoperable” and “Reusable”) by ensuring full and immediate open accessibility (subject to justified exceptions), and encouraging the development of national higher education and scientific publishing activities to operate on the principles of open science.

M 1.8. Establishing mechanisms or a system for informing the public about the importance of higher education for society

Systematic provision of information to the public will raise awareness of the value and importance of higher
education for society and its potential for social and economic innovation, with an emphasis on the role of arts and humanities in their development, both in terms of constructive criticism and providing alternative solutions and the establishment of values of sustainability and the inclusion of all social groups or their needs.

**M 1.9. Promoting sustainably oriented and viable regionalisation of higher education**

Sustainably oriented and viable regionalisation of the Slovenian higher education area will be enabled and encouraged with the aim of ensuring quality study accessible to all and promoting the development of regions, whose agents include higher education institutions that meet quality standards and have sufficient human resource and infrastructure conditions.

**M 1.10. Defining the conditions for the establishment and operation of individual types of higher education institutions**

**M 1.11. Granting of concessions**

Concessions can be granted for the implementation of accredited study programmes for which sufficient social needs are demonstrated and which meet the expectations of future development of Slovenian society and regional development and which qualitatively upgrade the diversity of the higher education offer in Slovenia or are not implemented to the appropriate extent within the public service in the field of higher education. The condition

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2 Regionalisation will adequately support and complement the importance of central Slovenia as the main higher education and research region.
for granting the concession will be that private higher education institutions have obtained accreditations for their activities from the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (NAKVIS). This means that such providers will implement quality educational programmes and related quality professional, research or artistic work, demonstrate quality integration in the environment, and provide an appropriate volume of professional practice in higher professional study programmes. Transparent criteria and a system for granting concessions to a higher education institution will also be provided, which will, upon compliance with conditions, enable the transfer of concessions between study programmes of the institution and thus increase the adaptability and responsiveness of higher education to the needs and challenges of social development.

M 1.12. Providing physical and sports activities for all students

Reintroduction of physical and sports activities not evaluated by ECTS as an accompanying content to first-cycle study programmes in the first years of studies.
Legislation and funding

Higher education is a public good and a public responsibility ensured by clear legislative rules and supervision of their observance and by sufficient funding from public funds to prevent shifting the financial burden to students.

Strategic goals in legislation and funding

G 2.1. Ensuring greater transparency, equal rights and responsibilities and equal treatment of students

Appropriate changes in the legislation will enable greater transparency and ensure equal rights and responsibilities and equal treatment of students (accessible student accommodation, study resources and equipment, learning bases, and physical and sports and cultural and artistic activities) at all higher education institutions with consistent respect of and differentiation between private (non-public) versus public and governmental versus civil society categories. Quality and universally accessible study will be provided; incentives for studying in study programmes for shortage professions will be ensured.
G 2.2. Increasing the competitiveness of the Slovenian higher education area in the field of internationalisation

The change in legislation will increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the Slovenian higher education environment, which will provide attractive conditions for studying and working with the aim of internationalising education, research and art and attracting highly qualified staff from abroad.³

G 2.3. Ensuring long-term stable funding of the public service in the field of higher education

Appropriate amendments to the legislation, which will comprehensively define the public service in the field of higher education, will ensure the stability of funding for educational, scientific, research and artistic work of higher education institutions through integral funding of public service, i.e. educational, research, artistic and support activities (lump sum funding⁴), which provides higher education institutions with mechanisms for an effective management of human resource, infrastructure and development potentials, instruments for co-financing and pre-financing research projects, and the implementation and financing of the sabbatical year.

G 2.4. Increasing total funds available to higher education and scientific and research work

Accelerated and systematic investment in knowledge, science and arts will be carried out to structurally

³ Attractive working conditions (including the elimination of administrative barriers) and an attractive academic environment (teaching, scientific and research, and artistic) will be provided for foreign students in all study cycles, promising young foreign scientists at the beginning of their careers, and top-quality internationally renowned researchers and higher education teachers from abroad (including Slovenians).

