

novičke

Winter 2003

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------------------------------|
| Adult education and learning opportunities * 4-10 Lifelong Learning Week – LLW 2003 * Let's live, work, create ... together! * Current Issues in Adult Learning and Motivation | | SIAE EVENTS |
| Presentation of the <i>Programme 10,000</i> * Study visit to the Netherlands and Belgium * First professional conference on e-learning in Slovenia * Lisbon strategy in the area of education and training * Reference levels of European average performance in education and training (benchmarks) | 11-22 | SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE |
| CEDEFOP study visit to Slovenia * International seminar on techniques for analysis of self-evaluation processes * First regional festival for South-Eastern Europe * First learning festival in Spain | 23-29 | INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION |
| School reform in full swing | 30-31 | SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE |



PROGRAMME BASIS OF NOVIČKE

Novičke (The News) is an information bulletin with which we wish to inform individuals and organisations abroad with adult education and learning in Slovenia.

We plan to provide the following types of:

- description and presentation of events and activities in adult education;
- development, research and other programmes and projects;
- information on organisations, their needs, plans and activities;
- information on policy and strategies of adult education;
- the latest news in administration and legislation;
- statistical data;
- information on forthcoming events, workshops, seminars and conferences;
- presentations of new books and articles.

Novičke will provide brief, concise, objective and unbiased information.

Novičke will be published three times a year in English language.

Users will receive Novičke free of charge. This is a policy we intend to continue, provided we are able to cover the costs of publishing from the public funds allocated to adult education.

Novičke is edited and published by the Information Centre at the SIAE.

In charge of the publication are: Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, M. Sc., head of the Information Unit, and Nevenka Kocijančič, editor.

DTP: Solos, inc.

Translation: AMIDAS, inc.

Printed by: Tiskarna Štok.

The publisher's address: Andragoški center Slovenije, Šmartinska 134a, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia. Phone: +386 (0)1 5842 560, fax: + 386 (0)1 5245 881, internet: siae.acs.si/novicke, e-mail: nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si

ISSN 1408-6492 (English edition - printed)

ISSN 1581-3789 (English edition - online)

Edition: 870



Christmas Greetings

The year 2003 is slowly gliding away, and we are all wondering what the coming one is going to bring us. It will doubtless be, in many respects, an exceptionally important milestone. Ahead of us are new challenges that will continue to make life attractive and will generate new, as yet unrealised ideas, that will enrich us.

We are proud of the time we have spent with you, and we hope that our meetings and shared learning will continue in the year ahead.

We wish you many sunny and serene days in 2004, an abundance of small pleasures and pleasant little attentions.

Happy and successful new year!



*Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar, directress SIAE
Lvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, head of Information Unit
on behalf of your friends from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education*



SIAE EVENTS

Adult education review Adult education and learning opportunities

For a number of years, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education has been collecting information on the range of education on offer from various adult education providers, publishing it each year in **Adult Education in Slovenia – Providers and Programmes**. In recent years, this review has been published on the Internet on the SIAE website at <http://www.acs.si/pregled>.

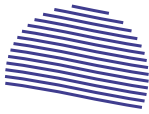
More than 300 providers responded to our invitation this year. Most are private organisations and private schools, secondary schools and adult units at secondary schools, and folk highschoools. Each year, interest in the publication is also shown by numerous societies, museums, galleries, chambers, company education centres etc. The largest number of providers are from central Slovenia (137), followed by Podravje (34) and Gorenjska (31).

This year, education programmes are particularly numerous and diverse, with more than 4,800 adult programmes listed in the Review. You will find programmes leading to formal education (16%) and work-related training and additional training programmes (14%), while the most numerous and diverse are programmes of informal general education for free time (70%). You can choose among foreign language learning, computing courses, various creative workshops, arts and cultural programmes, environmental protection, personal development, communication, health care, education and other contents.

Since we realise that the Review cannot cover the whole range of adult education available, the Review also includes additional sources and information on independent learning centres, knowledge exchanges, guidance centres and information and vocational counselling centres, where you can also find information on learning options to suit your needs.

We hope that, among the wide range of different programmes in the Review, you will find ones that match your needs and desires. We would like to thank all providers for responding to our invitation and for permitting us to publish their data in the Review.

Alenka Mavsar (alenka.mavsar@acs.si), outside consultant



Awakening curiosity and joy in gaining new knowledge!

Lifelong Learning Week – LLW 2003

The Lifelong Learning Week – LLW – is a festival event organised by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and numerous providers all over Slovenia and beyond, through which we attempt to present to people the importance of learning at all stages of life, regardless of circumstances, level of education, employment and social status ... The task of the festival of learning is to bring together providers and users of knowledge, and particularly to foster curiosity among the widest possible circle of people, enabling them in programmes and workshops, cultural events, information meetings or other organised festival events that are generally free of charge to find something that will help them feel the joy of gaining new knowledge. Whenever we opt for education or training, we choose a path to a better life. This applies to everyone at all levels, regardless of the barriers and shortages that the individual or group encounters.

LLW 2003 is now behind us. It is still too early to say whether it was a success, since we have not yet collected all data on the scope, attendance and quality of events, although we can be satisfied by the diversity of content emphasised. This year, the European Year of People with Disabilities, providers paid particular attention to the importance of learning for improving the quality of life for people with special needs. The first estimates suggest that there were at least 2,845 events all over Slovenia. Some 457 providers were involved, including folk high schools, schools, nursery schools, libraries, private education and care organisations, societies, clubs, cultural and commercial institutions and municipalities. This year for the first time the festival of learning also involved Slovenes in Italy (Trieste area), while the border region between Slovenia and Croatia (on both sides of the Kolpa) was already involved in LLW in previous years.

The main ceremony marking the opening of the Lifelong Learning Week 2003, with the presentation of the 2003 awards of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, was held on Friday October 10 in Ljubljana. The Government of RS, the patron of the festival of learning, was represented by state secretary for secondary education and adult education at the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, *Elido Bandelj*, who is also the chairman of the national LLW committee, and *Staša Baloh Plahutnik*, state secretary for employment at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. Festival speaker, respected actress and Unicef ambassador, *Milena Zupančič*, spoke of her personal thoughts on the link between life and learning. The festival mood and harmony of events was further enhanced by the musical group *Tulipan*

Quartet, which performed original arrangements of folk songs and motifs from the treasurehouse of classical music. The main part of the ceremony was once again this year given over to winners of awards from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Five awards were presented (to four individuals and one informal group) for outstanding learning achievements and improving their own knowledge, and another eight were presented (to four individuals, two groups, one society and one institution) for outstanding professional or promotional achievements in enriching the knowledge of others. We published the life stories of award-winners on our website at <http://llw.acs.si/awards/2003/>. The ceremony was followed by a friendly meeting in the premises of the SIAE, which also hosted an exhibition of promotional and informational material of LLW 2003 providers from all over Slovenia. Members of the *Culinary Study Circle of the Postojna Folk High School* provided traditional Slovenian food for our guests.

