

# novičke

## Winter 2007

Educational pack with practical suggestions for parents and educators \* Video talk supporting the culture of learning in selected target groups \* *ALLEGRO* - award-winning Slovenian Institute for Adult Education project \* Review of adult education on offer in Slovenia, 2007/2008

Slovenian Guidance Centres Days 2007 \* SAEA Conference, 30 and 31 August 2007 \* Importance of the portal project in terms of adult guidance \* Development of quality work in guidance centres

International Reading Association conference in Berlin \* International Adult Learners' Week in Manchester \* What have we learned from *EMMA*? \* Concluding conference of the *Value of Work* project in Iceland \* Challenges in adult education in Botswana and Slovenia

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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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In charge of the publication are: Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, head of cluster, and Nevenka Kocijančič, editor.

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## NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

Dear friends,

In the past year, Slovenia adopted the euro and prepared for the new financial perspective and Presidency of the EU.

At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education we paid special attention to the report on the implementation of the Resolution on the Master Plan for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia for 2005 and 2006. At the same time, our Institute published a report on the 15 years of its activities in Slovenia and the international arena. Having redesigned our corporate image and updated our Web pages, we believe we should be able to cope with the challenges of modern society and find proper solutions to topical issues.

Moreover, we received some awards in recognition of our achievements! Our PUM programme, the Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA) project, won the European Regional Champions Award in the area of social policy, awarded by Regional Review magazine in cooperation with the EU Committee of the Regions, an achievement of which we are particularly proud. We also pride ourselves on receiving the Golden Apple of Quality award for the "Self-Evaluation and Quality in Vocational and Technical Education of Adults" mobility project.

Indeed, 2007 has been a productive and exciting year for us, and we expect the same for 2008!

In future, we plan a review and modernisation of the programmes of adult education drafted in previous years; our objective is to tread new paths in adult education, search for systemic solutions for some of the long-standing projects, prepare expert groundwork for the draft law on adult education, and examine the implementation of Article 4 of that law in practice. We also face a number of assignments connected with Slovenia's Presidency of the European Union, which is a great honour as well as a major responsibility for all of us. Our fundamental task in future remains providing professional assistance to implementers of programmes of adult education. We hope to fulfil that task to the best of our abilities.

It is my wish that 2008 will be a special year for all of you - may it be a year of prudent decisions, may be it opulent and rewarding in your business ambitions and for the benefit of all people entrusted to your care. May seasonal charm and joy be with you throughout the year and may open dialogue among cultures ennoble your day-to-day life and work.

Dr Slavica Černoša, acting director of the SIAE



## SIAE EVENTS

### Literacy through play

## Educational pack with practical suggestions for parents and educators

*"It is very important for suitable literacy development that skills practice is done in a planned and timely manner. And here the role of the family, as the first encouraging environment for children, is extremely important,"* wrote Dr Petra Javrh, author of the teaching pack and *Literacy through play* series of programmes. *"It would be hard to find an adult who doesn't know letters or numbers. But can we all read fluently, fill in a form or write a letter without spelling mistakes?"* Some adults (and of course some parents) are not best at home in the world of words and language. Success in these areas is heavily influenced by good basic skills in **reading, writing and arithmetic**, and in turn the level of literacy in the home environment is a significant factor in the development of these skills.

The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education focussed on promoting the creation of the foundations for later literacy in 2006. In the *Better Literacy through Television* project, financially supported by the European Social Fund, in cooperation with the producer TV Pika, we prepared a series of programmes intended to promote **family literacy**. The series was successfully completed in January 2007. We were delighted to learn from TV Pika that the ratings for the programmes, which were shown at various times, were excellent. The series, particularly its educational part, will therefore be repeated, since it was considered a quality production. This gave us an additional incentive to an expansion we had planned from the very beginning – the design of a set of programmes with accompanying texts, suggestions for educators and an evaluation questionnaire.