⁴ Lump-sum funding of educational activities and lump-sum funding of research and artistic activities.
and permanently support cooperation between the academic and research spheres and the economy and the social environment. Universities and independent higher education institutions will be in the top third of EU countries in terms of the volume of budget funding (education, research and artistic activities, and investments in fixed assets and research equipment) expressed as a percentage of GDP. Slovenia will strive to meet the EU’s strategic goals and ensure stable funding for education and research in the amount of at least 4% of GDP by 2025 (2% from budgetary sources and 2% from other sources), which also includes funds for development. In 2030, the budget for education and research will amount to at least 2.25% of GDP. While ensuring educational, research and artistic excellence, the ability of higher education institutions to independently obtain resources other than those from the budget of the Republic of Slovenia will be one of the important indicators that will have a stimulating effect on the funding of higher education institutions.

G 2.5. Establishing systemic regulation of comparable legal statuses of higher education teachers and researchers

Measures for achieving strategic goals in legislation and funding

M 2.1. Establishing the funding of public service in higher education that will enable uniform funding of all activities within the public service

With the change of legislation in the field of higher education, on the basis of identified social needs and development programmes, internationally comparable lump sum funding of universities and independent
higher education institutions will be regulated within the framework of public service by defining all key mechanisms and instruments related to it; the legislative changes will be development-oriented and will enable universities and independent higher education institutions to include new research and educational content through a negotiation mechanism within the procedure of determining the scope of public service before signing a funding contract for the next period. Stable and uniform funding of educational activities and funding of basic scientific research or artistic activities will be ensured. Systemic funding of physical and sports activities will also be ensured.

M 2.2. Improving the facilities and equipment of institutions

The amended Higher Education Act will ensure the lump sum funding of basic and higher education (education and research) infrastructure in accordance with the state’s strategic development plans and the needs of society. Systemic regulation of investments in green infrastructure (construction of new buildings and renovation of existing ones) and large research equipment (borrowing by users and increase of twelfths for repayment) and funding of maintenance of (existing) infrastructure will be implemented.

M 2.3. Establishing a funding system for the implementation of the digital transformation

Systemic funding of digitally connected higher education infrastructure and intelligent equipment for the implementation of digital transformation and the development of smart lecture halls for the needs of accredited study programmes will be provided.
**M 2.4. Establishing the system of project funding in artistic activities**

Systemic funding of projects in artistic activity will be provided, including a mechanism for young artists modelled on that for young researchers.

**M 2.5. Enabling the teaching of the Slovenian language for foreign students and employees**

Funding will be provided for the teaching of the Slovenian language for foreign students and employees who wish to participate in study programmes delivered in the Slovenian language, including the appropriate promotion of these programmes.

**M 2.6. Establishing the system of funding physical and sports activities**

Additional systemic funding of physical and sports activities as a compulsory accompanying content of first-cycle study programmes will be provided.

**M 2.7. Preserving and upgrading accommodation infrastructure**

Systemic funding will be provided for the preservation and upgrading of public infrastructure for the accommodation of domestic and foreign students and visiting higher education teachers, faculty assistants, researchers and junior experts.
M 2.8. Providing a framework for the development of donations as an important private source of funding for higher education

M 2.9. Mutual coordination of the goals and operation of higher education institutions, NAKVIS, and the funding provider with clearly defined structures for the management of the system and defined responsibilities

M 2.10. Regulating the recognition of informally acquired knowledge

A comprehensive arrangement will be implemented for the recognition of education acquired informally through voluntary and other student work.

M 2.11. Establishing measures to attract foreign experts

Taking into account research excellence, simplified procedures will be implemented for the employment of top-quality higher education teachers and researchers from abroad (EU and third countries). Attractive conditions for research and artistic work of foreign higher education teachers and faculty assistants involved in the learning process will be provided.