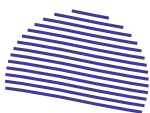
From Monday 13 October to Sunday 19 October 2003, several thousand events were held all over the country. Staff of the Institute for Adult Education were involved in the preparation of some well-received television programmes. Together we also created the *Student Arena education programme*, which was held in Ljubljana during the Lifelong Learning Week from 15 to 17 October 2003. We prepared and ran a “round table” on the theme of *When the alternative becomes a vocation*; its messages were very warmly received in the auditorium. We are genuinely delighted by this breakthrough among the student population!

At the end of the week, on 17 and 18 October, came the main professional event of the Week, the 7th Adult Education Colloquium on the theme of *Current Issues in Adult Learning and Motivation*, while from 15 to 19 October 2003 we also attended the first *Regional Lifelong Festival Skopje 2003*. Reports on both events are given in separate articles.

One achievement of this year’s festival of learning that we must mention is e-promotion with the attractively designed e-postcard (<http://tvu.acs.si/razglednica/>), the broadcasting of video-portraits of SIAE 2003 award winners on private and regional TV channels (we managed to make progress in the preparation of a quality video film which we offered to more than 15 studios) and the successful breakthrough by LLW into the main national media. Throughout the week, Radio Slovenia reported about award winners and educational events across the regions in its morning programme on its first channel, while TV Slovenia dedicated a number of well-received educational programmes to pressing issues of lifelong learning, guidance and motivation of adults. The September

issue of family magazine *Naša Žena*, with the largest circulation in Slovenia, published a special festival supplement in its September issue.

Slavica Borka Kucler (slavica.borka.kucler@acs.si), SIAE



LLW 2003 and the European Year of People with Disabilities – EYPD 2003

Let's live, work, create ... together!

This year, the European Year of People with Disabilities, we paid particular attention in planning the LLW to the life needs and achievements of people with disabilities, patients and other people with special needs for whom various measures in the area of lifelong learning, such as education and training for greater independence, programmes for self-development and spiritual growth, and not least adaptation and accessibility of suitable education programmes and the creation of opportunities for social integration, significantly ease their personal life and their participation in their social environment. The working group preparing the learning festival, LLW 2003, therefore established links with the national EYPD committee operating at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (MLFSA) and with the Office for the Disabled and Chronically Sick at the MLFSA, and prepared a year-long co-operation programme.

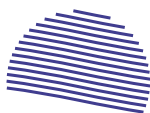
Among the highly diverse contents on offer at the learning festival, at least 40 events were intended for people with disabilities and other people with special needs. Institutions dedicated to people with disabilities, health centres and hospitals, various societies for patients, people with disabilities, volunteers participated in LLW with their own programmes, while a number of municipalities were particularly attentive towards their disabled residents.

Good examples are the most persuasive, and so in the spring we prepared a videocassette with portraits of disabled SIAE award winners who have achieved outstanding success through learning and their unshakable faith in their own abilities. In preparing the cassette, we received a great deal of help from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association of Slovenia, which subtitled the videoportraits of Alma Plivac, Roy Goreya, Marino Kačič and The group for the self-advocating of persons with moderate

and severe impairment in their mental development from Draga at Ig. We sent the cassette to the Office for the Disabled and Chronically Sick, which incorporated the portraits into the Lastovka programme intended for school students. In this way, we wanted to promote awareness among young people of the equality of people with special needs, and to familiarise them with the right to equal opportunities which we must ensure for those that are different.

The videoportraits were presented at the EYPD 2003 Festival on 4 June 2003, where we also had our own stall. At the Festival, we presented LLW 2003, the educational opportunities offered by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and by independent learning centres and counselling centres operating all over Slovenia.

Slavica Borka Kucler (slavica.borka.kucler@acs.si), SIAE



Conference Report

Current Issues in Adult Learning and Motivation

From 17th to 18th October 2003, the 7th Adult Education Colloquium entitled *Current Issues in Adult Learning and Motivation* was organised by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) in Ljubljana. The scientific committee received 42 proposals (26 foreign and 16 domestic) and the conference was attended by 90 participants, mostly teachers, researchers and other practitioners in the education of adults.

The conference's plenary sessions were opened by *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar* (directress of SIAE) who welcomed the participants of the conference and stressed the importance of research on learning motivation for the implementation of lifelong learning. *Dr Jyri Manninen* (Palmenia Research Institute, Finland) made an introduction on the first day of the conference by pointing out the importance of the images of education, and what educational institutions can do to promote educational programmes and motivate potential participants to enroll in education. *Marko Radovan, MA*, (SIAE) stressed the importance of a more holistic approach in examining and facilitating the motivation to learn in the classroom. Analyses of the issues that are emerging from recent research in the area of motivational psychology were also given. Finally, *Dr Sabina Jelenc*

Krašovec (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) explained the shift from teaching to learning and examined the role of the teacher in facilitating adult learning in detail.

Friday's paper presentations were divided into two groups. The first group explored ways of facilitating adult learning. *Dr Milka Atanasova* (University St. Kliment, Bulgaria) shared her views on the cognitive, social and metacognitive aspects of motivation. *Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MA*, (SIAE) and *Kristine Smalcel Pederson* (British Columbia Open University, Canada) gave some explanations of the role of guidance activity in adult education and its impact on the motivation of adults for learning. *Monika Rehl* (University of Regensburg, Germany) examined the value of self-directed learning for enhancing professional learning. The second group of paper presentations dealt with an emerging theme in adult education: technology as a new tool for adult learning. *Mateja Geder* (DOBA, Slovenia) and *Nadja Dobnik* (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) presented a model of distance education used at their respective institutions. *Dr Barry Sponder* (Central Connecticut State University, USA) made some points regarding the removal of the barriers that sometimes hinder adults in using technology for learning. *Dr Guy Arquembourg* (Université Charles de Gaulle, France) showed some practical examples of how new multimedia technology can be used in language education, while *Metka Uršič* (CPZ-International Centre for Knowledge Promotion, Slovenia) gave some descriptions of the development of a new computer learning programme for older adults. The first day of the conference ended with *Marjan Prevodnik's* (The National Institute of Education, Slovenia) interesting workshop on using art to build confidence and motivation.

