

Bojan Cvelfar: Archivist as an occupation in the Republic of Slovenia

International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) under its code 2621 defines the title Archivists and Curators. ISCO-08 was adopted through a resolution of a Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics held in December 2007. This resolution was subsequently endorsed by the Governing Body of the ILO (International Labour Organization) in March 2008. (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/index.htm>)

Occupation "Archivists and Curators" is included under the same code 2621 also in the Slovenian national classification of occupations (Standard Classification of Occupations SKP-08), which was issued by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia with its Regulation on Standard Classification of Occupations 2008 (Official Journal of RS, No. 50/2010).

Article 54, paragraph 3 of the Protection of Documents and Archives and Archival Institutions Act – (Official Journal of RS, No. 30/06, No. 24/14) states:

"Public employees employed by archival institutions to perform archives preservation tasks need to pass archival professional exam no later than a year after they were employed or after they were transferred to a position for which such archival professional exam is a mandatory condition. Should the employee fail to pass such professional exam required for a certain position, his/her employment relationship will terminate a day after the deadline determined in the employment contract. For justifiable reasons such deadline could be extended only once and for a period of three months. Details as to the method and the conditions for taking the professional exam are determined with the regulation issued by the minister responsible for archival institutions".

Professional exam is required for the following positions:

- Archival technician (V-secondary school)
- Archival collaborator (VI-higher education)
- Archivist (VII-university degree)
- Archivist with M.A. (VIII)
- Archivist with Ph.D. (IX)

Directors of archival institutions are also required to pass archival professional exam.

In Slovenia, the institution competent for organizing archival professional exams is the national archives, in our case this is the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia. It also issues written certificates to archivists (university or lower level) and to the rest of the archival staff (such as IT personnel) who successfully pass the exam. Still, we cannot use the term "certified archivist" since all Slovenian public archives employ strictly archivists (particularly those with university degree) who successfully pass such professional exam. In other words, professional exam is a mandatory condition for employment. This practice has been adopted also by a number of private archival institutions, such as the archives of the Roman Catholic Church in Slovenia. In order to get certified, archivist must have a university degree in history or related sciences such as history of art, ethnology, sociology, also acceptable are graduates from other fields of social science (law, political sciences ...). Beginners are expected to undergo one year of practice at archival institution (as a sort of probation period). During that time they need to complete and submit to the exam commission a work of their own. Usually, this is a short inventory of a not so extensive fonds, which must be arranged and described within the employee's first year. The inventory is then evaluated by the exam commission.

Article 89 of the archival act states: "The Minister responsible for archival institution shall prescribe detailed conditions for traineeship, professional examination, the list of successfully passed professional exams and acquiring professional titles by employees of archival institutions" (Protection of Documents and Archives and Archival Institutions Act, Official Journal of RS, No. 30/06, amend. No. 24/14).

Knowledge/Skills that archivists need to acquire in order to pass the exam are prescribed by the regulation on the professional exams in the fields of cultural heritage and archives preservation. Issued by the Minister of Culture (Official Journal of RS, No. 101/2008, amend. 23/2013), the regulation also includes requirements for archival professional exams and the list of exam subjects. However, education of the candidates and the list of literature needed for the exam is the responsibility of the national archival organization.

Such subjects are:

General part

- Constitutional organization
- Organization of the state
- Labour legislation
- Regulations in the field of culture
- Regulations in the field of archives protection
- Professional ethics

Special part

1. Archival science

- Structure and historical development of institutions
- Processing of archives with records management systems and compilation of finding aids
- Types of documents and publishing of archival sources
- Appraisal of documents
- Preservation of archives
- Reading and translation of archival texts
-

2.. Information science in archival institutions

- Information systems
- Management and use of information databases
- Processing of archives and compilation of finding aids
- Basics in the preservation of archives
- Reading and translation of technical texts in English

The Archives of the Republic of Slovenia keeps a record of successfully passed professional exams, which could also be called register of professional archivists.

Since 2013, a Graduate Master's study programme "Archival Science and Records Management" has been organized in Slovenia at a private international university Alma Mater Europaea. The programme takes two years (4 semesters) and includes 120 ECTS credit points.

In order to complete their study students need to pass:

- 8 compulsory courses (79 ECTS)
- 2 courses they can choose (optional) (14 ECTS)

- 1 project assignment (7 ECTS)
- MA thesis (20 ECTS)

Compulsory courses are as follows:

- Theoretical basics of archival science and archival ethics
- Basics of documentology
- State governed by the rule of law and legal protection of archives and documents
- Information organization basics
- Digital archives and preservation of digital records
- Research methods
- History of archival activities

Optional courses (students choose two):

- Access to information, users of information sources and services
- History of Modern age Europe
- Information marketing
- Cartography elements
- Selected chapters in standardization of records management
- Historical development and structure of institutions
- Elements of conservation and restoration of archives and documents
- Appraisal of archives and documents
- Cultural history of Slovenians
- Preservation of archives and documents in state of emergency
- Selected chapters in archival theory and practice.

After successful completion of their studies, students receive the title Master of Archival Science and Records Management, but still need to pass professional exam as determined by the national archival institution procedure before they can be employed as archivists.

And what is the status of archivists within the framework of general arrangement of work positions in Slovenian society? This is, of course, best shown by means of pay scale. Comparison:

Position of employment	Pay grade from (in EUR)	Pay grade to (in EUR)
Archival technician	18	29
Archivist	30	43
Archivist with M.A.	36	45
Archivist with PhD	39	49
Archival Councillor	49	57

An employee may advance within his position with periodic promotions based on the grade assigned by his superior and with professional titles granted by special commission appointed by the minister competent for archival institutions. The commission can grant the following titles: senior archivist, archival adviser and archival councillor.

Archival councillor is a work position for which the highest references need to be met, among other requirements the candidates need to have Ph.D, at least 25 year of archival service, they need to be internationally distinguished etc. It is sufficient to say that with the retirement of some of the best archival experts, there is not a single position of archival councillor currently occupied in Slovenia.

Comparison with other positions of employment (pay grades):

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE 53

DIRECTORS OF REGIONAL ARCHIVES from 45 to 52

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC 65

MINISTER 62

MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENT 55

LIBRARIAN, CURATOR, TEACHER from 30 to 43 (=ARCHIVIST)