



**CEI Human Resources Development Forum:  
*Identifying Barriers of Lifelong Learning and  
Their Removal***

**Prague, 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

Directorate for Secondary education

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## **Content of presentation**

1. Background information – setting the scene
2. Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context
3. Identified barriers and challenges
4. Policy answers



## Background information – set the scene

### Croatia

Population: 4.4 million

The Republic of Croatia is a parliamentary democracy, like most countries in Western and Central Europe

Croatia became an independent state in 1991 following the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.

Capital city – Zagreb

The area of Croatia can be divided into three major natural and geographic parts: **Pannonian and Peri-Pannonian area** comprises the lowland and hilly parts of eastern and northwestern Croatia, the **hilly and mountainous area**, which separates Pannonian Croatia from its coastal part, the **Adriatic Area** includes the narrow coastal belt separated from the hinterland by high mountains and the Croatian **Adriatic coast** is one of the most indented in the world: it has 1246 islands and islets with a total coastline of 4058 km



## Educational system – all levels data

The educational system in the Republic of Croatia includes:

- pre-school education - 150.000 children
- elementary education (compulsory and free of charge for all children aged seven to fifteen) - 350. 000 pupils
- secondary education – 180.000 students
- tertiary education – 170.000 students
- adult education (as an independent subsystem equal in strategic relevance to the subsystems of primary, secondary and tertiary education).

The system of secondary education in Croatia includes general education (e.g. grammar schools), vocational education (technical, industrial and craft schools) and art schools.

Tertiary education incorporates universities as the major background for scientific professions (university studies), non-university colleges, polytechnics and schools of higher education.



## **Educational system – VET / Adult Education facts**

Vocational education and training system covers 70,9% of the total secondary school population, i.e. 135.930 pupils, in 290 schools. The system consists of:

- 23 1-year and 2-year educational programs (0,7% of VET pupils is in those programs, 0,5% of total secondary school population),
- 93 3-year industrial and crafts programs (36,5% of VET pupils in those programs, 25,9% of total secondary school population),
- 4-year technical or related programs (62,8% of VET pupils in those programs, 44,5% of total secondary school population) .

The participation of adults in lifelong learning in Croatia was 2, 2%, far below EU 27, which was 9, 5%, but it is important to underline the statistical methodology which in Croatia take only formal adult education programme in to account .



## **Strategic documents – educational sector**

*Primary and Secondary School Education Act*

*Vocational Education and Training Act (2009).*

*Adult Education Act*

*Education Development Plan 2005-2010*

*Strategy for Adult Education*

*Development Strategy of the Vocational Education System in the Republic of Croatia 2008-2013 (2008)*

*National Curriculum Framework*

*Operational programme 'Human Resources Development' – IPA component IV.*

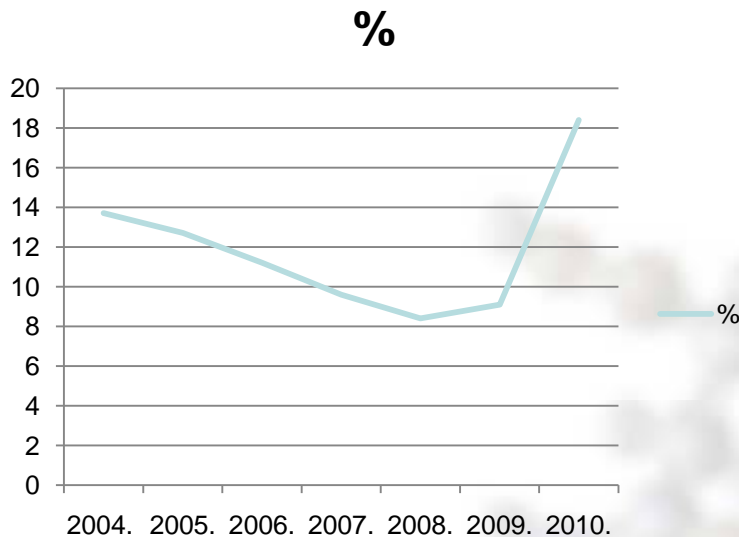
*National Strategic Reference Framework (Structural and Cohesion Funds – prepared by Croatian Authorities and under adoption by EC)*

# Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context

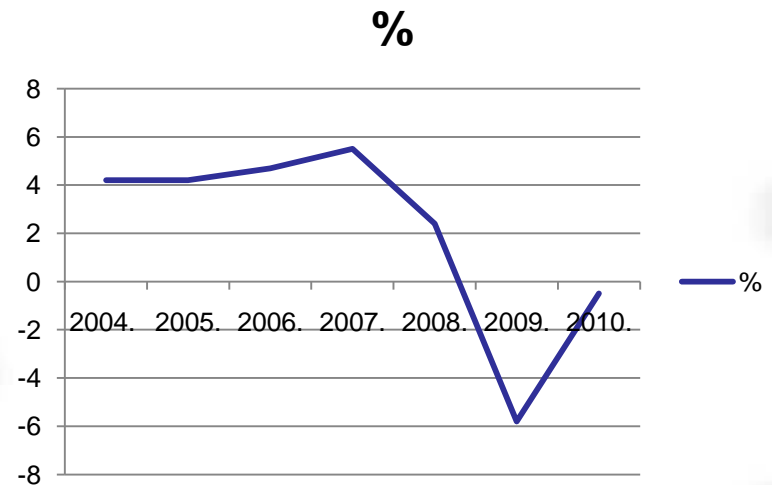
Unemployment rate

/

Real GDP growth rate

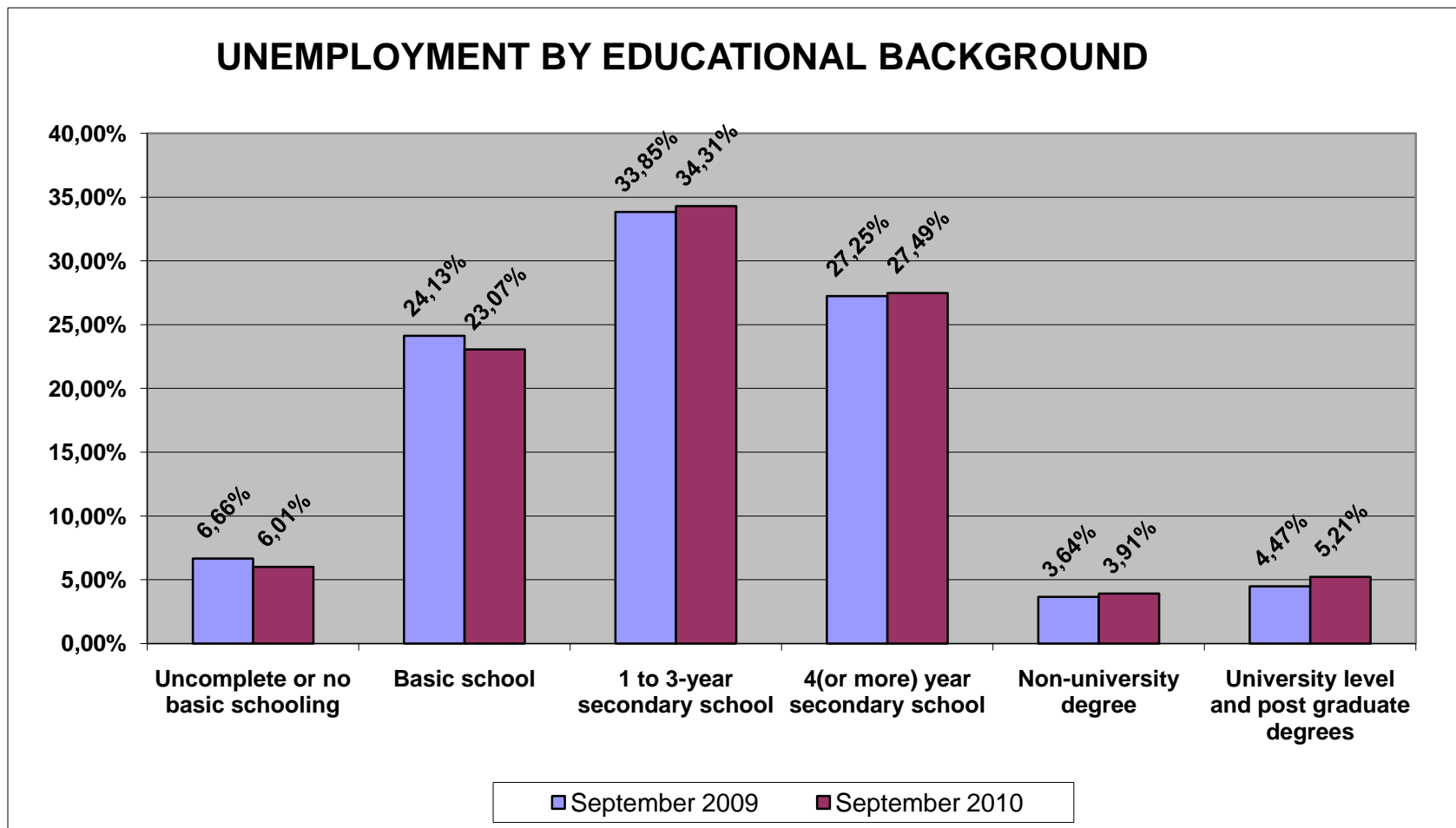