The first presentation of Saturday's morning session was given by *Dr Peter Jarvis* (University of Surrey, UK) who compared some well-established learning theories and analysed their suitability from an adult learning point of view. The need for a more general, all-embracing learning theory was identified. The second speaker *Dr Linden West* (Canterbury Christ Church University College, UK) emphasised the importance of a biographical approach to research in adult learning and motivation that captures a person as a whole. *Dr Knud Illeris* (Roskilde University, Denmark) drew our attention to a different dimension of adult learning and made a distinction between learning in adulthood and in youth. Concluding Saturday's plenary session, *Dr Ekkehard Nussl von Rein* (German Institute for Adult Education, Germany) shifted the discussion from the characteristics of learning on the individual level to learning on the regional level. He pointed out the importance of regional cohesion in promoting, and facilitating adult learning.

Saturday's paper presentations dealt with empirical reports on adult motivation for learning and the wider aspects of adult learning. In the former category, two papers were

presented that described some aspects of Slovenian teachers' motivation for training. These papers were by *Dr Bogomir Kovač* (Educational Research Institute) and by *Dr Slavica Černoša* (Ministry of Education, Sports and Science; both from Slovenia). *Dr Jane Simmons* (Liverpool Hope University College, UK) gave a general insight in the nature and state-of-the-art of adult learning, while *Dr Simona Sava* (Romanian Institute for Adult Education) and *Maja Mezgec* (Slovene Research Institute, Italy) presented some empirical data on the education of Romanian adults and the Slovenian minority, respectively. In the second group of Saturday's paper presentations, broader contexts of adult learning were examined. Firstly, *Dr Angela Ivančič* (SIAE) presented her views on the close association between learning and active citizenship. *Dr Hans Gruber* (University of Regensburg, Germany) then highlighted some aspects of motivation in the learning of professional musicians, while *Anthony P. Donajgrodzki* (University of Leeds, UK) presented the OPTIMISE project that supports lone parents and carers in their work-related academic learning. The conference was concluded with Dr West's workshop on the biographical approach in the research in adult education.

Marko Radovan, MA (marko.radovan@acs.si), SIAE



SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

Education programme for the acquisition of national vocational qualifications by unemployed persons in the 2003/2004 school year

Presentation of the *Programme 10,000*

The education programme for the unemployed, previously named *Programme 5,000*, is a programme that enables unemployed people to participate in education under publicly certified programmes and in procedures to acquire national vocational qualifications with the objective of increasing their employability. Each school year, the programme is prepared – in co-operation with competent institutions¹ – by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The programme is adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and financed by the two Ministries.

The programme, which has been provided since 1998/1999 and which by the end of February had involved 18,555 unemployed people, is well known in Slovenia. Two significant changes were introduced in school year 2003/2004.

Accelerated involvement in procedures for the acquisition of national vocational qualifications

Under *Programme 10,000*, the unemployed people will be able to participate in regular educational programmes at all levels, including university. Particular attention will be paid to participation in preparatory programmes for the acquisition of national vocational qualifications (certificates) and in assessment and certification procedures for national vocational qualifications for which all necessary procedures have already been or will be completed during the 2003/2004 school year.

Rapid changes in the labour market and in demand for labour are changing demand for specific knowledge and skills of the workforce. The gap between demand for works and

¹ Employment Service of Slovenia, Vocational Education Centre of Slovenia, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Ministry of the Economy, Small Business Chamber and Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

unemployed people registered with the Employment Service of Slovenia is still great. There is also increasing demand for specific knowledge and skills in the workforce for individual posts that are not covered by formal education programmes. Therefore the *Programme 10,000* will in the 2003/2004 school year pay more attention to the acquisition of national vocational qualifications, particularly by older and less employable unemployed people who cannot opt for formal education lasting several years.

Greater participation

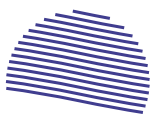
The number of unemployed people without formal professional education has for some time been falling faster than overall unemployment; the proportion of the unemployed without professional education has also been falling. Nevertheless, 44.9% of the unemployed still have no vocational or professional education; despite the fall in recent years, this still represents an excessive share. Therefore one of the priority objectives of the National Programme for the Development of the Labour Market and Employment up to 2006 is to raise the educational level, thereby reducing the active population without completed vocational education to below 25%. New European guidelines for employment policy also set as one of the objectives up to 2010 an increase in the proportion of the population aged 25-64 with at least vocational or professional education to 80% or more (in Slovenia in 2002: 67%).

As the number of people without vocational or professional education is the most worrying among the unemployed, increasing participation in education by the unemployed is the only option for coming close to the goal set. It is thus essential that this year participation in the programme of education for the unemployed increases from 5,000 to 10,000.

Another objective in increasing participation in education or in procedures to acquire national vocational qualifications is to increase employment opportunities for as many unemployed people as possible. Uneducated unemployed people are in a worse position in the labour market, as they are more common than other jobseekers. Their lack of knowledge makes them less attractive to employers, who are only willing to employ them on fixed-term contracts for seasonal work. Quality sustained employment can only be obtained through appropriate education and training. Raising the level of education and qualifications of the unemployed, which is the hope of the *Programme 10,000*, will help alleviate current and prevent future problems in the labour market; it will ensure the conditions for higher quality of life for all, including the most vulnerable groups, and for social justice and cohesion.

In the 2003/2004 school year, we expect 10,062 unemployed people to participate in education and procedures for the acquisition of national vocational qualifications; 2,500 of these are expected to continue their education, while 7,562 unemployed people will participate for the first time, particularly those without vocational or professional education and those who are unable to obtain employment in their field with their vocational and professional education and who have been registered with the Employment Service of Slovenia for more than six months.

Ana Hrvat (ana.hrvat@gov.si), Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs



MECE Project

Study visit to the Netherlands and Belgium

The purpose of the *Modernisation challenges in vocational and professional education and training in European Union candidate countries and Member States* study visit (14-20 October 2003) was for members of the Councils of Experts for Vocational and Professional Education and for Adult Education to learn in detail about the Dutch system of vocational education and training for young people and adults, the system of lifelong learning and employment before and after full membership¹.