Design of the *Literacy through Play* series of educational programmes involved a whole series of literacy experts in addition to the author Dr Petra Javrh, particularly project leader Ester Možina, MA; as well as practitioners, the following also supported the contents of the programmes: Dr Livija Knaflič, Dr Meta Grosman, Dr Sonja Pečjak, Dr Milena Košak Babuder, Marko Kalan, Dr Dora Jelenc, Natalija žalec and editor of Ciciban and Cicido, Slavica Remškar. Studio guests briefly interviewed included Dr Manca Košir, storyteller Anja Štefan, experienced teacher and manager of a private educational institution Marija Stanič, and literacy expert Tanja Černe. The programme also hosted Slovenian celebrities, who talked about their first steps to literacy. Guests

included musician *Vlado Kreslin*, actor *Andrej Rozman Roza*, sportsman *Dr Franci Petek* and actress and UNICEF ambassador *Milena Zupančič*.

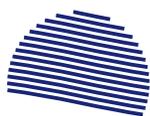
The pack comprises four DVDs with accompanying booklets:

- *How can we as a family help our children's literacy?:* a teaching pack for educators and parents of the youngest children up to two years old. The first programme talks about children's and parents' first encounters with picture books and books. It covers the first period, which is suitable for gently introducing toddlers to the world of letters, words and sentences.
- *Tell me a story:* a teaching pack for educators and parents of children from two to four years old. The programme focuses on developing speaking skills in pre-school children.
- *Our little one is counting:* a teaching pack for educators and parents of preschool children from four years old. The third programme emphasises the early development of numeracy.
- *My first letters:* a teaching pack for educators and parents of children in the first year of primary school. The final programme rounds off the theme of literacy development in the family by paying particular attention to the children's first attempt of writing letters.

As the titles of the individual programmes show, the series was intended to encourage **parents, grandparents, educators, carers, teachers** and other people who in the preschool period take care for the development of children's attitudes towards words, books, to pay suitable attention to the formation of a range of concepts and ideas, numerical and quantitative relations and other *preliteracy* skills, as well as to consolidate the first steps to literacy – from birth to the age of eight.

The teaching pack, which is primarily intended for **teachers in the first three years of primary school** and teachers in the **Adult literacy programme**, also includes a booklet presenting the theme of the programmes, transcripts of the statements of guests, practical suggestions from the programme and useful information for educators.

Slavica Borka Kucler ([borka.kucler@acs.si](mailto:borka.kucler@acs.si)), SIAE



## Examples attract

### **Video talk supporting the culture of learning in selected target groups**

At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, we recognise the power of video media. Video does not merely reach the human intellect, it addresses us as a whole. If we add a personal note to the content of the video message by presenting the life experience and achievements of someone with whom we can identify, the objective is almost certainly achieved: viewers will listen, and our only responsibility is the content - to justify the time and attention they give us through the quality of the message.

Ever since 1997, SIAE has been presenting awards for outstanding learning and professional achievements in adult education. From the very beginning, we prepared video portraits of award winners to be shown at the awards ceremony. Since 2001, we have also offered them for broadcast free of charge to private TV networks to promote the learning culture. Through the television screen, the examples of learning adults, who in their lives have had to overcome numerous barriers and who have - despite the difficulties - achieved great educational, personal and professional success, enter the lives of people, speak to them and often also encourage them to start to improve their lives through learning. Equally, the examples of innovative, self-sacrificing teachers, mentors and experts, or exceptional educational institutions, companies and local communities, address adult educators and users of their services. The quality of their work can dispel the fears harboured by many people about returning to education. Three-minute video portraits or full video presentations of award winners are broadcast in the autumn and throughout the winter on local television, especially private cable channels. When we reviewed the archive of video portraits, we realised that many of them were genuinely valuable and still topical, so we decided to use them to reach selected target groups, particularly those most in need of encouragement. We named the whole collection Examples attract.