M 2.12. Regulating work from home as a special feature of the university or higher education space by amending the Higher Education Act
M 2.13. Improving cooperation between higher education institutions and research institutes

Reciprocal mobility of personnel among higher education institutions and between higher education institutions and public research institutes; gradual association or integration of universities and smaller public research institutes that obtain funds for research almost exclusively from public resources; harmonisation of the wage system and the conditions for promotion and the work of human resources at higher education institutions and public research institutes in accordance with the strategy of achieving the target quality level.

M 2.14. Establishment of a system of tax incentives for investment in the higher education and research system by the private sector.

M 2.15. Involvement of all stakeholders in preparatory legislative processes

Working groups preparing legislative changes are balanced by involving representatives of all stakeholders affected by the changes.
Quality

Higher education achieves an internationally comparable high level of quality and excellence above the European average by all standard indicators. It is widely accessible, internationally integrated, and has developed instruments of internationalisation in Slovenia and study programmes that are delivered in a foreign language.

Strategic goals in the field of quality

G 3.1. Permanent quality assurance in Slovenian higher education

An upgraded system of promoting continuous improvement and (self-) evaluation in all areas of quality assurance in higher education based on appropriate models and principles (articulation of goals, measures, follow-up, and, above all, continuous improvement through a combination of internal and external assessment or critical reflection both at the programme level and at the level of higher education institutions). Quality in higher education is supervised by the independent national quality assurance agency for higher education (NAKVIS).

G 3.2. Student-centred teaching based on professional, research or artistic work

Student-centred teaching based on professional, research or artistic work for successful and timely completion of studies will be established. This will enable flexible
adaptation of curricula to ensure appropriate competences and knowledge of graduates and will include an appropriate combination of virtual and in-person presentation of learning content. It will be important to recognise the participation of experts and higher education teachers in the virtual or otherwise digitally supported delivery of learning content in the learning process of each learning unit.

G 3.3. Designing study programmes for professions and challenges of the future

Modern study programmes for the professions and challenges of the future will be offered, especially those dealing with the European Green Deal, the digital transformation of society and the transition to a sustainable society, ensuring high employability and professional qualifications of graduates for competitiveness in the domestic and international labour markets and for active citizenship, which means that students and graduates will be involved in social developments and decision-making and strive to strengthen democracy and civic and professional solidarity. The programmes will support self-initiative in creating employment opportunities (e.g. start-up entrepreneurship, open innovation and cross-sectoral initiatives), with special focus on the non-profit and non-governmental sectors. Such study programmes will create conditions for students and graduates to effectively transition to the labour market, which, together with expertise and interdisciplinary openness, require a high level of cognitive and socio-emotional skills or are defined by special, non-standard tasks and challenges that cannot yet be detected, predicted or defined in terms of content.
G 3.4. Effective transfer of knowledge to the social environment

The ministry competent for higher education and the ministry competent for the economy and technology, along with public agencies, will establish an efficient ecosystem that will ensure an internationally comparable transfer of knowledge to the social environment. They will also promote the co-creation of knowledge in the social environment.

G 3.5. Promoting entrepreneurship

Enabling and promoting entrepreneurship in study programmes and fields will be systemically regulated. It will be promoted and provided (by appropriate legislation) through the entities of the entrepreneurial environment of start-ups (spin-off, spin-out and start-up) based on scientific and artistic achievements and results of development, creative and research projects. International involvement will also be ensured in the establishment of companies and other independent forms of operation where this is necessary due to the international nature of projects, programmes or networks.

G 3.6. Establishing a lifelong learning system at the higher education level

A working system of lifelong learning at the higher education level will be established, including appropriate evaluation and recognition, with the aim of empowering wider circles of the active population with new findings of science, art and professions. Promoted for a broader population will be the necessity of acquiring diverse but high-quality higher education knowledge and skills and creating a positive, education-based orientation for the future.
Measures for achieving strategic goals in quality

**M 3.1.** Promoting cooperation with the wider environment and creating joint study programmes in the European space

Mechanisms to promote international (transnational) cooperation, development of study programmes with the emphasis on third-cycle study programmes, and cooperation with the economy and the wider society (integration of higher education in the environment) will be established. In particular, the topics of solidarity, quality of work, social security, social cohesion, inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups, non-discrimination, and so forth will be asserted in this process. Mechanisms will be established to encourage the acquisition of internationally recognised study accreditations related to individual fields of study.

