

novičke

Winter 2005

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Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres * 10th anniversary of the biggest centre for self-directed learning in Slovenia

Encouragement for lifelong learning * Four tools for introducing and promoting literacy programmes on the local level * Meeting of the International Adult Learners Forum in the UK and meeting of the project group in Iceland * International workshop in Sarajevo * Recommendations for applying the method of benchmarking * Study visit to Finland * Adult Education, Work and Achieving the Lisbon Goals - Highlights of the international conference * International Adult Learners Week 2005

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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.

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Christmas Greetings

*Dear readers of Novičke,
friends of the learning culture!*

*The time calling for good wishes is drawing nearer and nearer.
Greetings and kind wishes belong to the culture of which
our poet Simon Gregorčič said:*

*“The only culture I count true concerns the will,
the heart and the head – all three of them!”*

*And may this be accompanied by our New Year’s wish:
to be able to achieve and retain this entirety in ourselves,
to be able to cohabitate in peace and in pleasure facing
the challenges of learning, creating, getting to know ourselves
and the world we are co-responsible for.*

Therefore all the best in fulfilling these endeavours,

*Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar,
Directress of SIAE and colleagues*



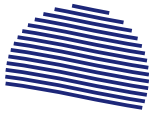
SIAE EVENTS

Internet overview of adult education **Adult education in Slovenia – providers and programmes 2005/2006**

In October, the website of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) posted the annual Overview of Adult Education Provision, which offers adults a great many information on opportunities for education and learning in the new academic year. The wide range of courses on offer in this year's Overview is even more diverse than last year's, and presents as many as 323 institutions with almost 6,000 educational programmes. Providers are dominated again this year by private organisations and private educational institutions, secondary schools and adult education units at secondary schools as well as adult education centres (folk high schools), but various other interesting adult education providers can be found, too. The programmes on offer are also wide-ranging and rich in content, and from all the courses covered you can seek out those leading to a higher level of qualification, those facilitating training and enhancement for work, or those that enable the acquisition of knowledge for the individual's overall development and for improving the quality of life in the community. For a more comprehensive view of the courses on offer, we have again added further information to the Overview on adult education and learning, such as a review of centres for self-directed learning, learning exchanges, guidance centres and employment information centres operating in Slovenia.

Evidently, there are many different possibilities for education. You can view these on the web page Overview of Adult Education Provision in Slovenia 2005/2006 (Pregled ponudbe izobraževanja odraslih) (<http://www.acs.si/pregled/> - only in Slovenian).

Erika Brenk (erika.brenk@acs.si), SIAE



Renewed commitment to the efforts for
Slovenia, a learning country!

Opening ceremony of the tenth Slovenian learning festival

This year's jubilee Lifelong Learning Week (LLW), which has just been concluded¹, for the tenth successive year now provided the opportunity for a gathering of all those dedicated to lifelong learning. During this time hundreds of event organisers – institutions, organisations, societies, groups and individuals – opened their doors to the Slovenian public. Through numerous events they presented the various forms and possibilities for learning aimed at all people; they presented the concept of the lifelong and continuous flow of learning, and at the same time they honoured the creativity of people of all generations.

By way of an introduction to the Lifelong Learning Week, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) organised the now traditional **opening ceremony**, at which we handed out awards for exceptional achievements in enriching one's own knowledge and for professional and promotional achievements in enriching the knowledge of others.

We wanted to mark the tenth anniversary of Lifelong Learning Week with slightly more celebration, so for this year's event we selected a more imposing and spacious hall, which was made available to us in a sponsorship arrangement at the Hotel Mons. On Friday, **14 October 2005**, the Plečnik Hall was filled with more than two hundred friends of the learning festival, award recipients and their nominators, and other guests from Slovenia and abroad. Among those from abroad, we were especially pleased to welcome the ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark, *Mr. Lars Møller*, foreign participants of the 9th adult education colloquium attending the ceremony, including *Dr Ramon Flecha* (Spain), *Dr Peter Jarvis* and *Mr Nick Walters* (both from the UK) and *Dr Ruud Veldhuis* (Netherlands), as well as a group of guests from South Eastern Europe, i.e. twenty-six history teachers from eight countries, who attended an international symposium in Maribor after the events in Ljubljana.

All those present were addressed by the host, directress of the SIAE *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar*; while *Mr Gorazd Jenko* greeted them on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, and with the symbolic cutting of the cake opened this year's Lifelong Learning Week.

¹ The official dates for the LLW 2005 were **17 to 23 October**, but increasing numbers of events attract LLW attendees both before and after these dates.

Through the learning festival we have been striving for a decade now to raise public awareness about the importance and presence of learning in all stages of life and in all the roles that a person has - not just as an employee or job seeker, but also as an individual striving for personal growth and creative coexistence in the family and in close communities. *Mr Boris Bregant*, mayor of the municipality of Jesenice, spoke about this and about his view of the broadest appeal of lifelong learning.

This year's opening was again enlivened by video presentations of 15 successful learners and dedicated and imaginative teachers, mentors, societies and companies that received SIAE awards for 2005. The awards and book gifts were presented by *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar* and *Dr Stane Vlaj*, president and vice-president respectively of the SIAE awards committee. The video portraits of award recipients² reflect effort and perseverance towards improving the quality of personal life and the rhythm of life in the home and wider social environment. Many of us were moved by the testimonies of personal courage and unselfish work, and by the boundless spiritual wealth of the individuals and groups receiving awards.

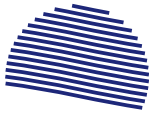
The harmonious combination of joy and ceremony at this year's event was enhanced by two groups which themselves could serve as models of continuous enrichment of one's own knowledge, having for many years tirelessly sought out and collected folk motifs, studying their origins and putting them into practice. The choral group *Bistrške škuorke* comprises six girls who set out on their common path more than ten years ago. Their name is taken from the old folk custom associated with *škorci* or "end bits". These were the cuttings of logs that had no particular value (they were used as fuel), and the girls want to preserve the expression as a precious piece in the mosaic of linguistic culture as a dialect phrase linked to the local Bistrica craft of file-cutting. *Bistrške škuorke* sing three-part harmonies, and some songs with four-part harmonies, and the significant thing is that they do not sing from sheet music, but just by ear from the oral tradition gleaned directly from the oldest inhabitants.

The family ensemble *Volk Folk* from Ilirska Bistrica is devoted to collecting and performing Slovenian vocal and instrumental (mainly dance) folk music. They place special emphasis on the tradition and sound of Brkini, the Reka Valley and Zgornja Pivka. They are continuing the family choral and instrumental tradition from Velika Bukovica, the original family home.

After these events, our guests stayed for a friendly get-together at which the *folklore group of the Rak Cultural Society from Rakek* presented part of the country wedding ceremony. Their songs and dances delighted all those at the event, especially the guests from abroad who were thus able to observe first-hand part of our folk tradition.

Nevenka Kocijančič (nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si), SIAE

² Based on scenarios by *Slavica Borka Kucler (SIAE)* and *Petra Jaurh* the video portraits were made by *Dalibor Tosić* and *Tilen Zemva (IAM)*.



9th Adult Education Colloquium

Discussing the link between active citizenship and lifelong learning

As part of the Lifelong Learning Week, the Hotel Mons in Ljubljana was the setting on **14 and 15 October** for this year's international – and now ninth – adult education colloquium entitled *Effective education and learning for active citizenship*. This was aimed at reflection on:

- concepts and strategies for the successful learning of democratic inclusion (both on the national and global level);
- the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for this;
- effective methods of promoting links between active citizenship and lifelong learning.