#### ***Equal opportunities for all through lifelong learning<sup>1</sup>***

In the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (EYEO), when we are celebrating the wealth of diversity, we particularly wanted to reach those among us who, because of their difference, must fight for equal inclusion in society. We would like to encourage those close to them, as well as public services deciding on their opportunities, and

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<sup>1</sup> The author of the animated presentation is *Slavica Borka Kucler*.

young people still forming their attitude towards difference, to become more sensitive and understanding, to know how to create an environment in which diversity would be welcome. We particularly want the cooperation of teachers of citizenship and ethics in using video to support young people; the thematic video (available free of charge) can be of great assistance in preparing contents in line with EYEO 2007. We want to use the video to reach those who fear difference, in whom difference creates discomfort, intolerance and insensitivity, to make them realise that not even two leaves from the same tree are absolutely identical. If nature is brimming with celebration of diversity, there is probably no good reason for me to be afraid! We are convinced that the life stories of people who have had to face up to shortages, obstacles, restrictions can help every one of us to look around with a relaxed view, sensitive to our own and other people's difference, exceptionality, value. The difficulties and obstacles we encounter in life - illness, disability, developmental problems, old age, unemployment, linguistic and cultural differences - can lead to separation, suffering and alienation, but can also become a challenge to discover new, original routes to self-realisation and creative cooperation in the community. We offer for consideration some examples of life stories of people who knew how to turn a shortcoming to their advantage. We want them to inspire many people to discover a new courage for life.

The video presentations of examples of good practice were sorted into three thematic groups:

- **Equal opportunities for all, irrespective of nationality, or cultural or racial group, through lifelong learning** (Examples attract I).  
This group presents exemplary cases of non-formal education and cultural programmes for residents of Slovenia with different linguistic backgrounds and for members of national minorities, including Roma, who lately have again become stigmatised.
- **Equal opportunities for all, irrespective of disability, illness or developmental problems, through lifelong learning** (Examples attract II).  
Through this video we want in the first part to present people with disabilities who - with the help of learning and their own creativity - have achieved essentially equal inclusion in society and who are now themselves active in helping others. In the second part, we present the activities of societies and self-help groups, with whose help members find it easier to train for full participation or return to the social environment.
- **Equal opportunities for all, irrespective of age, and family and social background, through lifelong learning** (Examples attract III).  
The first part of the video presentation is intended to foster quality of life in old age, while the second part is aimed at successful educational or support programmes for orphans and child victims of war.

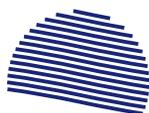
## Reaching your goals through learning<sup>2</sup>

This set of video materials in the Examples attract collection is intended primarily for counsellors and other professionals in employment services, guidance centres, centres for self-directed learning and elsewhere, and absolutely also for people striving to motivate unskilled and/or unemployed adults to take the first steps towards developing their own career paths.

The first DVD - **Early career period** (Examples attract IV) - focuses on giving adults the courage to take the first steps, to start to build their career paths 'from nothing' except vision, persistence and the support of a mentor or advisor.

We are also planning presentations of the specific features of middle and later career stages, employment and educational paths.

Slavica Borka Kucler ([borka.kucler@acs.si](mailto:borka.kucler@acs.si)), SIAE



One of the best projects in Europe

## **ALLEGRO - award-winning Slovenian Institute for Adult Education project**

Berlin in May this year saw the opening of the conference of the *Lifelong Learning* programme, the third generation of European Union programmes in the area of lifelong learning, with a programme period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013. More than seven hundred experts in the fields of learning and education, education ministers of EU states and the education commissioner, Mr Jan Figel, attended the conference.

The conference provided an opportunity to present the **Lifelong Learning Awards** to the three best projects of the *Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig, Lingua and Jean Monnet programmes*; a collection of European Commission publications *Success Stories - Europe Creates Opportunities for the Comenius, Grundtvig, Erasmus, Jean Monnet and Leonardo da Vinci programmes* were also published.

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<sup>2</sup> The author of the video materials is *Dr Petra Jaurh*.

Third prize, bronze, in the *Lingua* programmes went to the *Access to Language Learning by Extending to Groups Outside - ALLEGRO*<sup>1</sup> project coordinated by The Nottingham Trent University in the UK; besides Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, other partners from Denmark, Germany, Spain and France participated in the project.