**M 3.2.** Establishing internationally comparable quality standards

NAKVIS will develop standards for evaluating the quality of higher education institutions in accordance with legislation, the needs of the environment, and international standards and indicators.

**M 3.3.** Broadening the scope of NAKVIS activities

NAKVIS will also have an advisory role, helping higher education institutions to continuously improve their quality on the basis of a combination of external evaluations and self-evaluation. It will help higher education institutions by preparing guides, analyses and comparative data on the Slovenian higher education system.
M 3.4. Critical self-reflection of the higher education system

Critical self-reflection of the higher education system will be carried out at the state level with the involvement of all key stakeholders in order to change higher education in accordance with the needs of society and with optimal exploitation of new technologies and scientific findings and intense cooperation with the cultural and creative sectors.

M 3.5. Creating modern and flexible educational programmes in accordance with international development trends and the needs of the environment

Study programmes will be designed on the basis of appropriate curricular theory and taking into account pedagogical, psychological and didactic principles and the goal of quality assurance. They will be offered and implemented in a way that responds to the needs of the environment and society while reflecting development guidelines and enabling development in completely new areas. The range of study programmes will offer both basic and applied knowledge. In-depth, structured links with non-formal education and other aspects of lifelong learning will be established. Flexible and inclusive student-centred study will enable the implementation of lifelong learning for different living conditions and at different stages of life.

M 3.6. Providing suitably qualified staff for the needs of the economy and society as a whole

Mechanisms of promoting and enabling the achievement of the highest academic standards and flexibility will be established at the institutional level, enabling faster and more efficient diversification of study programmes (and institutions) by individual professional fields with the aim of
providing the most appropriate, inter-disciplinarily trained human resources for both economic and non-economic activities.

M 3.7. More flexible definition of workload

Systemic solutions for the permanent education of higher education teachers and faculty assistants that will also include a more flexible and appropriately balanced definition of workload will be provided. At the same time, appropriate reconciliation of work and family life, actions against burnout, introduction of green solutions (e.g. work from home) and so forth will be ensured.
M 3.8. Updating the minimum standards for appointment to titles through the implementation of teaching and professional performance

Qualitative and quantitative indicators of teaching performance will have a comparable weight in the procedures of appointment to titles and promotions in terms of indicators of scientific or artistic excellence; consideration will also be given to success in the implementation of projects (including programmes and networks) and other aspects of professional performance, which will also include reputation among the professional and general publics and public representation of professional or academic views, impact or recognised achievements in the field in which one’s title is to be awarded, and the field of academic and social activity.

M 3.9. Greater involvement of experts from both economic and non-economic sectors in the study process and external evaluation

There will be systemic solutions (determining the criteria and conditions following the example of the most developed EU countries) for time-limited appointments to the title of experts from the economic and non-economic sectors and their inclusion in the study process and external evaluation. Successful and recognised experts who demonstrate high ethical principles and whose contribution will raise the level of quality of delivered content will be encouraged in particular.

M 3.10. Strengthening the importance of student survey results in internal quality assurance

Evaluating the teaching work of higher education teachers will continue to be one of the important mechanisms of
internal quality assurance and one of the key options for students to responsibly and directly express their opinions or evaluate the teaching work of their teachers, thus significantly co-creating the higher education area. Prior to the publication of the results of student surveys for the interested public, higher education teachers will have an opportunity to respond. In addition to research and quantitative teaching indicators, appropriate qualitative indicators for the evaluation of teaching work will be introduced.