*Unemployment rates represent unemployed persons as percentage of the labour force*



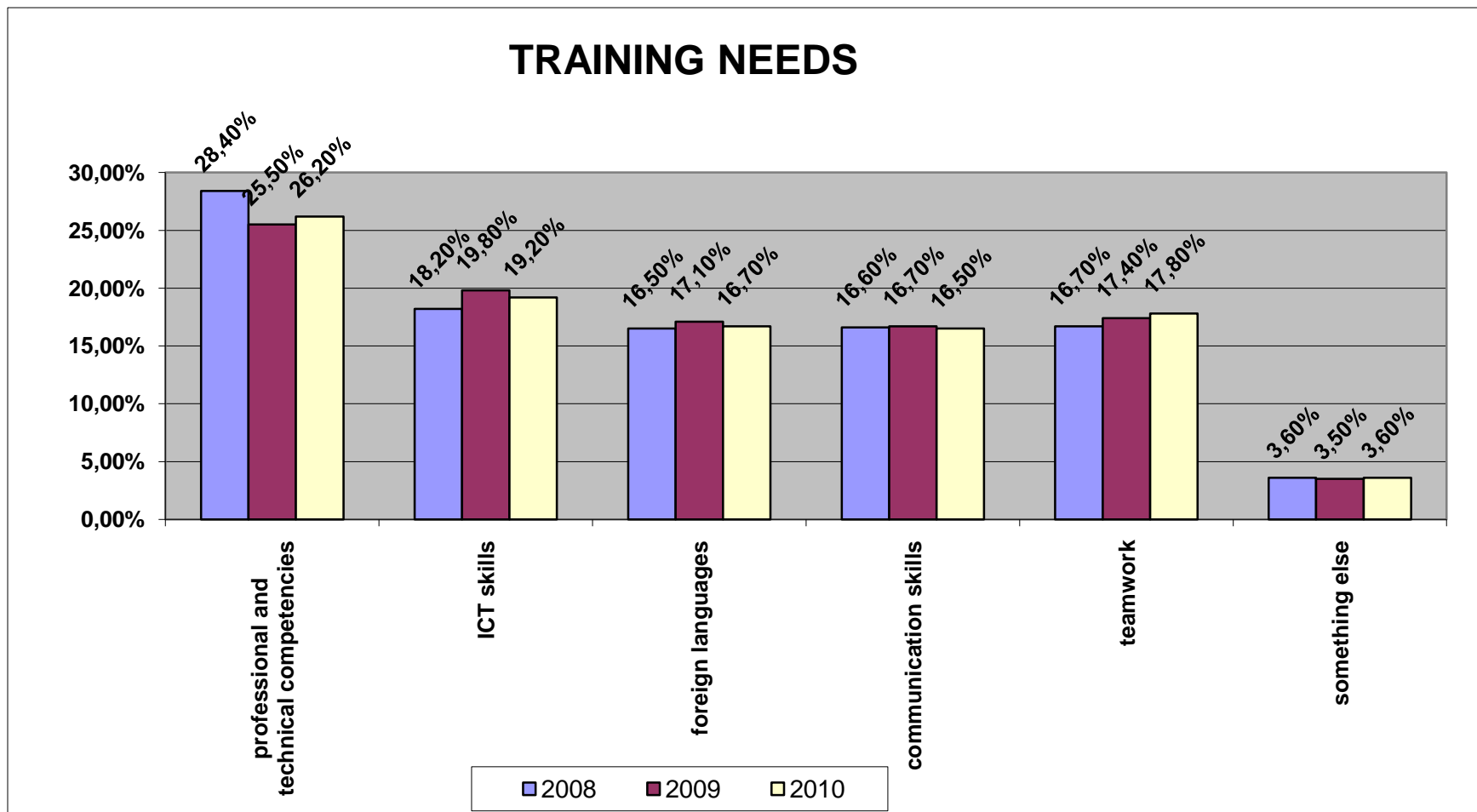
*Growth rate of GDF volume – percentage change on previous year*

## Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context 2





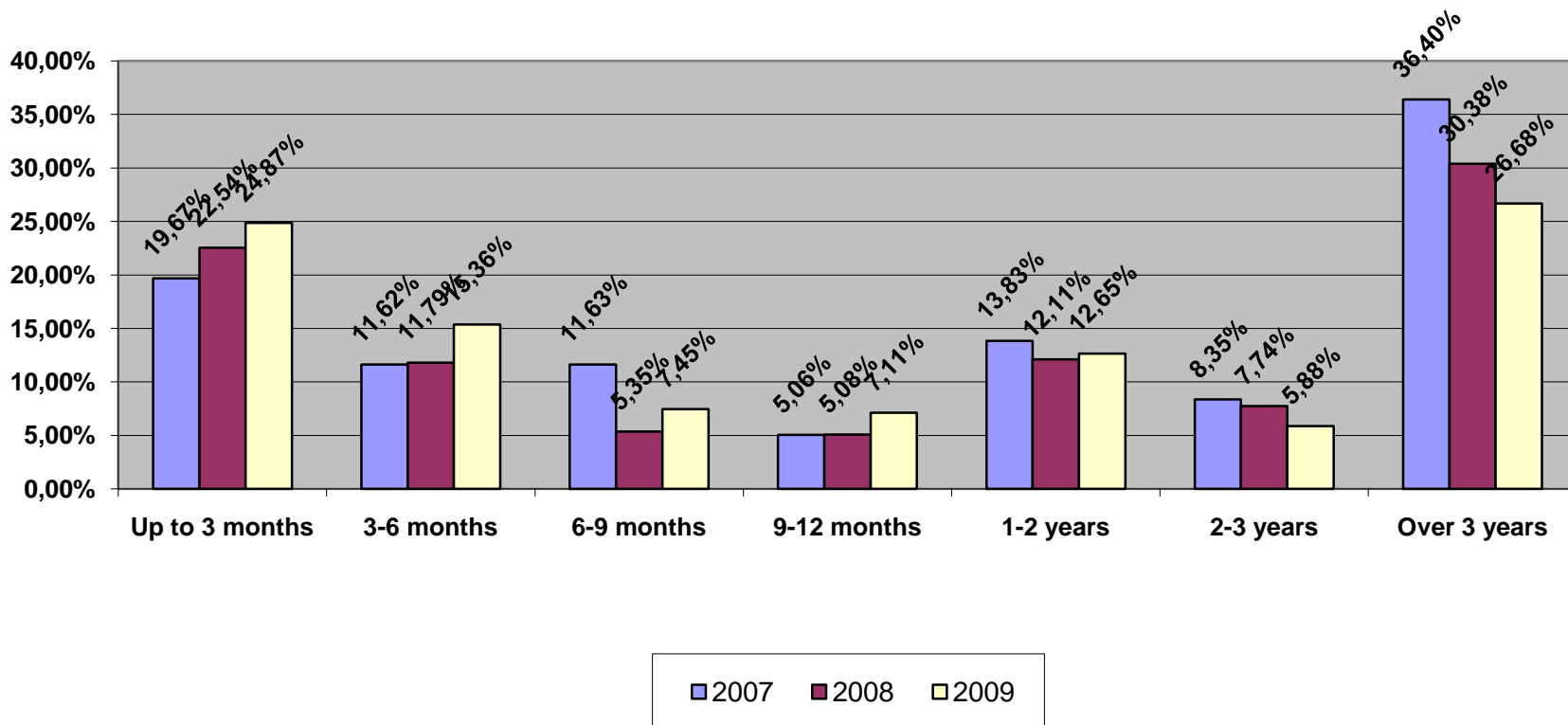
## Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context 3