Cooperation at the colloquium was especially enhanced by the plenary speakers invited from Slovenia and abroad:

- *Dr Ramón Flecha*, director of the Centre for Social and Educational Research (CREA) and professor of sociology at the University of Barcelona, who spoke about participatory democracy and presented in particular the special approach to including marginal groups;
- *Dr Keith Forrester* of the University of Leeds, who spoke about revived union strategies and learning for active citizenship;
- *Dr Peter Jarvis* of the University of Surrey, who fascinated us by tying personal self-fulfilment into the context of learning and active citizenship;
- *Dr Kari E. Nurmi* of the University of Helsinki, who outlined the various modern possibilities for learning democratic inclusion via electronic media;
- *Dr Julia Preece* of the Centre for Research and Development of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of Glasgow, who presented findings on gender roles in more active citizenship;
- *Nick Walters* of the University of Surrey, who focused his talk on the role of formal education in the development of active citizenship;
- *Dr Ruud Veldhuis* of the Institute of Public Participation, Civitas International in the Netherlands, who offered an in-depth look at opportunities for education and learning active citizenship.

Four plenary speakers from Slovenia also presented papers:

- *Dr Alenka Janko* of the Faculty of Humanities in Koper focused on the case of the Roma, presenting the role of ethnicity in the development of active citizenship;

- *Dr Matej Makarovič* of the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana used a comparative analysis to outline the dominant patterns of political inclusion in Europe;
- *Dr Darko Štrajn* spoke about the various meanings of civic education;
- *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar* of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education reflected on those areas where effective adult learning for active citizenship is most topical, and pointed out the need to ask adults themselves about this.

Three parallel presentations of short papers were then each focused on further immersion into the issues presented in the plenary session, their illumination from the aspect of everyday practice, and on formulating conclusions and proposals. This involved the participation of 15 experts, who in terms of geographical diversity – from Portugal, Hungary and neighbouring Italy to France – outlined a wide variety of topical issues: from development and education towards active citizenship in the school system, to the ethical issues of active citizenship, forms of high-quality association of citizens (such as study circles) and association in the scouts and other organisations. Questions were raised about the levels on which institutions should be “*channels for enhancing and promoting active citizenship*”. Participants highlighted in particular the theoretical and practical issue of how to determine the competences necessary for active citizenship and of course how to integrate them into the formal educational system. The summaries from the colloquium also included some protests at government policies that are not attentive to the alarming fact that lifelong learning, which is one of the declarative goals of the majority of European policies, is increasingly becoming an exceptionally attractive market sector accessible to those who can pay for it. Prominent among the values espoused by the majority of participants was respect of the individual and his right to learn. Here *Dr Jarvis* stressed that “*personal fulfilment is possible when, for example, employment is truly creative work, and when active citizenship does not mean just mechanical functions in the system, but contributes to the common good.*”

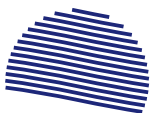
Among the interesting conclusions of the colloquium a particular chord was struck by the ideas that:

- “*participation is a process of learning*”;
- for this citizens need certain skills;
- they should begin learning for active citizenship as early as possible;
- media literacy is one of the vital elements of education for active citizenship.

In presenting the woman’s role in this context, *Dr Julia Preece* placed special emphasis on the fact that “*the concept of active citizenship is subjectively defined in line with normative values in a given time and space*”, but that research shows that the methods of learning active citizenship in all parts of Europe are similar. “*At least in a certain part adults will learn their understanding of their own rights and responsibilities in relation to others in line with their position in society.*”

At the conclusion of the colloquium *Dr Peter Jarvis* stated that the programme committee would try to stimulate all authors to collect their reflections from the colloquium in a special publication, since the findings would be of interest to a wider professional circle.

Petra Javrh (petra.javrh@acs.si),
external associate of SIAE



Life is learning - let it be fun!

Glimpses of the Learning Parade

This year, on the tenth anniversary of the Lifelong Learning Week, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education was offered the chance for the first time of holding an event which we called the *Learning Parade*, on **20 October 2005** in Ljubljana's central Zvezda Park. Its purpose was to offer a joint presentation of LLW providers from the central region of Slovenia. We would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the City of Ljubljana, which provided sponsorship support and supplied stands, a stage with PA system, a press conference and an address by the mayor, *Ms Danica Simšič*, at the opening of the Parade.

You are probably wondering, why did we call this event *Learning Parade*? Well certainly the name itself should spell out clearly enough that this is a fun, dynamic and diverse event. And ultimately isn't learning exactly this too? We wanted to stress that learning takes place throughout life, in various situations and environments, and helps us to live a fuller and higher quality life. So how could we not have fun with this?

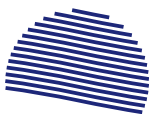
We attempted to show the diversity of what can be learned both on the stands and on the stage. The **exhibitors** (a full 40 of us), who presented their educational, learning and other activities and achievements, worked very hard to create a fun event that was also informative and rich in substance. We covered highly diverse areas of learning, so visitors could obtain information on various educational, language and computer courses, and even courses in modelling, woodworking and tourism. They were able to find out about how our scout activities are organised; and they learned about the work of libraries and the role of guidance centres. If someone was interested in where and how to get legal help, they could get the relevant information at the Federation of Unions stand. Special presentations were made by the technical and schools museums, as well as by the Production School, which familiarised visitors with its activities

and with the possibility that the world does not necessarily fall apart if you don't succeed at school. Just what you can actually do in life if you have sufficient will was shown in particular by the clients of the Zarja Institute and the Tončka Hočevar Sheltered Work Centre. Alongside all this, stands were also offering for sale books from the Mladinska Knjiga and Mohorjeva Družba publishing companies. The stand of the Vrhnika Municipal Services Company promoted greater awareness of environmental protection. And visitors could participate actively and creatively at the Vitra stand, where they could make dolls, sew, crochet and so forth.

Stage entertainment was provided by a wide variety of learning individuals and groups who proved that learning is fun and accompanies us at every step. We took the first step of the Parade in front of the City Hall. In the company of majorettes and to the rhythm of a brass band, together with the exhibitors we set off through the streets of old Ljubljana towards Zvezda Park, where we were addressed by the Ljubljana mayor *Ms Danica Simšič*, and the directress of the SIAE, *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar*. The rhythm was kept up by the young *musicians of the Ljubljana Secondary Music and Ballet School*. Laughter and wonder was provoked on the faces of children and adults alike by the sorcery of the *Wizard*, who kept on underlining that knowledge is greater than sorcery. There are various spells for conjuring rabbits and pigeons, but there is only one form of wizardry for acquiring knowledge – learning. We learned African dances, polkas and yodelling. Slovenian singer *Adi Smolar* first said in his song that he was “*not going to school any more*”, but when he noticed that he was inadequately “*adjusted*”, he started learning. The fact that right at a time of continuous global change, which affects all areas of human life, learning is essential, was stressed by *Dr Manca Košir, professor at the University of Ljubljana*. And we heard just how important it is to preserve the Slovenian cultural heritage in Italy, near the Slovenian border, in the Trieste area from *members of the Ivan Grbec Cultural Society*. We were given a special address by the *two clients of the Zarja Institute for Guardianship and Rehabilitation after Head Injuries*, who shared their experiences with us and the thought: “*after a head injury I learn differently*”. We were also joined by kindergarten *children* who showed how they learn coordination through the Maria Montessori method. Then followed a music and dance show put together by *clients of the Dolfka Boštjančič Centre* (social health care institution for qualification, training and education, health care, rehabilitation and nursing of children and teenagers with moderate, severe and profound deficiencies in mental development with additional impairments.), whose sparkling eyes and happy faces showed how people with special needs want to learn. Even adherents of rap had their turn, and we were able to provide answers to anyone interested in becoming a good pop-rock musician. We showed that learning foreign languages and stage improvisation is very entertaining and useful. And we heard from the *clown woman Mika Maka* that clowns learn how to make people happy. We even saw how you can learn to lie on a bed of nails and eat fire. And our final joint farewell to the Learning Parade came with the singer *Nuša Derenda*, who filled us with energy for new exploits of learning.