M 3.11. Preparing a strategy for placing lifelong learning in the higher education space

This will include the development of an accreditation system and the recognition of micro-credentials and a system for the recognition and evaluation of previously acquired knowledge, along with a plan to promote the importance and necessity of acquiring diverse but high-quality modern higher education knowledge and skills throughout an individual’s working life.
Internationalisation

The internationalisation level of Slovenian higher education is comparable to that of the best European universities.\textsuperscript{5} Mechanisms for so-called brain circulation and permanent care for the development of the Slovenian language and professional terminology are established.\textsuperscript{6}

Strategic goals in internationalisation

G 4.1. Increasing the level of involvement of universities and independent higher education institutions in the Common European Higher Education Area and the internationalisation of curricula

Universities and independent higher education institutions will be successfully involved in all international activities, especially in European university networks, with a high proportion of international students and higher education teachers, faculty assistants and researchers in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Process. Strategic internationalisation of curricula will be carried out.

\textsuperscript{5} In order to achieve long-term international comparability of the Slovenian higher education area, the implementation of internationally comparable internationalisation of the Slovenian higher education area is a necessity.

\textsuperscript{6} The synergistic effects brought by the internationalisation of higher education and greater competitiveness of the economy and consequently a stronger and more self-confident society will reduce the level of endangerment of the Slovenian language.
G 4.2. Increasing the inclusion of Slovenians living abroad in the Slovenian higher education system

Study in Slovenia will be enabled and promoted for all Slovenians who live and reside abroad (both those living in neighbouring countries and those living in more distant places).

G 4.3. Increasing the level and quality of incoming mobility at universities and independent higher education institutions

Quality incoming mobility will be promoted along with acquiring renowned foreign higher education teachers and faculty assistants, researchers and junior experts for faster development of individual fields in Slovenia.

G 4.4. Increasing the level and quality of outgoing mobility of students and staff in higher education

Greater outgoing mobility of Slovenian students to quality institutions or study programmes abroad (short and long visits) and of Slovenian higher education teachers and faculty assistants, researchers and junior experts in fields where the level of development is not yet competitive enough in Slovenia and on which we can build complementarity of individual areas with foreign knowledge institutions will be encouraged.
Measures for achieving strategic goals in internationalisation

M 4.1. Establishing a system for more successful integration of universities and independent higher education institutions in a single European and international higher education area

A system will be set up to provide funding for higher education teachers, faculty assistants, researchers and junior experts, which will enable them to take a sabbatical year and join and cooperate with elite university and research networks and seize good opportunities for project cooperation.

M 4.2. Promoting the mobility of students, higher education teachers, faculty assistants and junior experts.

M 4.3. Drafting the National Strategy for the Internationalisation of Slovenian Higher Education until 2030

The strategy will determine the importance and forms of internationalisation and the share of foreign students and higher education teachers, faculty assistants, researchers and junior experts involved in international activities. Priority areas or regions for both incoming and outgoing mobility will be identified, though not on an exclusive basis. Among the priority areas for incoming mobility remain the Western Balkans, along with the rest of South-Eastern Europe and Central Europe.

7 Study and research experience abroad broadens horizons and both contribute to the academic and personal development of individuals and endorse cultural diversity.
M 4.4. Implementing the internalisation of curricula

An ambitious and strategic internationalisation of curricula will be carried out. The number of joint study programmes with higher education institutions abroad and other forms of intensified teaching cooperation will be increased.

M 4.5. Systematically attracting Slovenians living in neighbouring and other foreign countries to study in Slovenia

At all official representations of Slovenia in countries with Slovenian population, an active connection is established to all accredited study programmes offered by Slovenian higher education institutions with the aim of promoting education in the motherland.

M 4.6. Higher education institution oversee the development of the Slovenian language and professional terminology

Stakeholders involved in the processes of internationalisation oversee the transfer of concepts and terminology into the Slovenian language, thus enriching it. If a study programme is delivered in a foreign language, the development of the Slovenian language and terminology in higher education and science will also be ensured by access to the study content in Slovenian.

M 4.7. Ensuring equal study conditions for Slovenian and foreign students

Systemic measures will be prepared to create conditions on the basis of which Slovenian and foreign students in Slovenia will have a study experience of the same quality under the same conditions.
**M 4.8. Promoting excellence in higher education**

A systemic solution will be provided for the awarding of scholarships and other forms of incentives to excellent students and scientists or artists, regardless of their citizenship.