In The Hague, we initially learned about the Dutch education system and the National Advisory committee on Vocational Education and Labour Market (ACOA), a partnership body responsible on the national level for the qualifications structure and for achieving the objectives set and the suitability of the system. Over the following days, we learnt about various associations in the field of vocational and adult education. They presented the integration of elements of general and vocational education into the curricula of vocational and adult education and the strategy and role of individual participants in the system. We visited Mondriaan College, the regional schools centre (<http://www.hotelschool-netherlands.com/>), which provides training for the hospitality, tourism and personal-services industries, we viewed the exemplarily equipped school and its classrooms for practical lessons, and then visited the Kurhaus resort, the venue for practical education. We also met representatives of The Dutch

¹ Information on this area is also available online at: <http://www.minocw.nl/english/index.html>, <http://www.bveraad.nl/>, <http://www.cfi.nl/>, <http://www.onderwijsraad.nl/>, <http://www.minez.nl/>.

Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and representatives of the Centre for the Innovation of Education and Training in the Netherlands (<http://www.cinop.nl/>), which is comparable to our public institutions established by the government (Vocational Education Centre of RS, SIAE).

In Brussels on the last two days, we met advisors for the field of education within the European Union and familiarised ourselves with the priority areas they support. At the end, we also visited the Slovenian Mission in EU, where the ambassador and his colleagues presented the work and role of the Mission of Republic Slovenia, policy in the field of education and employment, and the expected rights and responsibilities of acceding countries.

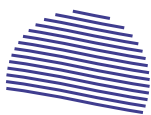
Participants expressed our conclusions, findings and suggestions during evaluation of the programme of the study visit to The Hague. I myself will mention only a few:

- For all education and qualifications, the Dutch plan what individual learners will be able to build on, and how they will learn and expand their knowledge. Social partners co-operate closely with educational institutions, and together they plan the contents of education, since both possibilities – what young people want and what the labour market needs – must prepare people to be able to return to the educational process (lifelong learning).
- Programmes for adults leading to publicly certified education do not represent a problem in the Dutch education system. All adult participants are included in education together with young people. Fewer problems thus arise in returning to education, and at the same time young people in the education system together with adults can receive non-formal education – gaining various life experiences and learning tolerance.
- Adults represent some one-third of all participants in vocational education. Most are less than 35 years old. When the Dutch talk about adult education, they mean general adult education. The age structure of these participants, representing as much as a quarter of all people in education, is almost evenly distributed from 17 to 65 years of age.
- Through their strategy of incentives and reliefs (e.g. tax policy), the Dutch support lifelong learning. Responsibility for cofinancing is shared by the government, municipalities and education participants themselves. One consequence of the system of various initiatives and benefits is greater adult participation in the education process and improvements in the educational structure of the population. The level of funding allocated to formal adult education is almost equal to funding for non-formal adult education.
- The international literacy research project carried out a number of years ago ranked Slovenia at the bottom of the table of participating countries. If we want to improve

our results and significantly improve the educational structure of the population in our country, as we wrote in the proposed Adult Education Master Plan, we should pay more attention to general adult education. This process will last a long time if the system of formal education is dominated by young people. The Dutch experience could help us in these efforts. We should probably consider whether or not younger adults (unemployed and employed) should be included in regular classes of young people in professional and vocational education, thereby improving the educational level of the active population more quickly.

The study visit meant an exchange of information and the acquisition of new behaviour in the education and training system. Our discussions often reached the conclusion that in Slovenia certain matters are better arranged and better implemented in school practice, but nevertheless there would be nothing wrong in wanting to learn from each other.

Nevenka Črnigoj (nevenka.crnigoj@guest.arnes.si), Postojna



e-Learning: to experience and implement First professional conference on e-learning in Slovenia

The first professional conference in Slovenia dedicated to pedagogical and organisational aspects of e-learning was organised in Maribor on 3 and 4 November by DOBA European Business and Education Centre of Maribor. The interesting topic attracted 85 participants – representatives of ministries, educational and research institutions, companies and students.

The basic **purpose of the conference** was to familiarise the Slovenian public with trends and experience in the field of e-learning, to promote the exchange of experience among educational institutions in this field, and thus to contribute to the wider introduction of e-learning in Slovenia.

The conference was opened by Doba directress *Jasna Dominko Baloh*. Participants were addressed by the Mayor of Maribor, *Boris Sovič*, the minister of information society, *Dr Pavel Gantar*, and state secretary for further and higher education at the Ministry

of Education, Science and Sport, *Dr Lučka Lorber*. The key note speech was given by *Dr Gilly Salmon*, a renowned expert in e-learning from the Open University Business School in the UK, who presented experience and opportunities of various approaches to the introduction of e-learning.

Afterwards, renowned Slovenian e-learning experts presented their views on new teaching approaches in e-learning, the design of effective e-learning models, technical and technological support for this form of education and training, and the introduction of e-learning in companies, and drew attention to examples of good practice. One interesting feature of the professional conference was a live presentation of a paper via videoconferencing.

The conference was also accompanied by a series of **professional events**:

- Workshops: one, entitled *E-moderating: the key to successful online learning*, was run by our guest from the UK, *Dr Gilly Salmon*, and was intended for all those wishing to learn about effective methods and techniques of teaching in a virtual learning environment; the other, entitled *Designing virtual learning environments with the courseware WebCT*, run by professional staff of Doba, was intended for all those wishing to familiarise themselves with the possibilities and principles of designing online education processes.
- During breaks, participants were able to view presentations of solutions and programmes developed for e-learning: Small Business Development Centre presented its entrepreneurial e-learning programmes, Laboratory for Telecommunications of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering presented its *Echo.sola* project, while Doba presented the *vocational college's information-educational portal* and its online business English courses for companies.
- Participants were able to exchange opinions, experience and views with experts during round table debates at lunchtime: one was given over to discussion of the role of didactic and informatics specialists in the development and introduction of e-learning, another to the possibilities for cofinancing the development of e-learning from the Structural Funds of the European Union.

At the conference, the first generation of online students at Doba, Vocational College in Maribor was awarded diplomas.

The conference ended with a round table. During the round table, participants set out among other things the need for ongoing co-operation and links among experts in the

field of e-learning and for linking people and resources in an e-learning network, as well as the need for the development of a central e-learning portal.

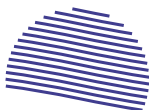
A book of papers was also published.

What were the main conclusions of the conference?

Experts were agreed that there is in Slovenia both interest in and potential for the development and introduction of e-learning. This would require an interdisciplinary approach that takes account of pedagogical-didactic, organisational, technological and economic aspects of its development. One important foundation for further development of e-learning in Slovenia is the design of a national strategy in the field of e-learning and the formation of a permanent system of state funding for this field.