The project - which has won several European language awards - enabled language learning for groups who for social reasons or due to physical barriers had difficulty in accessing foreign-language learning. In each of the aforementioned countries we carried out various learning events with more than sixty underprivileged groups. In Slovenia, we offered foreign language learning to prisoners, the blind and partially sighted, people with head injuries and developmental problems, students with disabilities, people with war-related disabilities, pensioners and women who had recovered from cancer.

The *ALLEGRO* project was also included in the *Success Stories*<sup>2</sup> publication, which presented the twenty best *Grundtvig* projects according to the following criteria: suitability, innovation and originality, influence, visibility and support for strategies. The publication also presents the *Twinning the Elderly Disadvantaged and Disabled with the Young by Encouraging Active Reminiscence - (TEDDYBEAR)*<sup>3</sup> project. Project partners from the UK (Educational Centres Association, Norwich - coordinator), Italy, Finland and Slovenia tried to encourage the whole community to care for the elderly and thus improve the general quality of life. This intergenerational project brought together marginalized and isolated people over 50 from selected rural environments and primary school pupils. These target groups exchanged knowledge and experience. The older people told their life stories based on 'key themes' (such as: food and drink, celebrations, World War II, local crafts, games, children's books, dialects etc.) that encourage the young towards creative artistic expression - theatrical, literary and artistic. For their part, the young offer the older people help in understanding and using computer technology (Internet, email, games).

The awards received show that here at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education our work is going in the right direction.

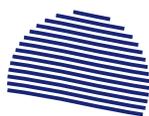
Darijan Novak ([darijan.novak@acs.si](mailto:darijan.novak@acs.si)), SIAE

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1 Project website: <http://allegro.acs.si/>.

2 Web version published at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/publ/pdf/grundtvig/success-stories\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/grundtvig/success-stories_en.pdf).

3 Project website: <http://www.teddybear.eu.com>.



## Web review of what's on offer this year now out **Review of adult education on offer in Slovenia, 2007/2008**

The new school year has begun and adult-education providers have reopened their doors. They offer adults a multitude of educational programmes covering the widest range of subjects. Once again, we have gathered a great deal of information on the supply of adult education and learning from providers all over Slovenia, presenting it in the ***Review of adult education on offer in Slovenia 2007/2008*** (<http://www.acs.si/index.cgi?m=51&id=85> - Slovenian language only). We want the Review to provide the broadest overview of education and learning opportunities available to the widest public in the new educational season, and at the same time, to motivate adults towards greater participation in education, and to encourage them towards lifelong learning.

The Review brings together basic data on education providers, the specialities of their programmes and other useful information in the area of adult education. Currently information is available on more than 300 adult education providers and roughly 6,000 education programmes. The number of providers and education programmes is not yet final and will rise over the next few months, as providers continue to provide information on their educational programmes. Every year, we strive to collect and publish data on the widest possible range of providers. Since adult education is not exclusively provided by public educational institutions, we also want the Review to include providers such as societies and associations of societies, museums, galleries, universities of the third age, libraries, private organisations and others providing various educational contents, particularly in the area of general non-formal education. Equally, every year we try to include providers from all Slovenian regions, and not just from Central Slovenia, where the supply of education is greatest. Unfortunately, once again we found this year that adult education opportunities in other regions remain fairly modest.

The highly diverse range of programmes collected in the Review include education programmes enabling individuals to gain a higher level of formal education, work-related training and additional training programmes, and programmes of general non-formal education, which are particularly diverse in terms of content. Foreign language learning and computer education and training account for a large proportion of programmes, as do training in the area of communication, familiarisation and learning in the areas of art and culture, education, health care, hospitality and tourism, environmental protection, personal growth, employment, enterprise, citizenship education, learning manual skills etc.

In addition to data on providers and their educational programmes, the Review also collects important web addresses that provide additional sources of information in the area of adult education (tenders, catalogues of public certified programmes for adults, national information centre for vocational education etc.), data on guidance centres, folk highschoools, knowledge exchanges, centres for self-directed learning, vocational guidance and information centres and other useful information.