The Learning Parade was of course a success, ultimately in part because we recognised the importance of this kind of event, believed in it and put it together – albeit basically without any prior experience – with great enthusiasm. The responses of those collaborating and attending confirmed the rationale of having a fair-like event as well as an accompanying programme on the stage. We believe that we gathered sufficient experience and suggestions to make the next Parade even more successful.

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A stroll through 10 years of the Lifelong Learning Week

Exhibition at the National and University Library

The LLW team, which this year redoubled its efforts to put on a number of special events to mark the tenth anniversary of the Week, rounded off its work for the year by opening an exhibition in the Plečnik Hallway at the National and University Library in Ljubljana on Friday, **4 November 2005** at 6 pm.

Ten years have seen the accumulation of an extensive archive of various printed, pictorial and promotional material, which in its own way, as national Week coordinator *Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik MSc* says, “reveals the story of the project’s successful development, with the presented material taking us through the time and space in which the LLW was strengthened and expanded”.

The six large and eight horizontal showcases obviously offered insufficient space to show in its entirety the rich sweep of imaginative avenues and promotional approaches from the wide variety of lifelong learning providers and the material showing how event providers imaginatively combined corporate graphic elements of the LLW and the substance of the event, how information and guidance to those taking part in the Lifelong Learning Week were provided and so forth.

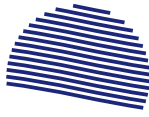
We have attempted to present the basic idea of the Week, which has grown into a festival of learning, this year involving close to 400 event providers that organised right across Slovenia more than 4,000 learning, promotional, informational/guidance and cultural events. The exhibition shows the ten-year development of the project through

figures that indicate how the numbers of participants increased. We devoted a special board to a presentation of the international aspect of the learning festival, which is also being implemented in other countries, and at the same time we attempted to emphasise the important role of the Slovenian LLW, which is one of the leaders and has made its own significant contribution to the international movement. We also presented the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), the institution under whose auspices the Week has run for all these years and which for ten years has coordinated the entire project. In this context we also showed the presentation of SIAE awards for exceptional learning achievements, an event that will celebrate its tenth birthday next year. By presenting awards each year to individuals, groups and organisations, the SIAE is spreading the culture of lifelong learning in an effective way, with 113 recipients being presented with awards over the past nine years. The events of the Week also include the SIAE's main professional event - the adult education colloquium - which focuses each year on a different topic of this profession. We also presented the nine adult education colloquiums so far and their publications and promotional material in a special showcase.

We devoted the horizontal showcases to presenting the wealth and diversity offered by the Week across the entire country. This makes clear how the LLW reaches the most remote locations and achieves its mission through the message of the lifelong dimension and the search for learning opportunities wherever and whenever.

At the modest ceremony to mark the opening of the exhibition, alongside the SIAE directress *Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar* and the representative of the National and University Library, *Zoran Krstulovič MA*, the main speaker was *Mr Elido Bandelj*, president of the National Committee for the LLW. The exhibition was opened by LLW coordinator *Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik MSc*, who concluded her thoughts with: *"A look at ten years of implementing the LLW is not just a story of fulfilling a project, but is actually a story about people - those who believe in the mission of the Week and who invest time, effort, conviction and passion. At the event locations we meet visitors who are (non)participants in education. It is for them that the events are organised, but the boundaries between teachers and learners are erased and we are both winners. These events forge links, they strengthen the commitment to learning in all places and periods of life, they inform about possibilities, they attract and inspire, they celebrate achievements and establish examples, and they build bridges between cultures, generations and beliefs. There are also many other people involved - those who through the media spread the word about the LLW, others who help its messages to break through to the profession and political circles, and then those who support the project in various ways."*

Petra Javrh (petra.javrh@acs.si),
external associate of SIAE



New literacy programmes **Is something stirring in the field of literacy?**

It definitely is. We prepared three new literacy programmes (for adults) made to fit three new target groups. Together, we now have five different literacy programmes¹. Let us start with a bit of history.

In 2002 we finished preparing two literacy programmes: *Reading and Writing Together* and *Bridge to Education*. *Reading and Writing Together* is a family literacy programme aimed at parents who have poor literacy skills and have children in their first years of schooling. The main goal² is to pass knowledge to the parents on how to help their child with their schoolwork. *Bridge to Education* is aimed at adults who want to continue their formal education. The main goal is to equip participants with adequate learning techniques to help them cope with educational demands, and as a result, be more successful at schooling. The two programmes have been running successfully now for four years, but we thought we could do more.

This year we started preparing three new programmes: *Challenges of the Countryside*, *My Own Step*, and *Me and My Workplace*. *Challenges of the Countryside* is aimed at people living in rural areas who want to find and take advantage of opportunities provided by the environment they live in. Through the programme we are trying to help participants improve their social position and economic living status. *My Own Step* is a programme for people with special needs who want to improve their quality of life. The main goal is to show them how to be more independent and resourceful in their everyday life. *Me and My Workplace* is aimed at adults working in low skilled jobs that have difficulties dealing with the fast changes in industry. The teachers in the programme should equip participants with knowledge to help them keep up with the demands of the workplace.

Literacy programmes are performed by different organisations working in the field of adult education: schools, secondary schools, folk high schools and private organisations. An organisation that wants to provide the programme will respond to the notice

¹ All literacy programmes are aimed at adults who have up to 10 years of schooling.

² The main goal of all literacy programmes is, of course, raising participants' literacy levels and improving their basic skills. In addition, every literacy programme is offering specific knowledge, significant to the group at which it is aimed.

for funding issued by the Ministry of Education. When the organisation is granted funding it will send the teachers that will be performing the programme to our Institute for training.

Training consists of two parts: first general, then specific. The first is obligatory for anyone who wants to be a teacher in any of the literacy programmes. After successfully completing the general part, a teacher begins the specific part of the training. This is different for every literacy programme, consisting of topics relevant to the target group at which the programme is aimed. Teacher training and the programmes themselves are funded by the Slovenian Ministry of Education and the European Social Fund, and are free of charge to participants. We also provide additional training for "our" teachers on topics the teachers themselves choose. After completing the programme, they sometimes feel that they did not get enough in-depth knowledge on a certain topic during the training or simply, a new topic arises that they think would benefit the participants. In the first two years of teachers' practical application of the programme, we follow up on their work. The purpose of this is that we want to meet the participants of the programmes to see if the programmes meet their demands. In addition, we like to hear from the teachers about their positive and/or negative experiences with the programmes. We then share examples of good practise and try to solve the problems in special evaluation meetings.

This year we expanded the network of organizations that are performing the programme so that they are now in almost every region of Slovenia. In January we are starting with teacher training for the three new literacy programmes, and after successful completion, the teachers will begin programme instruction. We are looking forward to co-operating with them because we value their opinion and realize that without their first-hand experience with the participants, we can not make the new programmes as successful as the two "old" ones.

Ana Ileršič (ana.ilersic@acs.si), SIAE



SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

Information and Guidance in Adult Education Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres

One of the operating goals of the guidance centres for adult education is to link up the highest possible number of providers of adult education and guidance services operating in the local environment into a network, and thereby to ensure the high-quality, comprehensive, impartial and coordinated operation of everyone involved in providing information and guidance in adult education. In order to achieve this goal the adult education guidance centres feature the operation of **local guidance networks**, which connect municipalities, administrative units, regional development agencies, the commerce, craft and other chambers, employment services, social work centres, other guidance organisations, educational organisations providing courses for adults and others. The **professional partners** in the network are members of the local guidance network who are themselves involved directly in guidance activities or in adult education, while the **strategic partners** are those that are involved in decision-making on developmental issues for a certain environment.