You can find out more about the conference on the Internet at: <http://www.doba.si/konferenca/>, where you will also find Power Point presentations and photos of highlights of the conference.

Mateja Geder (mateja.geder@doba.si), DOBA Maribor



Common European goals Lisbon strategy in the area of education and training

At its meeting in Lisbon in March 2000, the European Council (which consists of heads of state or government of EU member states) acknowledged that the European Union faces exceptional changes brought about by globalisation and the knowledge-based economy, and set the strategic goal for 2010: *“to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”*. These changes forced fundamental changes to the European economy while at the same time contributing to the formation of programmes to modernise social welfare and education systems. The European Council called on the Education Council (a body consisting of education ministers of EU countries) and the European Commission to provide a general assessment of specific objectives of education systems, focussing on common

difficulties and respecting national diversity. As a result of these guidelines, the European Commission first prepared a *draft report* on the future concrete objectives of education and training systems, which was then subject to negotiations among member states. The Council adopted the final report and submitted it for debate to the Stockholm European Council in March 2002. The final report defined three long-term strategic objectives:

- Improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union;
- Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems;
- Opening up education and training systems to the wider world.

The *Detailed work programme on future objectives education and training systems* was adopted in February 2002. This set out the key issues that must be dealt with to achieve the three strategic goals mentioned (which were subdivided into 13 objectives and 42 key issues). The work programme covers various segments and levels of education and training ranging from basic skills to vocational and higher education, with particular attention paid to the principle of lifelong learning and the general promotion of the philosophy contained therein.

Participating countries are most occupied with (and responsible for) achieving the common objectives. To this end, a new approach to political co-ordination which applies to fields such as education and training was defined, the so-called “open method of co-ordination”. The purpose of this method is through the exchange of good practice and a group of uniform indicators and benchmarks to achieve mutual comparison and learning.

Since the late 1990s Slovenia has been very successfully participating in the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth programmes, as well as a broad range of EU research activities. Education ministers of EU member states and candidate countries have in past years met regularly at non-formal – and since May 2003 also formal – meetings. Moreover, all candidate countries are involved in the Bologna process (tertiary education), since the end of 2002 the Brugge process (vocational education and training), and many other actions and initiatives of the European Union (*eSchola*, *Spring day* etc.). It was therefore completely understandable that member states agreed at the Stockholm meeting of the European Council that candidate countries (and EFTA countries) should be included in the long-term objectives and procedures of the whole Lisbon strategy and the area of education and training.

In the autumn of 2002, the European Commission called on Slovenia to nominate national experts to participate in the “open method of co-ordination” in eight working

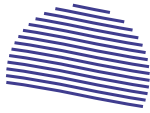
groups and the group for indicators and benchmarks. Their task is to promote work and to ensure that effective progress is made within the framework of the 13 common European objectives in the area of education and training by 2010. Slovenian representatives have been actively participating in meetings of the working groups in Brussels since November 2002.

The Education Council and the European Commission will prepare on the basis of the contributions of the working groups an interim report on the implementation of the Work programme, and will present it to the European Spring Council in 2004. They will discuss the whole process, review activities and the first results achieved. The first draft interim report was discussed by education ministers in Brussels on 25 November 2003.

Although education and training have a decisive role in the Lisbon process, they transcend the role of a tool and means for greater employability, since they also bear a wider share of responsibility, both for citizens and for society as a whole. In addition to training Europeans for their career paths, they contribute to personal development, which enables better life and active citizenship in democratic societies that respect cultural and linguistic diversity. Equally, education and training have an important role in strengthening social cohesion, since they prevent discrimination, exclusion, racism and xenophobia, which promote fundamental values common to all European societies, such as tolerance and respect for human rights. The setting up of a common and open European education and training area will at a time of knowledge and in a world of globalisation be of key importance for the future of Europe and its citizens.

We were directly and in detail acquainted with the “future objectives process” at the conference *Slovenia and common European objectives in the area of education and training*, which was organised on 8 October 2003 in Ljubljana by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Centre for Mobility and European Programmes of Education and Training – CMEPIUS (former Service for EU Programmes).

Tanja Grželj (tanja.grzelj@gov.si), Ministry of Education, Science and Sport



Common European objectives in education and training

Reference levels of European average performance in education and training (benchmarks)

Lifelong learning has become an indispensable constituent element of the future society, defined by the Lisbon Summit (2000) as the '*knowledge-based society*' and by the Slovenian government as '*Slovenia, the learning country*' (1997). Following the Conclusions of the Heads of States in Lisbon, a series of strategic documents has been endorsed with the aim to implement the strategy of 'lifelong learning for all' and thus alleviate the threat of exclusion that individuals and countries will have to face on their way to 'the most competitive and dynamic, knowledge-based economy in the world...'. This time however, words have been followed by action.

An important shift from words to deeds has been accomplished by the adoption (European Council, May 2003) of the five reference levels (benchmarks) regarding the attainment of European average performance in education and training. Each country should contribute to these averages in accordance with its possibilities, and mutual learning via examples of good practice should be a side effect of this common process. At first, reference levels applied to 15 member states only; later on an analysis of the impacts of 10 new members joining the EU showed that in the case of four benchmarks there were no significant differences between members and accession states. However, the EU enlargement will affect the ambitiousness of objectives that have been set.

With the **first benchmark** the Commission would like to ensure a significant fall of the rate of **early school leavers** (age group 18-24); reaching **max 10% in 2010**. At present, the European average is 18.8% (data source Eurostat, Labor force survey (LFS) 2002; provisional data); the accession states have a significantly lower average of 8.4%. Highest rates are observed in Portugal (45.5%), followed by Spain (29%) and Italy (24.3%); among accession states, Latvia has the highest share (19.5%). According to the LFS 2002, in **Slovenia** the share of early school leavers amounts to **4.8% only** (3.3% female, 6.2% male).

The **second benchmark** addresses the issue of gender imbalance among **graduates in mathematics, science and technology** and suggests for 2010 the increase of the number of graduates in MST by **15 %**. According to Eurostat data (UOE survey, 2000), the absolute number of graduates in the 15 member states was 568,000, and in the accession states 81,000; the common objective being **746,000 graduates in 2010**. UOE

data for Slovenia show a 22.5% share of MST graduates at ISCED levels 5A, 5B in 6 (10.5% female, 37.9% male).