The web application allows the provider and programme data to be simply and quickly searched separately by various criteria. The search criteria for **provider data** are: provider title, location of the provider's premises or region. Basic data such as name, address, telephone and fax numbers, web and email addresses, managers, contact persons and data on educational programmes provided are available for each provider. **Data on specific educational programmes** can also be found by searching on the programme name, title of the occupation acquired on successful completion, place or region where the programme is provided, subject matter or keywords. Searches can be restricted to publicly certified programmes or programmes leading to formal education.

There is a rich array of education and learning available to adults this year, and we are convinced that the information brought together in a single place makes it easier for many to find a suitable education programme amongst the mass of education providers.

Erika Brenk ([erika.brenk@acs.si](mailto:erika.brenk@acs.si)), SIAE



## SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

### Guidance in adult education Slovenian Guidance Centres Days 2007

For the third year running, Adult Education Guidance Centres and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education organised *Slovenian Guidance Centres Days*. In the previous two years, the event lasted only one day, but **this year**, based on past experience, we extended it to **three days**, from **Wednesday 19 September up to and including Friday 21 September 2007**. Each of the fourteen guidance centres together with partner organisations from their districts prepared a plan of activities to attract a wide range of adults in their selected environments to obtain information on education and learning opportunities prepared for them in the new education season.

The main aims of all events during these days were information, promotion and motivation for adults to participate in formal or non-formal education programmes. Past experience suggests that such events make an important contribution to increasing access to information on lifelong learning opportunities and of course consequently to greater adult participation in various forms of education and learning.

It seems important to us that this event is staged in September, when educational and other organisations prepare their programmes for the new education season. By directly presenting these programmes, we bring learning and education closer to adults not reached by educational organisations or guidance centres through normal promotion – publication in predominantly print media (newspapers, brochures).

In the morning on a chosen day, all guidance centres together with their partners presented educational opportunities in local media (radio, television, newspapers), and in the afternoon organised events in various public places, where they gave specific presentations on educational programmes, providers, enrolment conditions, funding for education etc. Most guidance centres chose to organise afternoon events in local shopping centres, while a few chose other well-visited locations – e.g. in the capital Ljubljana, on a main city-centre street, in Nova Gorica in front of the town hall, in Velenje in front of the library etc.

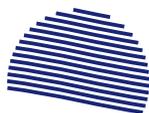
The decision this year to extend the event from one to three days proved justified. Centres were able to organise more events to present their activities and adult education



available. As a consequence, guidance centres recorded increased visits and more telephone calls in the days after events.

We believe that this year's Slovenian Guidance Centres Days have achieved their purpose, since through various media (major emphasis on radio, but events were also presented mostly in the morning on national television), and in informal environments we informed and advised many people about educational opportunities, and encouraged and motivated them to learn. We will continue such activities next year.

Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MA ([tanja.vilic.klenovsek@acs.si](mailto:tanja.vilic.klenovsek@acs.si))  
and Jerca Rupert ([jerca.rupert@acs.si](mailto:jerca.rupert@acs.si)), SIAE



## Lifelong Learning and Adult Education in National and European Frameworks

### **SAEA Conference, 30 and 31 August 2007**

The last three days of August saw three professional events important for the development of lifelong learning in Slovenia. The Education Research Institute and the Ministry of Education and Sport (MES) organised a workshop entitled *Key concepts and basic terminology of lifelong learning*, and the Slovenian Adult Education Association (SAEA) arranged two conferences in two days – *Lifelong learning strategy in theory and practice* on Thursday 30 August, and *National strategy for adult education, a look forward* on Friday 31 August. The conferences were well received and attracted around 130 delegates from the profession, decision-making bodies (relevant ministries) and representatives of public and private education and development organisations from all over the country.

There were thus two interesting events on 30 August, and many professionals, publicists and practitioners in the areas of lifelong learning and adult education were disappointed that they had to choose between them, since they would liked to have attended both; both aspects are important for comprehensive planning, implementation, promotion and further development of the field. Without clear terminology, we will always have one hand tied behind our back in preparing strategic documents and implementing acts.