The main operating goals of the local guidance networks are continuous professional cooperation and exchange of experiences among organisations included in the local guidance network; good flow of information on the needs of adults for education, information and guidance in the local environment; ensuring the possibilities for development of guidance activity for adult education; representing the interests of the local network in involvement in local environment development programmes; carrying out joint promotion activities and preparing joint promotional material; agreeing on coordinated and rational development of information and guidance activities and on the exploitation of all resources, and so forth.

Adult education organisations are especially important professional partners in the local guidance network. Yet since in certain locations in the first years of operating the guidance centres we did not succeed in getting all the adult education organisations into the network, we decided in 2004 and 2005 to further intensify our cooperation with them. We set ourselves two specific goals:

- increasing the number of organisations providing adult education in local guidance networks; this means that the networks would include all educational organisations operating in the environments of guidance centres for adults,
- improving cooperation between guidance centres and adult education organisations that are already members of the local guidance network or will be joining it.

Within this framework we are planning and implementing joint activities involving the cooperation of all guidance centres and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), while at the same time each guidance centre is carrying out individual activities within its local environment. These include presenting information and guidance activities to various organisations, joint presentations in public media, providing education courses and workshops for partners and similar.

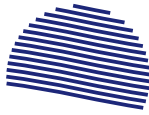
Another joint activity is the **Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres**, which was held in all guidance centres on **14 September 2005**. The main purpose of this event was to promote courses to obtain formal education. We linked this year's Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres to the results of the call for enrolment in publicly recognised adult education programmes. This call publishes all the publicly recognised programmes in which adults can enrol in 2005/2006, comprising: programmes of short-term and secondary vocational education, secondary technical and general education, post-secondary non-tertiary vocational courses, language courses and so forth.

In the morning of 14 September, all the guidance centres together with partners presented the possibilities for education in the local media (radio, television, newspapers), then in the afternoon they held events at various public places, where they presented courses, providers, conditions for enrolment, course financing and so forth. The majority of centres opted to organise an afternoon event in one of the shopping centres in their location, and some chose highly frequented locations in town - in front of the municipality or library. The response was considerable, with adults eagerly seeking information that was offered by the guidance centres and their partners, and this also helped many people become familiar with the work of the guidance centres. In this way we also brought learning and education closer to adults, whom the guidance centres would not reach through "ordinary promotion" (newspapers, radio, leaflets).

In view of the good response from visitors, something also reflected in the subsequent increase in visits to guidance centres, all the centres decided to make the Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres an annual traditional event, whereby they would promote the various possibilities for adult education and learning.

Through the work of the guidance centres, and especially through such events, we are contributing to the increased access of adults to formal education, and in this way towards raising the educational level of the population. This is also leading to the fulfilment of the goals that Slovenia set itself in the Resolution on the Adult Education Master Plan in Slovenia up to 2010, whereby at least 85% of the population between 25 and 64 in Slovenia will have at least secondary-level education by 2010.

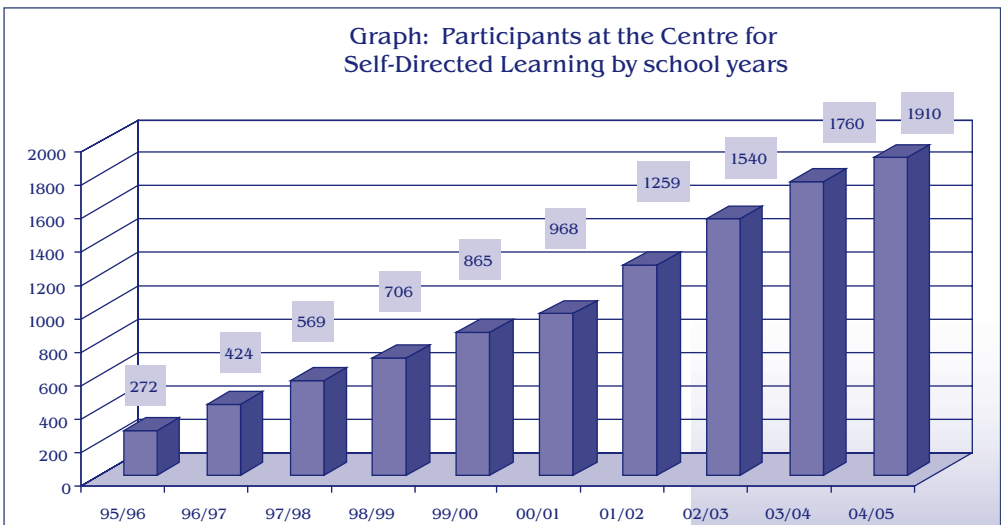
Andreja Dobrovoljc (andreja.dobrovoljc@acs.si), SIAE



DOBA

10th anniversary of the biggest centre for self-directed learning in Slovenia

This autumn at DOBA in Maribor we marked the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Centre for Self-Directed Learning, which represents the first and today the main organised form of self-directed learning in Slovenia. The founding of the centre was the result of close collaboration between DOBA and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Implementation of the activities at the Centre for Self-Directed Learning has been supported through cofinancing for a number of years by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the City of Maribor; and by providing these activities at the Centre for Self-Directed Learning at DOBA (which means 'age' in English) we are contributing towards greater access to education and learning for the citizens of Maribor and the surrounding area.



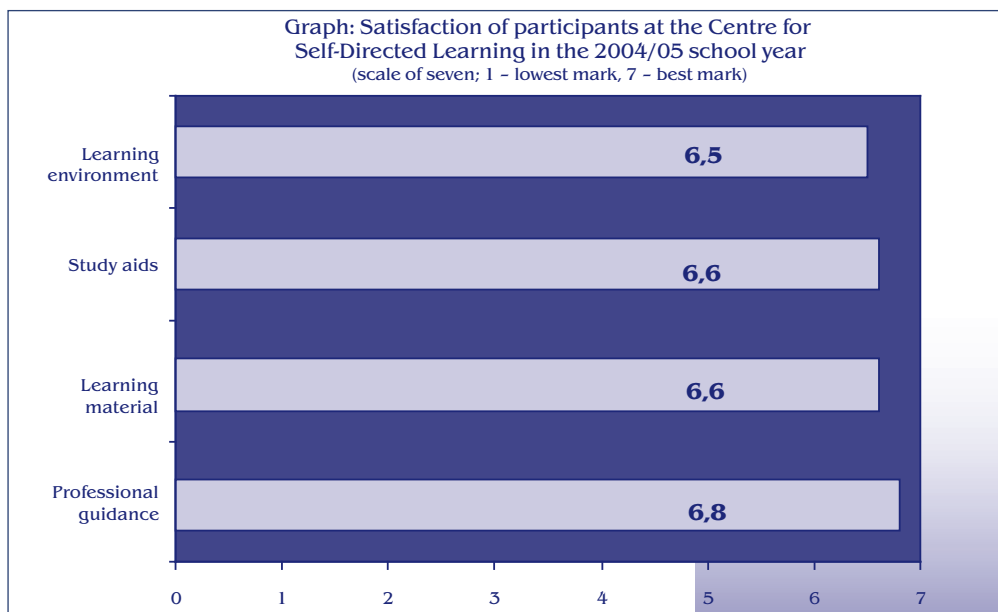
The number of those attending the Centre has grown sharply over the years. In the first year of operation 272 residents of the Maribor area opted for this form of learning, while now the Centre provides for 1,910 participants, making it the biggest in Slovenia. Women dominate these numbers at 69%. In terms of status the biggest single group is unemployed persons, accounting for 37%, followed by students and pupils at 25%, retired persons at 21%, and the

proportion of employed and self-employed persons is 17%. The majority of participants, 55%, are under 30 years old, while the proportion of those over 40 is 22%.

Each day the Centre for Self-Directed Learning is attended by 28 participants, and each month by more than 165 doing 1,350 study hours. This kind of volume results from the fact that at DOBA access to courses is maximised with the Centre being open for participants 12 hours every working day.