The **third benchmark** refers to the share of 22-year olds with **completed (at least) upper secondary education**; the reference level until 2010 was set for **'at least 85%'**. Provisional LFS 2002 data show that the EU 15 average is 75.4%, whereas the accession states have already reached this benchmark (average performance 90.1%). **Slovenia** with its **88.1%** share of 22-year olds with completed at least ISCED level 3 is ranking high, however, the figure for the age group 25-64 years differs significantly – according to 2000 data it is 75.4%. It is also worth mentioning that ISCED level 3 encompasses secondary education which does not ensure the transfer to higher levels of education meaning that high ranking in educational achievement does not necessarily mean that other indicators (literacy!) are high as well. Having this in mind, in the Slovenian Adult Education Master Plan (1998, updated in 2003), the four-year secondary education has been proposed to be the minimum educational standard for the majority of the population.

The **forth benchmark** refers to the share of **15-year olds with low performance in reading literacy**; this share should **decrease until 2010 for at least 20%** in comparison with the 2000 rate. Data source for this benchmark is the OECD's PISA 2000 survey in which Slovenia did not take part. At this point we would like to call attention to adult literacy achievements (OECD surveys – IALS, SIALS and ALL), which have not been included in the list of crucial EU indicators. In Slovenia¹, adults achieved much lower performance (229.7 points) compared to the EU 10 average² (272.3). The concern for adult literacy is thus an important theme which deserves utmost attention. In Expert foundations for the Adult Education Master Plan, several measures have been defined calling for considerable funding. Unfortunately, adult literacy and adult education in Slovenia are not really among the priorities of the national educational policy therefore funds allocated to this field do not suffice for a considerable improvement of the situation.

According to the **fifth benchmark**, until **2010 the average share of participation in lifelong learning (age group 25-64) should be at least 12.5%**. Following the EU enlargement, this reference level will be less ambitious since according to LFS 2002 data, the EU 15 average amounts to 8.5%, whereas the average of the accession states currently amounts to 5.0%. Best ranking EU states have very high participation rates – Great Britain (22.9%), Finland (18.9%) and Sweden/Denmark (18.4%); Slovenia with 8.8% ranks second among accession states, following Slovakia (9.0%). In addition, the

¹ Adult literacy in Slovenia - IALS, 1998, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

² Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Portugal, France.

share of people with less than secondary education (ISCED levels 0-2) participating in lifelong learning is very low (1.9%).

Consequently, Slovenia will have to take thorough measures concerning its adult education policy in order to be in line with the process of achieving common European objectives. 'Learning for all' should be the leading strategy in this regard, however, benchmarks as well as common future objectives mainly foster measures for improving attainments and performance of the young population. The improvement of educational possibilities for adults and a balanced allocation of funding for educating the youth and adults seem to be some of the imperatives in order to decrease the share of population which due to low educational attainments and low literacy skills are of little interest to employers as well as providers of educational programs.

Olga Drofenik (olga.drofenik@guest.arnes.si), outside consultant
Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc (zvonka.pangerc@acs.si), SIAE



INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Education for the unemployed

CEDEFOP study visit to Slovenia

Under the aegis of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs organised a study visit from 29 September to 1 October 2003 entitled *Education for the Unemployed*. Experts from various institutions from the United Kingdom, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, France and Finland learned about the system of adult education in Slovenia, particularly for unemployed people. They visited the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and saw a number of examples of good practice:

- Novo Mesto School Centre – example of co-operation between schools and employers;
- TIN Institute, one of the providers of Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA) – example of motivating young dropouts to return to education or the labour market;
- CIPS – Vocational Information and Counselling Centre in Ljubljana – example of a range of different information in the area of the labour market and education.

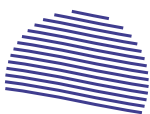
The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, in conjunction with the Vocational Education Centre of RS and the Social Chamber of Slovenia, presented the system of assessment and certification of national vocational qualifications, the accelerated introduction of which in Slovenia will represent a major shift in adult education. Here, foreign experts emphasised the need to pay particular attention to maintaining quality.

During the visit, participants gained the impression that, as an essential social partner, trade unions were insufficiently active in the area of adult education.

The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Employment Service of Slovenia, presented one of the first measures to be cofinanced from the European Social Fund, Programme 10,000. This programme of education for the unemployed was viewed positively by foreign experts. They were also interested in non-formal forms of adult education – *Project*

Learning for Young Adults (PLYA) and study circles – that have been developed at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

Ana Hrvat (ana.hrvat@gov.si), Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs



Development of quality management in adult education

International seminar on techniques for analysis of self-evaluation processes

Within the framework of the *Grundtvig 1 – Development of quality management in adult education* international project, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education prepared a seminar from 5 to 9 October on the theme of *Techniques for analysis of self-evaluation processes*. In addition to Slovenia, the project involves Finland, Spain, Germany and Poland. We were also joined at this meeting by representatives of Switzerland and Hungary.

The basic purpose of the project is for partner countries, with the aid of analysis and comparison of various concepts and models of quality used in participating countries, to exchange knowledge and experience. The basic objective of such activities is to expand the international network of educational organisations involved in adult education and the development of comparable international models for quality management. Participants in the Grundtvig 1 project and representatives of the domestic network of adult education organisations involved in the *Offering Quality Education to Adults* (OQEA) project had the opportunity to exchange experience of the introduction of a quality system in adult education.

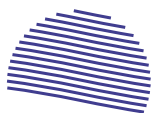
The first day of the seminar was given over to presentations of quality-management models used by individual partner organisations and to discussion of them. Over the next two days, we were joined by representatives of educational organisations introducing the OQEA model in Slovenia and by other experts involved in the field of quality in education.

A full-day workshop was run by the director of the Centre for Integral Excellence at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom, *Mike Pupius*, who first gave an interesting presentation on the EFQM model of excellence.

The next day was opened by the directress of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar*, who presented the activities of the SIAE. *Dr Zdenko Medveš* contributed valuable information on the launch, development and purpose of the *Assessment and assurance of quality in education – Modro oko* project. *Sonja Klemenčič* from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education presented the OQEA model in full; this was followed by *Nada Klučar* and *Silva Pralica* from the Ljubljana Secondary Trade School and *Petra Rozman* and *Tanja Avman* of the Škofja Loka Folk High School, who summarised the specific experience of the introduction of the model in their own educational organisation. A student at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, *Milena Zorić*, presented the results of the first analysis of self-evaluation processes in the OQEA model and the effects of the model on the educational organisation. Our guests from partner countries, *Edward Maliszewski* and *Dr Juha Vaso*, presented the Polish and Finnish experience of self-evaluation in adult education.