The basic purpose of the conferences organised by SAEA in conjunction with The Education Research Institute in Ljubljana and with financial assistance from the European

Commission and MES, was to discuss in particular:

- Measures to implement the *Operational plan of the Lifelong Learning Strategy in Slovenia*;
- Paths and procedures to effectively use funds from the European Social Fund (ESF) as the material basis for realising operational plans in Slovenia.
- The debate allowed delegates to present their own experience, form positions and make initiatives for successful operation in future.
- The conferences were the result of an initiative of the Slovenian Adult Education Association put to the Ministry of Education and Sport in 2006. The initiative was only realised in 2007, when the EU granted Slovenian (MES) special funds to promote the *Lifelong learning strategy in Slovenia*.

### **First SAEA conference: Lifelong learning strategy in politics and practice**

The bulk of the programme of the first SAEA conference was taken up by a debate on the operational plan for realisation of the *Lifelong learning strategy in Slovenia*. It was based on a document adopted by MES that was first presented in print at the conference. Many delegates participated in the debate, justifying the expectation that the theme was topical and in serious need of a thorough debate.

The second part of the programme of the first conference followed with a presentation of the ESF Tender as an instrument for realising operational plans in Slovenia. Within the time allocated to discussion, representatives of ministries answered delegates' questions, while the programme of the second conference offered an opportunity for a more in-depth discussion of effective drawing of ESF funds.

### **Second SAEA conference: National strategy for adult education, a look forward**

As an introduction, the programme of the second conference offered delegates consideration of the question of the contribution of the *Resolution on the National Adult Education Programme (ReNAEP)* to realisation of the EU communiqué *It's Never Too Late to Learn* and the *Adult Learning Action Plan*. The bulk of the programme concerned presentation and discussion of effective use of ESF funds.

The introductory presentation was given by *Janez Mežan*, director of the Directorate of Secondary, Higher Vocational and Adult Education at MES, in a paper entitled *Education and Training 2010 and Development of the Adult Education Strategy in Slovenia*. The second plenary presentation entitled *Contribution of the Resolution on the National Adult Education Programme to realisation of the EU communiqué It's Never Too Late to Learn and the Adult Learning Action Plan* was given by *Peter Beltram, MA*, a Slovenian Institute for Adult Education researcher. One of the aims of his paper was to evaluate how current the ReNAEP is in terms of the priorities and guidelines set by the EU.

The statement by Mr *Mežan* and the detailed justification provided by Mr *Beltram* that the ReNAEP will have to be 'renewed', and that its schedule will have to be coordinated with other strategic documents of Slovenia for the period to 2013, is significant for the further development of adult education.

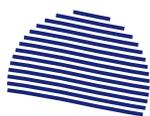
The second part of the conference was given over to presentation of the operational programme for the development of human resources 2007-2013, with central themes linked to problems associated with drawing on ESF funds and changes in the new financial perspective. This was the part of the conference delegates were expecting most from.

In this report I will limit myself to in my personal opinion the best things 'to happen to us' at the conference:

- The clear efforts of all those responsible to improve the system in the new perspective;
- Recognition by the payment body at the Ministry of Finance that the numerous deficiencies in drawing to date indicate weaknesses in the system and inadequate staffing in ministries;
- The great willingness in the government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy and in the payment body to improve the system, and to reach direct agreement with providers on solutions to specific problems;
- The statement by a representative of MES that in future the ministry will promptly pay undisputed amounts in provider claims, and disputed sums once providers have eliminated the deficiencies;
- The call by delegates for SAEA to prepare another meeting (workshop) as soon as possible for providers to present in particular specific problems and initiatives, and for representatives from MES and other ministries to explain what is legally acceptable and what will change to improve the drawing system in the new perspective in line with their competences.

The organising committee of the conference included the initiatives and proposals of delegates in the final draft initiative to improve the system for drawing funds, forwarded them to the relevant offices, and requested responses regarding the fate of the proposals.