We offer new and permanent participants at the Centre individual guidance in selecting appropriate study programmes, study aids and effective methods and techniques of learning. Participants have at their disposal a broad range of courses for self-directed learning, as well as study facilities furnished with learning technology and multimedia computers. More than 1,100 of our participants have opted to gain new knowledge in the area of computing and to learn foreign languages, mainly English (458 participants).

Since 2002 we have been systematically monitoring participant satisfaction after 10 hours of study at the Centre for Self-Directed Learning. In the 2004/2005 school year we also started measuring the satisfaction of permanent participants at the Centre.



Zorislava Tavčar and Meri Lorenčič
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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

European Social Fund Encouragement for lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is one of the five priority areas being supported by the European Union through resources from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programme period 2000–2006. In Slovenia, securing ESF funds is based on two documents, the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2004–2006 and the Programming Supplements. Through the acquisition of ESF funds Slovenia is also offered the chance to promote the development of lifelong learning and thereby also adult education.

The first activities aimed at securing such funds started at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) back in 2003 through involvement in the drafting of the expert basis for the fundamental SPD text in the area of lifelong learning. In 2004 the SIAE began carrying out ESF-cofinanced tasks agreed with the Ministry of Education and Sports, and defined as part of the Separate Annual Work Plan of the SIAE. These tasks fall within the measure Lifelong Learning. They are carried out within the framework of two projects:

- Developing and expanding the network of local/regional guidance centres and vocational guidance centres supported by information and communications technology (ICT);
- Reducing the educational deficit among adults and education and training for drop-outs.

Under the project *Developing and expanding the network of ICT-supported local/regional guidance centres and vocational guidance centres* work is conducted in two subprojects:

- Preparing the concept and expansion of the network of ICT-supported local/regional guidance centres and vocational guidance centres and other forms;
- Maintaining the operation of existing local guidance centres and other infrastructural activities.

Two working groups operate within the framework of the task *Preparing the concept and expansion of the network*. The *Guidance Networks* group analysed the state of record-keeping services offered in existing networks for guidance in the area of education, employment, career and so forth; it drafted some proposals for defining the concept of further development. The second working group, *Lifelong Learning*

Centres, gathered data for analysing the situation regarding forms of lifelong learning that are ICT-supported, and on this basis it will draw up the concept for the operation of lifelong learning centres.

Work within the project *Reducing the educational deficit among adults and education and training for drop-outs* is conducted in three subprojects:

- Raising the literacy level;
- Development and expansion of the model of self-evaluation Offering quality education to adults;
- Development and implementation of educational programmes for adult education professionals.

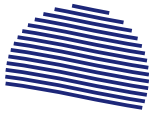
The area of literacy involves implementation of certain developmental assignments deriving from the Strategy for raising the adult literacy level in Slovenia. These are focused primarily on the development of the new educational programmes *Training for Life Success (UŽU): Challenges of the Countryside, My Own Step, and Me and My Workplace*, which are also discussed in this issue of *Novičke*.

In the area of quality there is an expanding number of adult education organisations that will be able to carry out self-evaluation; a training model has been developed which provides the basis for training personnel to carry out self-evaluation in adult education organisations; preparations are in hand for a study to develop a system of guidance support for self-evaluation and for Internet support to organisations for self-evaluation.

A range of different tasks is being carried out under the subproject *Development and implementation of educational programmes for adult education professionals*, including development of on-line courses in the area of professional enhancement for adult educators and in the area of e-education, and training leaders and mentors of study circles and reading study circles.

In view of our experiences to date with these projects, we believe that ESF resources facilitate the additional stimulus to develop adult education in Slovenia, but the management of these funds could show a little more perspicacity. Expectations that the use of ESF funds would be conducted roughly in the way that is customary for international projects have sadly not been borne out. For international projects in the area of education, the financial rules and rules of reporting are known and already set out at the time of project application, and providers can obtain at least a portion of funds in advance. Imprecise instructions and denial of financial requests cause considerable ill will and financial embarrassment among providers, including the SIAE. We may hope that in the coming programming period the rules will be better thought out and known in advance, something that will facilitate more effective use of the ESF funds.

Margerita Zagmajster (margerita.zagmajster@acs.si), SIAE



Promoting Social Inclusion through Basic Skills Learning

Four tools for introducing and promoting literacy programmes on the local level

This year the closing conference held in Prague in July marked the end of a three-year Grundtvig I project entitled *Promoting Social Inclusion through Basic Skills Learning*.

This project involved the cooperation of 11 educational and other organisations from eight European countries. The Pannonian fruitfulness of the Hungarian coordinator (Association of Hungarian Folk High Schools) combined with the Spanish relaxedness and British sense of time, Danish pragmatism, the Slavonic breadth and enthusiasm for work primarily of the Polish, and also of the Czech and Slovenian partners, and the quiet ambition of the Romanian organisations. This culturally diverse and varied group, which communicated for a large proportion of the time electronically, occasionally meeting up in various European cities, set itself the goal three years ago of preparing by the end of the project period the following 4 tools that would be applicable in various socio-cultural contexts in introducing and promoting programmes to improve literacy:

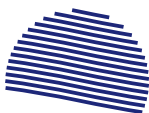
- a list of general **criteria** that would, taking account of differing standards, enable the discovery and definition **of good practices** in the area of basic skills learning;
- a simple handbook with **guidelines on how to carry out research** on education needs in the area of basic skills in the local community (NUTS IV small regional level);
- **a system for evaluating learning** and other activities that promote the acquisition of basic skills;
- main instructions and **guidelines for formulating policies** on the local community level to promote and ensure the acquisition of basic skills for local people.

All the tools originated in English, and later project funds were provided to translate all four tools into Spanish, Czech, Romanian, Polish and Hungarian. They will also be published in their entirety on the website <http://www.nepfoiskola.hu/pro-bsl/>.

Denmark, the UK and Slovenia collaborated in the project as advisor countries that have already implemented good practices in this area.

One interesting point also worth noting is that this project was encouraged by the successful project Phare Lien – Literacy as a path into society, which was carried out five years earlier in a successful Danish-Hungarian-Slovenian collaboration, coordinated by the Danes.

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Grundtvig 4 project

Meeting of the International Adult Learners Forum in the UK and meeting of the project group in Iceland

Second meeting of the International Adult Learners Forum

As part of the IntALWinE¹ project, in October last year a meeting was held in the United Kingdom for representatives of participating countries, with the purpose of familiarising participants with the role of adult learner forums and in order to enable the setting up of similar forms of learner associations in their own countries. Slovenia was represented by *Ms Dušica Kunaver*, recipient of an SIAE award for 2002, and I attended the forum to obtain information on the procedure for implementing a forum and on its method of operation.

This year the same participants met up on a study tour of the 2005 British learning festival². We attended the opening ceremony in London, and then split up into two groups that went to Cardiff and Manchester respectively to view the LLW event scenes there, finally meeting up again in London at the second International Adult Learners Forum. In the **first part** of the meeting participants exchanged information on how our efforts to set up forums in our own countries were progressing. We found that it was easiest in countries where the institution of making awards and prizes for exceptional learning achievements was already up and running, while another important element was the support offered for the idea of the forum on the state level. The **second part** of the meeting was led by *Ms Winifred Hignell*, an award recipient for exceptional learning achievements and member of the British National Forum of Adult Learners.

¹ The International Adult Learners' Week in Europe (IntALWinE) project, about which we have written several times in *Novičke*, is coordinated by the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg, and involves the cooperation of 16 national coordinators of festivals of learning in Europe.