**M 4.9. Systemic regulation of all forms of mobility**

Virtual mobility will be systematically regulated alongside classic geographical transnational mobility.

**M 4.10. Establishing specific measures to attract top-quality foreign experts**

Mechanisms will be provided to facilitate and speed up the involvement of foreign and Slovenian top-quality experts from abroad in the work of universities and independent higher education institutions, which includes accommodation, priority treatment in obtaining a work permit, incentive tax treatment, childcare assistance, providing career opportunities for partners and similar; barriers to obtaining residence permits for foreign experts and students will be removed.
Digitalisation

Higher education follows the guidelines of digital transformation and actively co-shapes them.

Strategic goals in digitalisation

G 5.1. Providing conditions for the implementation of the digital transformation

Higher education will respond quickly to the needs of its environment by developing important knowledge, skills and competences, will be resilient to extraordinary circumstances, will promote quality economic, sustainable social and environmental development, will be responsive and accessible to different groups of knowledge and science users, will invest in green, resilient, open, sustainable and digitally connected higher education infrastructure and in smart equipment, will develop smart lecture halls, and will upgrade and optimise the use of high technology accessible to all stakeholders.
G 5.2. Promoting an active role of higher education in the process of digital transformation

Higher education will take into account and co-create guidelines for digital transformation in the fields of teaching, advanced and innovative teaching practices, digital literacy, research, and artistic and administrative processes and critically evaluate and use them wisely and establish a systemic and normative environment that promotes digital transformation.

G 5.3. Promoting education in the field of information services and content

Higher education will develop and educate in the field of information services and content, ensuring the bridging of the digital gap and divide.

G 5.4. Providing infrastructure for broadband internet connections

Infrastructure for broadband internet connections will be provided throughout Slovenia and will be focused on constant updating in accordance with emerging needs and conditions.
Measures for achieving strategic goals in digitalisation

M 5.1. Creating a strategy for the digitalisation of higher education

A strategy for the digitalisation of higher education for the development of digital learning environments and study content and the development of teaching approaches and modern models of learning and teaching using ICT and digital tools and information resources for inclusive education will be developed. These are based on open principles, wide or universal accessibility, data security, inclusion, and transparency.

M 5.2. Promoting the development of digitalisation in distance learning and teaching

Digitalisation in the field of distance learning and teaching will be developed strategically, taking into account all key guidelines in the world and the EU, along with the specifics of the Slovenian space, human resources, equipment of students and institutions. This development will continue to strengthen cooperation while supporting creativity and flexibility in the implementation of personal contact or localisation of higher education processes, enable raising the quality of the study process and greater resilience of distance educational process.

M 5.3. Empowering individuals and institutions for appropriate use of tools

Institutions and individuals will be empowered (acquiring appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes or motivation)
for the appropriate use of tools and approaches and the development of innovative learning environments in light of the changing situation of student and staff mobility and their mastery of digital tools and the availability of equipment, including methods of implementation (physical presence or remote or combined).

M 5.4. Provide mechanisms to strengthen ICT and media studies

Mechanisms will be provided to strengthen the fields of ICT and media studies, along with media production and the arts, especially where in-depth understanding, production management and critical reflection of ICT, on which society increasingly depends, are key professional skills.
M 5.5. Establishing a unified scheme of student digital identity

A unified scheme of student digital identity will be established, which will be harmonised with the Records and Analytical Information System for Higher Education (eVŠ) and which will enable numerous activities for students in Slovenia and abroad through dedicated online programmes or applications.8

M 5.6. Establishing a systemic solution for strengthening human resources in the field of ICT

Systemic solutions will be established to strengthen human resources in the areas needed for digital transformation (technologies and techniques for digitalisation of processes, digital security and ethics, artificial intelligence, digital didactics, etc.) and the educational process itself, taking into account EU guidelines.

M 5.7. Institutional adjustments to all areas of higher education institutions’ operations for the utilisation of new technologies and ICT equipment.

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8 Implementation of library services, schedule and calendar review, multi-level communication services, organisational and administrative tasks, etc.