The last two days of the seminar were again given over to partners in the Grundtvig 1 project. Once we had exchanged first impressions of the various approaches to and models of quality presented during the seminar, we agreed on the continuation of work in the project. We reached a common conclusion that the seminar had made a major contribution to achieving one of the key objectives of the project – expansion of the international network of educational organisations engaged in adult education, and to the exchange of experience among various countries and the various models of quality that they use.

Polona Kelava (polona.kelava@acs.si), SIAE



Central event in Skopje, Macedonia

First regional festival for South-Eastern Europe

The first regional festival for South-Eastern Europe is the final result of three-year endeavours to foster promotional campaigns for adult education and lifelong learning in the region. The central event took place in the Macedonian capital Skopje from October 16 – 19. It was organised by IIZ/DVV Bonn, IIZ/DVV Office in Tirana, and IIZ/DVV Office in Skopje in co-operation with other partners of the EBIS¹ (Adult Education in South-

¹ Project partners: Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia.

Eastern Europe) project. Slovenia was represented by *Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik*, MSc (national co-ordinator of LLW and EBIS), *Slavica Borka Kucler* (co-ordinator of SIAE events within LLW in head of promotion activities), *Jasmina Mirčeva*, MA (conference participant), *Metka Rečnik* (former EBIS co-ordinator), and *Barbara Grahek* (representative of the national TV). The manifestation took place at four levels: professional, political, level of AE providers and level of award winners and examples of good practice.

Getting together at expert level

The conference ‘Lifelong learning, adult education and employability’ (October 16 - 17) featured distinguished guest speakers such as *Monika Mott*, MA (Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe), *Evelyn Viertel* (European Training Foundation), *Dr Ritta Suessmuth* (president of DVV, Germany), and *Dr David Fretwell* (World Bank). Following the plenary session, six workshops were taking place. *Jasmina Mirčeva*, MA, participated in the workshop ‘*From theory to practice: How to transfer results of innovative pilot projects into regular practice of educational and further training*’. She introduced the *Programme 5,000: increasing employability by implementing the strategy of lifelong learning*; her presentation was followed by lively discussion on how to motivate unemployed people, results of the ‘Programme 5,000’ project and evaluation methods of this kind of projects in general. *Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik*, MSc, took part in the workshop ‘*Mobilising for lifelong learning: the contribution of learning festivals to larger integration and participation in the European learning society*’. The introductory paper on the development and meaning of learning festivals was presented by *Bettina Bochynek* (Unesco institute for education in Hamburg), whereas additional presentations were given by *Dr Maria Todorova* (IIZ/DVV Office in Bucarest) as well as by representatives from Albania, Serbia and Slovenia. The Slovenian presentation was focused on the functioning of the network of LLW co-ordinators and the financing and evaluation of the festival. *Sebastian Welter* (IIZ/DVV Bonn), called attention to the LLW – Grundtvig 1 project and to the fact that learning festivals should contribute to transnational and intercultural co-operation and understanding.

Getting together at political level

Important participants to the first regional learning festival for South-Eastern Europe were deputy ministers and other representatives of competent ministries from eight countries. Slovenia was represented by its ambassador in Macedonia, *Mr Marjan Šiftar*. The meeting was opened by the Macedonian president, *Mr Boris Trajkovski*, and there

was a roundtable organised for representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovenia. Participants presented the views of individual ministries regarding the implementation of adult education and lifelong learning in their countries, and signed a joint declaration and action plan concerning future development of lifelong learning in the region.

Getting together at the level of providers of and participants in adult education

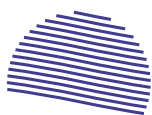
At the adult education fair, organised between October 17 - 18, about 30 - 40 exhibitors, half of them from Macedonia, the other half from EBIS countries, took part. The Slovenian delegation's stall provided promotional material of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, the Lifelong Learning Week, the LLW – Grundtvig 1 project and other SIAE projects, the catalogue of SIAE training programmes and the bulletin *Novičke* and LLW-*Novičke*. Promotional material of Slovenian providers of LLW events as well as Slovenian tourist information was presented to visitors of SIAE's stand.

Presentation of exceptional individuals, groups, projects, organizations

At the fair, special attention was paid to successful individuals from Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia and Montenegro, whereas outstanding projects were presented by Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia. SIAE prepared a videopresentation featuring three examples of good practice with regard to intercultural and cross-border co-operation, respect for differences and employability. On behalf of the award winners, *Slavica Borka Kucler* briefly described their activities.

The festival was followed by a short evaluation by EBIS national co-ordinators; we all expressed recognition to the organisers and shared the opinion that the event had importantly contributed to the political and professional breakthrough of the EBIS project and its future activities. Without doubt, it also confirmed the importance and potential value of learning festivals – in the national, regional and even international context.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc (zvonka.pangerc@acs.si), SIAE



Results of co-operation in the LLW - Grundtvig 1 project

First learning festival in Spain

The first learning festival in Spain is one of the central achievements of the collaboration of partners from five European countries: Bulgaria, Germany, Romania, Spain and Slovenia (the latter in the role of project co-ordinator) in the *Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the LLW Movement*¹ project. The festival was organised jointly by the Spanish project partners – FEUP (Spanish federation of popular universities) in CREA (University of Barcelona, Centre for Social and Educational Research). In addition to events dedicated to Spanish learners, adult education providers and other public², there were also activities which enabled project partners to meet with participants and organisers of the festival. These meetings were genuine learning lessons which certainly deepened our commitment to the lifelong learning movement.

At the **national ceremony** of the first Spanish festival of lifelong learning and adult education (Madrid, November 21), *Olga Drofenik*, project co-ordinator, was among the key speakers. She briefly presented the outcomes of the joint LLW – Grundtvig 1 project and the role it had played in establishing the festival in Spain; she expressed her appreciation of all partners in the project, and best wishes for the further successful implementation of the 'learning for all' strategy. Other key speakers were *Manuel Perez Castell*, president of FEUP; *Manuel Corredoira Lopez*, assistant director of vocational training at the Ministry of education, culture and sport; *Florentino Sanz*, director of the postgraduate adult education course at the hosting institution UNED; *Sue Duffen*, NIACE, Great Britain, senior promotions officer; *Janos Toth*, president of EAEA; *Ana Lebron Ruiz*, president of CONFAPEA – Confederation of federations and associations in adult learning and democratic culture of adults; *Bettina Bochynek*, co-ordinator of learning festivals at the Unesco institute for education in Hamburg. Four successful learners shared their outstanding life stories with the audience. At the round table *Lifelong learning and adult education in Spain and other European countries*, presentations were given by *Janos Toth*, *Florentino Sanz*, *Bettina Bochynek*, *Sue Duffen* and *Sturla Bjerkaker*, director of the Norwegian Association of Adult Learning, as well as by co-ordinators of learning festivals in partner countries: *Maria Todorova* (Bulgaria), *Sabrina Boscolo Lips* (Germany), *Mariana Matache* (Romania) and *Zvonka Pangerc*

¹ Briefly, 'LLW – Grundtvig 1' project.