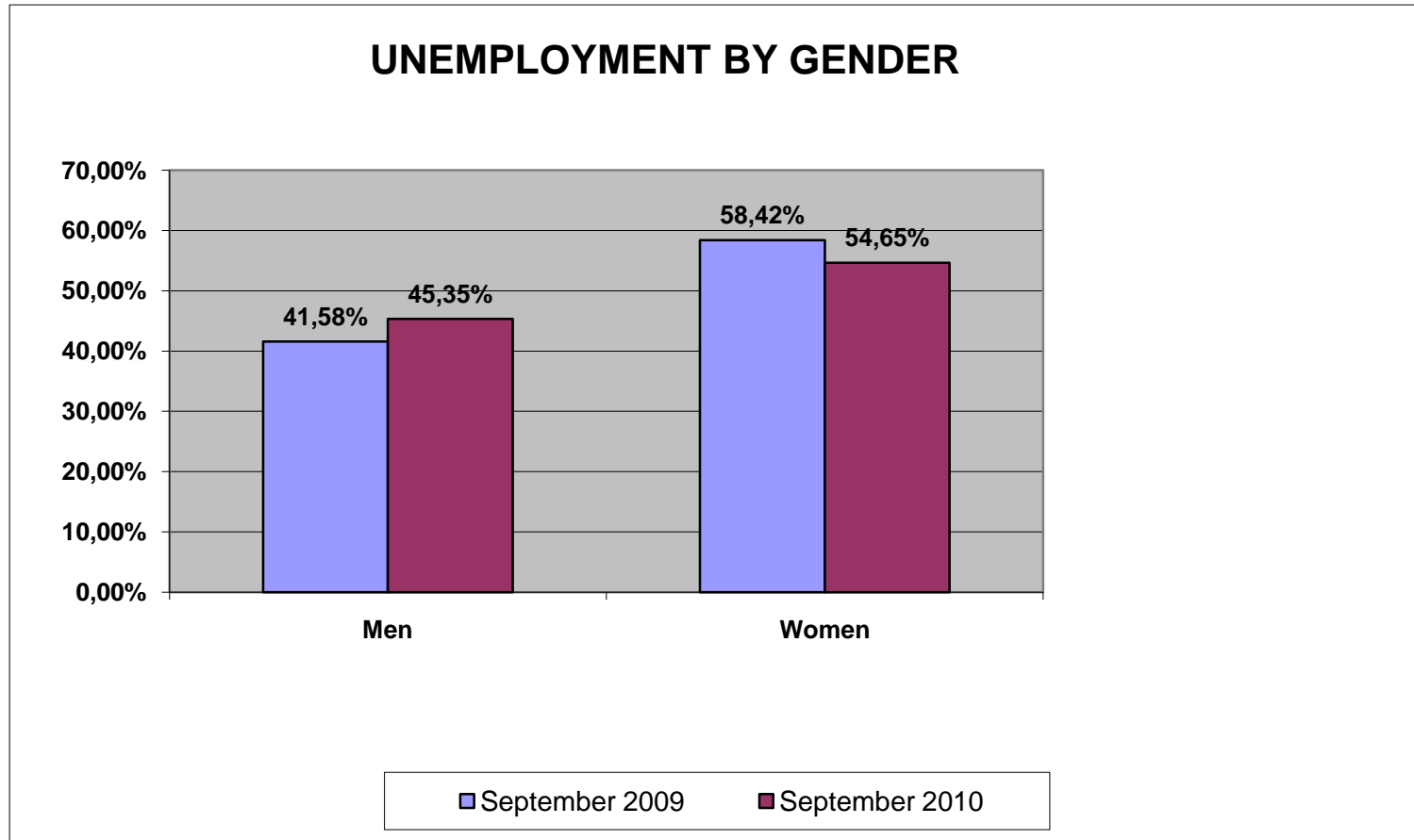


## Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context 3

### UNEMPLOYMENT DURATION



## Some facts and figures relevant to lifelong learning context 4





## Identified barriers and problems

- low level of awareness among individuals/employers about importance of lifelong learning / and low level of participation in lifelong learning programmes
- lack of tools for assessment of competences acquired out of formal system of education
- unemployment rate – economical crises impact – particularly in relation to long term unemployed and vulnerable groups (women)
- adjustment to the requirements of the labour market - educational offer should be more harmonized with labour market / economy needs particularly with regards to the interest of specific counties – local labour markets -
- social partnership is still under development – institutional framework has been established (e.g. Sectoral councils in VET system – representatives of all social partners) but not fully operational yet



## Policy answers

Development and implementation of the **CROQF** (Croatian Qualification Framework) and **National Framework Curriculum** for Preschool, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education

### **CROQF**

- an instrument for coordination and connection of all parts of qualifications system in the Republic of Croatia
- the aim of the Croatian Qualifications Framework is to link together learning outcomes achieved in all educational institutions (primary schools, secondary schools – grammar and VET – higher education institutions, adult education providers, training providers etc.) and enable their referencing within Croatia as well as in the context of international exchange;
- under the implementation of the CROQF a **tool for recognition and validation of competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning will be developed**



## Policy answers 2

### **National Framework Curriculum Preschool, General Compulsory and Secondary School Education:**

- sets out the goals and values of education and training, learning and teaching techniques, educational accomplishments on certain levels of students' development ;
- **planning and programming the educational process according to educational achievements**, e.g. the skills and competencies that a student has to acquire in different fields during his / her primary and secondary school education.
- It gives greater discretion to schools in the preparation of school curricula, a greater autonomy of teachers and pupils, the possibility of introducing new programmes, for instance health programmes, children's rights etc.