² Adult Learners Week - ALW

She spoke to us about her experiences, and advised us on the approach to setting up forums in our own environments, since her current assignment is setting up a network of learners in the UK on the local and regional level. In the **final part** of the meeting we discussed the future of our group. The financial resource under the IntALWinE project has run out; at the same time we need to define the content of our joint work on the international level. We set up a small working group, which will work to ensure that we stay in touch and continue our work in the future. The project coordinator also informed us that *Mr John Gates*, an award recipient from Cardiff (in cooperation with NIACE³ Wales) intends to register a Grundtvig 1 project with the aim of us continuing to set up national forums and to operate the international forum. All partner countries will be invited to cooperate, and this should begin in autumn 2006.

We should also mention that the IntALWinE project also served as an occasion for the publishing of the book *I Did it My Way: Journeys of Learning in Europe*, which presents 29 life stories of adult learners from fourteen countries. In principle there are two stories per country, one from the respective participant of the international forum⁴. This publication is the result of efforts by the IntALWinE project sub-group, which focused its work on spreading the word about adult learners. In many countries these are among the most important actors in the festivals of learning, since their stories illustrate most convincingly the importance and transformational role of education in the life of the individual.

Meeting of the IntALWinE project group in Iceland

This meeting was attended by national coordinators of learning festivals from 16 countries, including for the first time Italy. The host of this penultimate meeting of the project group was the institution Educate Iceland, or Mennt of Reykjavik. Mennt is a branch of the Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle – CEDEFOP in Iceland, and at the same time functions as a forum that ensures the cooperation of the education sector, social partners, local authorities and others working in the area of education and training. Mennt was established in 1998 in response to the current developments in the area of lifelong learning, and their work covers four areas:

- an information technology system in the area of vocational education and training,
- European projects (e.g. Europass),
- national projects – including the festival of lifelong learning (for the first time in 2000),
- cooperation and dialogue with partners.

³ National Institute of Adult Continuing Education - NIACE

⁴ Of the five Slovenian contributions, the life stories of Dušica Kunaver and Marina Kačič were selected for publication.

Following a presentation of Iceland, its education system and concept of the learning festival we focused our work on the content of three basic working groups:

- **Learners' voices**

The first group concluded its work with the production of the above mentioned publication and by organising two meetings of the international adult learners forum.

- **Operational improvements to learning festivals** (examples of good practice, models of cooperation, methods of evaluation)

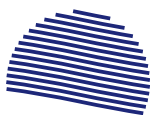
In the coming period the group will gather contributions from all participating countries.

- **Instruments for mobilisation and advocacy**

Members of the third group will study innovative aspects of lobbying and advocacy.

We also discussed putting together a final publication which would present the activities of the IntALWinE network, the results of all working groups, festivals of learning in partner countries, recommendations to politicians and recommendations from learners. The final meeting of the project group will be at the end of April 2006 in Lithuania.

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Empathy in intercultural learning International workshop in Sarajevo

An international workshop was held in Sarajevo from **23 to 26 June 2005**, entitled *Embracing Empathy in Intercultural Learning*, and representatives of the countries of South Eastern Europe, members of the Stability Pact and Slovenia, former members of the Pact and part of the former common state in this area were invited to attend. Participants came from the most varied employment, national and social environments. Of the total 25 participants, two came from Slovenia, and the rest from Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia and Montenegro.

The workshop, part of the project *SEEding for Multiethnic and Intercultural Learning Experiences - SMILE*¹ was designed by *Emilia Ilieva* of Bulgaria, and she was assisted in its implementation by her compatriot, *Vanya Ivanova*. The project promotes cooperation between the nations of SE Europe; and the workshop we attended should also contribute to a deeper acceptance of differences.

¹ You can read more about the SMILE project at <http://www.smile.iizdvbg.org>, which also has the publication SMILE Project 2004 (<http://www.smile.iizdvbg.org/materials/SmileProject2004.pdf>).

Empathy

In the introductory part the participants introduced themselves and described their views on empathy, then we familiarised ourselves with the theory of empathic, non-violent communication, as developed by *Marshall B. Rosenberg*.

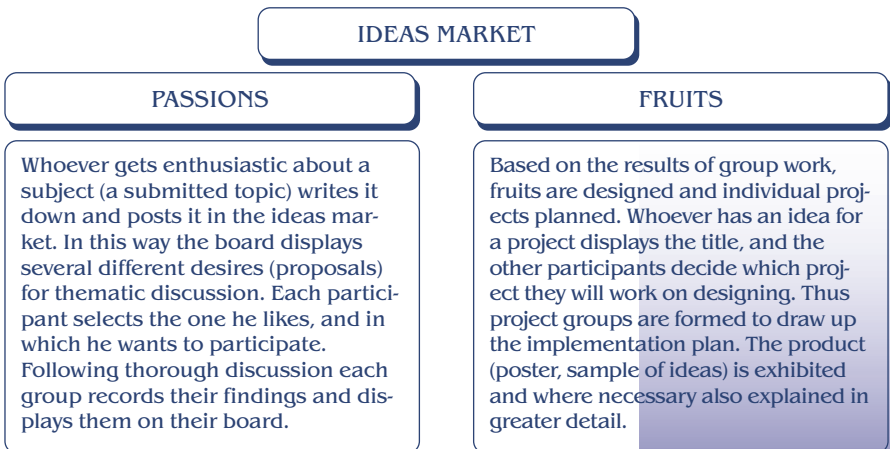
Using practical cases and working in groups, we attempted to experience empathy as “walking in the moccasins of someone else”. The empathic person is therefore someone who is prepared to take the necessary time and is able to be focused on the other person, who can then express himself or herself and feel understood.

Open space technology

The second part of the Sarajevo workshop was aimed at testing the method of *Open Space Technology*,² which offers an interesting alternative form of work at conferences. It promotes creativity and requires responsibility from participants; it gives them roles they would otherwise not have in an organisation. The only framework set by the organiser is the title of the topic that the participants will discuss. They must also adhere to the following four rules:

- whoever comes is the right person;
- whatever happens is the only thing that could happen;
- whenever it starts is the right time;
- when it's over, it's over.

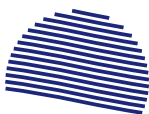
The centre of activity at a conference organised in this way is the "ideas market".



² More on this method at : <http://www.openspaceworld.org>.

The selection of Sarajevo as the location for the workshop was not coincidental, since at one time this city was a model of coexistence for different races, cultures and religions. The work was organised in such a way that we had the opportunity several times to walk the city streets, and we were pleasantly surprised: despite the horrors of war to which the residents were exposed for several years, the city is now breathing easy again, and it is vibrant and full of friendly people.

Franci Lajovic (franci@acs.si), external associate of SIAE
Slavica Borka Kucler (borka.kucler@acs.si), SIAE



*Developing Quality Management in Adult
Education by Developing Self-assessment
processes*

Recommendations for applying the method of benchmarking

From **2 to 6 September 2005**, Lahti in Finland was the location for the concluding meeting under the international *Grundtvig 1* project entitled *Developing Quality Management in Adult Education by Developing Self-assessment Processes*. Work on this three-year project was coordinated by an education organisation in Finland (Salpaus Further Education), with key partners coming from Germany (Bilse Institut), Poland (Torun Teacher Training College), Slovenia (Slovenian Institute for Adult Education) and Spain (Dema). Within this project, partners sought to test the method of benchmarking. In business this is a frequently applied method for developing the quality of companies, but has rarely been used in education. In many cultures there is a fear of abuse by competing organisations. So partners wished to acquire some experience by applying the benchmarking method; and in their own countries they tried to break down the taboo that this is a “dangerous method”.