² The festival was organised at the local level (November 7), regional (November 15) and national level (November 21 and 22); in addition, on December 3 in Madrid Ana Araujo Freire will give the presentation 'Adult education in Brasil today. The legacy of Paulo Freire'.

Pahernik, MSc, (Slovenia). At the exhibition, promotion and information material was presented, such as various learning festival posters, leaflets, web sites and videos.

At the **third literary circles congress CONFAPEA** on November 22 in Madrid, project partners were involved in the plenary session but they also took part in live literary circles to have a taste of the atmosphere at such gatherings. Through this experience we gained insight into their work and the meaning they have for people who – through reading the classics such as Don Quihot – get empowered for speaking publicly and expressing their views openly. The event inspired us to introduce similar forms of discussion groups in our own countries.

The three-day LLW – Grundtvig 1 **project meeting** (Barcelona, November 24 - 26) was part of the Spanish festival as well. Attention was paid to the outcomes achieved so far and the ones in process; an action plan covering the period December 2003 – May 2004 was set up. The project results – national report on the lifelong learning state-of-art and needs' analysis, manual for LLW/LF co-ordination, corporate image, training of co-ordinators, joint promotional material (poster and leaflet), national LLW/LF models and national media promotion plans - have been used in the process of implementing national festivals and strengthening the profile of adult education in our countries. Some activities will be still ongoing (updating of web site - <http://www.llw5.org>, E-bulletin, project evaluation, dissemination, project reports), and others are in their developmental stage (internet based computer application for monitoring of festivals – registration, calendar of events, evaluation, as well as LLW/LF reports and analyses). The silent partner, *Ruth Jermann* from SVEB, Switzerland, took part in the meeting for the first time and importantly contributed to the efficiency of our discussions.

The closing event was the **workshop on the democratic movement in adult education** (Barcelona, November 27). Spanish representatives of FACEPA (Federation of cultural and adult education associations; see <http://www.facepa.org>) and CONFAPEA presented the history of the movement which is based exclusively on participants. The Participants' Bill of Rights and the Ethical code for a democratic adult education are the formal basis of the movement which is being supported by the Network for democratic adult education (REDA) and the group of university professors 'Group 90'. The presentation of an example of good practice - the School for adults at la Verneda-Sant Marti, completely run by participants, rounded up our exceedingly interesting and intensive visit to Spain.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc (zvonka.pangerc@acs.si), SIAE
Olga Drogenik (olga.drogenik@guest.arnes.si), outside consultant



SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKI

Primary education in Slovenia

School reform in full swing

All Slovenian primary schools transformed from eight- to nine-year programmes as of this school year. Until now, the mandatory school age was seven, while now children will have to go to school a year earlier. Compulsory schooling for six-year olds is nothing new though; with the introduction of the school reform of Empress Maria Theresa in 1774, children had to go to school at the age of six. The present reform has introduced several changes, among them the introduction of lessons at three levels of difficulty.

Not all first grade pupils have been enrolled in the nine-year programme. While 17,815 six-year olds entered first grade of primary school this year, there are still an additional 8,250 seven-year olds who entered the primary school under the “old” system. The number of pupils enrolled in the eight-year programme will each year decrease. The old programme will be phased out by the 2008/09 school year, when all primary schools will have switched to the nine-year programme. That school year the generation of seven-year-old first graders will skip the sixth grade to the seventh and thus join their peers on the nine-year programme.

The curricula for all subjects in the nine-year programme have been reformed and the Ministry of Education promises that pupils will be more active in the new programme. The reforms require more repetition and reinforcement of the subject matter during lessons, which means less homework. The programme is divided into triennia, each of which concludes with a national examination of basic knowledge. National examinations at the end of the first and second triennium are voluntary, while the final examination is obligatory. Combined with teachers’ marks, the final examination will establish whether the pupils have acquired the knowledge needed to successfully conclude the nine-year primary school programme. A pupil’s success in the national examination will be an important factor in the decision whether the pupil will be able to enrol in the secondary school of their choice.

In the first three years of primary school, activities are conducted at a single level and the length of the lesson depends on the needs of the children. During lessons, two teachers

are present in the classroom; one of them runs the class for the first three years. Marks are descriptive and the parents will receive them on special forms listing the objectives their children have to attain in individual subjects.

The fourth grade is when pupils begin to learn English and the number of lessons and subjects starts gradually increasing. The teachers will assess their pupils' knowledge by means of descriptive and numerical marks, however using only symbols at the end of the year. In at least one major subject, lessons will be organized at a basic level with all pupils together, as well as others taught at three different levels of proficiency. The differentiation of pupils by skill levels means that lessons are conducted in groups of pupils sharing similar knowledge and abilities. Lessons are therefore tailored more to the needs of individuals rather than using the same pattern for everyone.

Slovenian, mathematics and English lessons in the last two grades (8th and 9th) will no longer be conducted at one basic level, but only at three levels, while pupils will be marked by symbols alone. They will be able to choose among optional subjects divided into two groups: social sciences and the humanities on the one hand, and natural and technical sciences on the other. Every school has to offer at least three subjects from each group of choices. Pupils select three optional subjects each year, but they cannot choose more than two from the same group.

Erika Rustja, STA (<http://slonews.sta.si/search.php?srchid=451463953&id=1232>)

God's blessing on all nations,
 Who long and work for a bright day,
 When o'er earth's habitations
 No war, no strife shall hold its sway;
 Who long to see
 That all men free
 No more shall foes, but neighbours be.

F. Prešeren: The Toast
 Slovenian national anthem



AREA (sq km): 20.266 • POPULATION: 1,990,600 • POPULATION GROWTH (30): -0.3
 • DENSITY (inhabs. / sq km): 98.3 • POPULATION OF LJUBLJANA (capitol): 330,000



Andragoški center Republike Slovenije
 Slovenian Institute for Adult Education