## Policy answers 3

Implementation of the **Training company programme** :

- envisaged as adopting and establishing theory knowledge through concrete performance of work usually done in real organization:
- Students learn how to actually start a company, how to manage all business communication and financial transactions, how to present product/service and keep accountant evidence of all changes that occur
- Students learn how economy of Croatia works (as well as international economy) with all required institutions. They develop creativity and professionalism in performing certain tasks, professional interest, communicativeness, entrepreneurial spirit, mutual tolerance and respect for diversity
- around 74% of economy schools in Croatia participate in the Programme



## Policy answers 4

Targeted support to the development of lifelong learning system through EU funds ( **IPA** – Instrument for pre-accession assistance and **ESF** – European Social Fund)

IPA – projects currently under implementation:

### ***'Regional network of local learning institutions'***

- improvement of **key competences** and other competencies of adult learners with aim to enable them to participate more actively in the labour market;
- setting up of a **regional network** through establishing and/or continuation of cooperation between AE institutions and through their cooperation with local partners, NGOs and other relevant partners

### ***'Local partnership for employment'***

- establishment of partnerships between all relevant stakeholders in the regional labour market responsible for the development of comprehensive human resource development policy at the regional level





## Policy answers 5

### Future interventions – European Social Fund

Two of the specific objectives are:

- **raising awareness** on and research carrying out in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning system;
- Strengthening of the provision of Adult Learning, in a complementary way to the support offered to educational system, including the implementation of Distance Learning Methodology;

Special emphasis will be put on different type of **scholarships** targeted to:

- individuals who are far less likely to take part in lifelong learning than others and who are, thus, most vulnerable in a rapidly changing labour market;
- the **poorly literate and low skilled** people;
- one of the area of interventions will particularly address the **ICT skills**



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