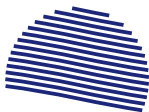
In order to reach our goal, we divided up the work by individual stages and seminars. After the **introductory seminar in Finland**, by means of a PEST analysis we were first able to examine the political, economic and social characteristics of the environment in which the individual partner operates. This was followed by the **meeting in Slovenia**, where by means of common criteria the partners performed self-evaluation of various models for assessing quality used in our own organisations. In this way it was possible to determine the positive sides and drawbacks of the established models for assessing quality, which allowed an identification of certain criti-

cal points that have arisen in self-evaluation and have become the target of improvement through the benchmarking method. However, in order for the benchmarking method to be used properly, in line with all ethical codes, and systematically, at the **seminar in Germany** project participants were trained with the assistance of the external expert from Finland, *Dr Juhanni Kulmala*, for applying the benchmarking method according to the *Spendolini model*, which later all partners applied in carrying out the benchmarking visit. The partners exchanged their experiences in using this method in education at the **seminar in Poland**, where they presented the progress of benchmarking visits and planned improvements that they will implement in their own education organisations and models for assessing quality that they are currently using. At the Poland seminar the partners opted to take one step further. They took a broader view – in order for the acquired knowledge and experience not to remain merely within the narrower circle, they decided to transfer these findings to the entire network of education organisations in partner countries in the form of **general recommendations for applying the benchmarking method in education organisations**. This gave rise to a document with recommendations for applying the method of benchmarking in education organisations, and this was presented at the **closing seminar in Lahti in Finland**.

Allow us to offer just a brief summary of some of the most salient findings (recommendations) that seemed important to the project partners. One of the key stages in the application of the benchmarking method is its preparation. It is extremely important for us to know what the aim of implementing the benchmarking method is, and what we wish to examine by using it. The benchmarking method is recommended as a team assignment, but here some attention must be paid to the **composition of the group** that will implement the benchmarking method: it is important for the group to be carefully selected, taking into account the level of individual familiarity with the subject of benchmarking; it is also recommended that members of the group within the organisation have many years of experience, that they are committed to change, persevering, and possess a diversity of knowledge, since well selected people will also know how to pose appropriate questions to the benchmarking partner. The next recommendation is **careful selection of a partner** for implementing the benchmarking method. We must be attentive especially in selecting the kind of partner for whom we know that in the areas in which we seek to use them as a benchmark, they operate with excellence or better than we do, since the method of benchmarking is a tool for learning from partners through benchmarking. In selecting the partner we must compare several sources of information: documentation, reports, Internet sources, oral information and so on. In the stage of implementing the benchmarking method, one key step is **analysing one's own actions**, where we determine and analyse our own situation and processes, identifying which are the good and weak points in our organisation. In this step the fundamental rule is: "First know yourself!" Only in this way will it be possible to learn

something from others and to compare their processes with our own. In implementing the benchmarking method, experiences have shown that it is also advisable to **prepare questions for benchmarking in advance** and to **familiarise the partners with them prior to the benchmarking visit**. It is also important to make further agreements regarding the implementation of benchmarking together with the partners (date of visit, progress of benchmarking etc.). And certainly the most important thing in all this is to respect the ethical code for pursuing the benchmarking method, since only in this way will we succeed in breaking down all the reservations in connection with the use of this method (including those between competitive organisations), where the basic purpose is not to “steal” ideas and knowledge, but to learn from each other and to implement what has been learned in the benchmarking visit but in a different way, adapted to the situation and characteristics of the individual organisation. Only in this way will an organisation successfully apply the knowledge and ideas gained on the benchmarking visit.

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Learning about different approaches to evaluating quality in adult education

Study visit to Finland

From **2 to 9 October 2005** participants of the project *Offering Quality Education to Adults - POKI* went on a study trip to Finland, organised by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) as part of the project *Leonardo da Vinci - Mobility: Self-evaluation and quality in vocational and professional adult education*. Representatives of eight educational organisations collaborating on the project took part in the trip.

The aim of our study visit was precisely defined and derived from the need to develop new approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of adult education programmes. At the same time the aim was to acquire international experience to carry out self-evaluation activities and to study the Finnish approach to ensuring quality.

Our work began in the Finnish city of Lahti, from where we made local trips to visit various educational organisations. We were given a presentation of the host education organisation, Salpaus Further Education in Lahti, by the director of develop-

ment and a planning associate. The organisation provides secondary vocational education for young people and adults, with work experience playing a very important part here. The complete education programme, which is free, is evaluated through credit points, with the professional portion of courses counting for 75% of all credit points. Salpaus is organised as an educational centre, providing vocational education in the business and administrative field, arts and crafts, technology and transport, tourism and catering, health and welfare and farming. The hosts facilitated a visit for us to some schools within the centre, where we were very warmly received and we were able to get answers to a mass of questions that entered our heads. In addition to lectures, round tables were also organised. They gave us a presentation of the established system of quality management and the process of self-evaluation at the catering school, the vocational education institute and the arts and crafts school. The main feature of their operation is the system of monitoring quality, which is built into the functioning of the school; it is a constituent part of the school, a kind of motive force for implementing change, and it generates new ideas and promotes adaptation and development, especially in the area of human resources. This system consequently enables them to measure the effectiveness of the organisation, which has quantitative impacts on the levels of funding.

The visit to the Lahti adult education centre, which is one of the oldest in the country, showed the special quality of adult education, which is paid great attention, in part because of the relatively high unemployment level. Following a comparison of the initial expectations of those enrolled and their achievements at the end of the course, plus an analysis of the process, an evaluation and assessment of the quality of implementation is made.

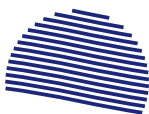
There was also a highly interesting presentation of quality management from the aspect of the Finnish National Education Council, a presentation of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council and a presentation of curriculum development.

In the final part of the study trip we visited the adult education organisation Edupoli in the city of Porvoo, where we were familiarised with the excellent system of monitoring and improving quality, which is based on taking into account the needs of the user, the professionalism of providers and the social responsibility regarding employability of participants who have completed courses. We learned about the extremely well thought out information technology system they use to remain competitive and to maintain and improve the quality of education services.

The gruelling but exceptionally well organised study trip to Finland, which from the professional aspect exceeded our expectations, triggered a wave of new ideas in us about the possibilities for improving the quality of education for adults and of course

young people, too. And international experience is also invaluable in terms of establishing new contacts for cooperation and exchange.

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Adult Education, Work and Achieving the Lisbon Goals

Highlights of the international conference

In previous issues of *Novičke* we have familiarised you closely with the role of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) in the international project *Adult Education, Work and Achieving the Lisbon Goals*¹, the result of which has been the organisation and implementation of a European conference. The Slovenian delegation was the most numerous among the participants, there were eight of us in all: one representative each of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Folk high school Jesenice, Institute for Education and Culture Črnomelj and the Association of Slovenian Adult Education Centres, and two representatives each from Folk high school Murska Sobota and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

The project coordinator, the UK's National Institute for Continuing Adult Education – NIACE, selected the location of the event at the university campus of University of East Anglia in Norwich, where both participants and lecturers were accommodated. The conference was attended by around 140 delegates from 29 countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

The two-day conference was opened with an introductory welcome address by the project coordinator, *Sue Meyer* of the NIACE. Papers were presented in the **plenary session** by:

- *Phil Hope* from the British Government, who dealt with the importance of computer literacy for the country's economy and for the learning society as the basis for creating a trained workforce.

¹ More on the conference and material at <http://www.niace.org.uk/signupnow/EU-presidency-conf/Default.htm>.

- *Tom Schuller*, head of the Centre for Education Research at the OECD, gave a presentation on the impact of demographic structure and migrations on education and the needs for education, especially in adult education, since the birth rate is very low in all European countries.
- *Ekkehard Nuissl* from the German Institute for Adult Education presented the didactic structure of the learning place (where, how and when adults learn), whereby he emphasised in particular that it is not just educational institutions that are the right place for learning, but also other places where adults feel comfortable. He highlighted this international conference as a good example of a learning place.
- *David Hughes* from the European Commission presented five European benchmarks in the process *Education and training 2010*; he criticised the Lisbon Strategy for being too broad and covering too many areas; he stressed that it is not just the acquisition of knowledge, qualifications, occupation and work that are important, but also being an active inhabitant and citizen.
- *Anders Franzén* from the Swedish Ministry of Education, Research and Culture spoke about the Swedish initiative in education, which arose in response to problems in the mid-'90s (high unemployment, terminating jobs for employees with low skills, the ineffective and expensive traditional labour market). The main goals of the initiative were: reduce unemployment, develop adult education, overhaul labour market legislation and promote economic growth. The initiative enjoyed great success from 1997 to 2002, since the area of adult education was promoted as a possibility for economic development of the local community.
- *Alan Smith* from the European Union, who familiarised us briefly with the historical development of European Union programmes and presented the new generation of Grundtvig programmes in the area of integrated programmes for 2007–2013, which will be based on lifelong learning.
- *Serge Ravet* from the European Institute for e-Learning presented the role and importance of the e-portfolio.
- *Wendy Jones* from the BBC highlighted the important role of promoting education and learning, which should be the priority task of every education organisation. She acquainted us with the historical development of education programmes on BBC national television since 1924. Through the promotion of education they seek to entertain viewers, and enable visitors to the website the downloading of various TV clips for educational purposes. We were also acquainted with the project of developing basic skills of adults, *Read-and-Write - RaW*.
- *Ian Nash* from the *Times Educational Supplement* publishing group stressed the role of written sources and materials in education, and emphasised that anecdotes increase participation and motivation for education.

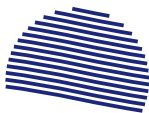
The organisers spiced up the plenary session and the afternoon workshops through the presentation of new approaches and methods. In the *World Knowledge Café*, under the moderating gaze of *Annette Zera*, we debated certain key issues of demography and how this influences adult education; we also discussed the promotion of active citizenship.

The afternoon session featured **numerous thematic workshops**, with a prominent place being taken by the Slovenian contribution entitled *Active Citizenship in Study Circles*. The leader of the workshop, *Darijan Novak*, presented the results of the ETGACE project and the ten-year experience of the SIAE with study circles, and he highlighted the prospects for merging the two. Unfortunately there was not sufficient time to debate their substance, which should be communicated to the mentors of study circles that promote active citizenship.

As part of the programme we visited the City Council, where we were greeted by the mayor of Norwich, and the Learning Centre, Norwich Origins Visitor Centre.

The conference was very well organised. There was a great deal of time allotted for questions and answers. The programme contained appropriate proportions of professional and free-time activities; the choice of location should also be praised – the University of East Anglia offered excellent conditions for work and accommodation. The only thing to merit criticism was the somewhat deficient conference material.

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"Education for All" in the age of increasing
mobility

International Adult Learners Week 2005

The concept and event of the *International Adult Learners Week* were established in 2000 with the aim of bringing together in one place representatives of countries that hold festivals of learning, in order to raise the profile and validity of this international movement. After Hanover (2000), Sao Paulo (2002), Bangkok (2003) and Cape Town

(2004), from **24 to 26 October** this year around 150 participants from more than 40 countries gathered in Oslo in Norway¹.

The main theme of the meeting was *Education for All in the Age of Increasing Mobility: Implications for Adult Education*. Mobility was presented as a concept with several dimensions: geographical, social, cultural and also personal and spiritual. The role of adult education in these processes was presented in the following **three thematic groups**:

- Education for All (EFA)²,
- Basic skills,
- Inequality and participation in education.

Each topic was first examined by plenary papers, which were followed by parallel workshops that served to present actual experiences and examples of good practices from various countries. An introduction to the **first topic** was provided by the representative from Brazil, *Mr Ricardo Henriques*, Secretary for Continuing Education, with a presentation of the national programme, which seeks to ensure continuity between literacy programmes and continuing adult education, and high quality and equal opportunities of access for all strata of society. The president of the Asia and South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE), *Ms Sandra Lee Morrison* of New Zealand, spoke about literacy programmes and continuing education for Maori people from the aspect of non-governmental organisations. The **second topic** was introduced by the famous expert in adult education and literacy, *Prof. Harbans S. Bhola* of the USA/India; he spoke about the research perspective of developing basic skills and emphasised the need for a systemic and holistic approach. He was followed by *Prof. Egil Gabrielsen* of the University of Stavanger, who presented the results of ALL³ research in Norway, with an emphasis on the (low!) literacy of immigrants. The introductory paper for the **third thematic area** was given by the head of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources in Mauritius, *Mr Santosh Kumar Mahadeo*; he stressed the need for communication skills in the complex modern society and highlighted the role of education in attaining these skills.

In the workshops participants addressed related topics: from the policies and practices for achieving EFA goals through adult education and informal education, to various concepts, national strategies and methods of identifying basic skills, and then on to the mobilisation role of learning festivals and the increasing importance of learners networks.

¹ This event was hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg, and was organised in cooperation with the Norwegian Committee for UNESCO, the Norwegian Institute for Adult Education (VOX) and the Norwegian Federation for Adult Learning (Vofo).

² This topic ties in with the World Education Forum in Dakar, April 2000, where within the framework of the document *The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All (EFA): Meeting our Collective Commitments* 6 goals were adopted, and these should be achieved by 2015.

³ OECD research study *Adult Literacy and Life Skills (ALL)*

In the final plenary session *Dr Katarina Popović* of Serbia spoke about the role of learning festivals in South Eastern Europe, and she was followed by the representative from Canada, *Ms Susan Nielson*, who highlighted the expanding role of learners in the Canadian festival of learning. There was also a talk given by *Mr Jan-Helge Svendsen* of Norway, an award recipient from two years ago and participant of the International Learners Forum. He stressed that in the future such conferences should also be attended by learners, and not just experts and politicians. The conference was concluded by *Mr Peter Smith*, assistant head of the education directorate at UNESCO, who underlined that in the future adult education and lifelong learning would continue to be indispensable components of UNESCO's education strategy.

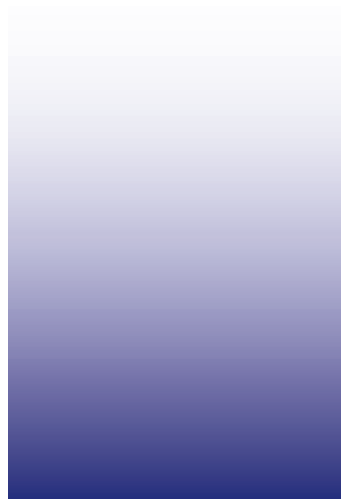
The International Adult Learners Week 2005 was timed deliberately to coincide with this year's Norwegian festival of learning, so part of the programme was devoted to visiting various institutions and courses. I took part in a tour of the Skullerud education centre and the Norwegian Institute for Education (VOX). At Skullerud we visited a class of adult immigrants (deaf and hearing impaired), who were learning Norwegian by means of a computer programme⁴.

We also attended the awards ceremony for the Norwegian Adult Learners Week. Awards were made to a library, which devoted its work to the integration of asylum seekers and other immigrants into the local community, and to a local community for its international cooperation in Third World countries - in Africa they built a school through their own contributions. The award to an individual, the "hero of learning", was made to a young man who cured himself of drug addiction and after numerous education courses enrolled in four-year teacher training studies in order one day to become a teacher for children and adults. The VOX prize was awarded to a learning institution involved in cleaning and maintenance services whose employees continuously pursue education. Two international awards were also given by the UNESCO Institute for Education, for education and research work in the area of literacy, to *Prof. H. S. Bohla* of the USA/India and to *Ms Sofia Valdivielso Gómez* of Spain.

The main messages of the conference, selected papers and speeches are published on the website <http://www.vox.no/ialw-conference>.

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⁴ Under a recently adopted law immigrants have the right and duty to attend free 300-hour foreign language courses.



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