Olga Drogenik ([olga.drogenik@quest.arnes.si](mailto:olga.drogenik@quest.arnes.si)), SAEA,  
and Slavica Borka Kucler ([borka.kucler@acs.si](mailto:borka.kucler@acs.si)), SIAE



Dolenjska Lifelong Learning Centre

## Importance of the portal project in terms of adult guidance

The vision of the *Dolenjska Lifelong Learning Centre (DLLC)*, coordinated by RIC Novo mesto, is to offer adults and young people in their region support in their learning, with emphasis on non-formal lifelong learning. In so doing, we aim to enable wider participation by all local residents in non-formal lifelong learning, particularly those groups currently unaware of the importance of learning or without access to learning resources, and with the weakest participation. Thus one of the main intentions of the project is to include in the network as many partner organisations as possible engaged in guidance, lifelong learning and human resource development in the region, and to develop a strong lifelong learning centre that through guidance activities will provide support to local people in involvement in all forms of lifelong learning supported by information and communications technology (ICT).

One of the objectives we set ourselves to achieve this vision was to establish a single platform/web portal (<http://www.cvzu-dolenjska.si/> - Slovenian language only) to serve as support for Dolenjska LLC activities, to promote its activities, to enable network members and all users to use databases, existing and newly developed self-directed learning materials and e-materials, to promote lifelong learning, and to enable participants to access guidance and learning materials using the web. The portal was launched in April 2007 with an updated look and feel. Visitors to the home page of the portal can, in addition to information on *the project*, *partners* involved in the project, and *the area* covered by the project, also obtain important information divided into three sections: *News*, *Events in the region* and *Tenders*. The home page also has left and right menus.

The *database of educational opportunities in the SE region* is very valuable for local people and anyone needing information on formal and informal forms of learning, and for the needs of the Novo mesto Guidance Centre. It was created by converting an existing local database for the needs of the guidance centre. Analysis of the existing database indicated that it didn't meet all requirements for information we have recorded in the guidance centre. Furthermore, it was designed to contain data on individual educational areas, which included data on organisation and data on individual programmes (which covered data on name, number of places, duration, organisation, cost, payment method etc.). The expansion of guidance activities led to the problem of updating this database, as a guidance counsellor in the centre would have to do so. As this was not feasible, we disposed of the inadequate database and

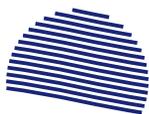
each sought information again, direct from provider organisations. Moreover, we had expanded our areas of operation and didn't have information on all education available. Of course, the principle of quality and comprehensive guidance, the sheer size of the area covered by the guidance centre, the lack of information on individual educational organisations on the national level, access to local informal educational opportunities and not least access to the required information at all times, all of these require a comprehensive database. So rather than choosing to upgrade the existing database, we chose to design a new one. A special workshop - attended by counsellors of the Novo mesto Guidance Centre, representatives of RIC and project partners, and a user representative - defined the structure of the database and decided within individual areas to present only provider organisations and web links to them. We divided individual areas into: obtaining an education, lifelong learning, learning assistance, employment opportunities, project learning for young adults, adult literacy programmes and universities of the third age. The advantages of this database are reflected in:

- Ensuring accurate and current information and all opportunities open to guidance centre clients or portal visitors;
- Enabling comparison among programme providers (individuals can choose for themselves the most appropriate);
- Enabling review of and access to information at home;
- Rapid access to information and the possibility of establishing cooperation with organisations in the area.

It must be emphasised that local organisations and individuals are invited to update and supplement the database. In terms of personal guidance, it proved a very effective source of information, allowing those with better ICT skills to quickly find the information they were seeking, saving them a trip to the centre while maintaining the motivation to gain knowledge, something we know can rapidly fade in the face of a lack of information.

Recently at the guidance centre we have devoted some considerable time to promoting the portal and presenting it to various target groups (those with Internet access at home, and those without who can come to the self-directed learning centre), and providing training in its use. Greater attention must be paid to the target group with less education and those with limited options for participating in forms of lifelong learning. Here, too, we see the mission of the Novo mesto Guidance Centre.

Polona Tratar ([polona.tratar@ric-nm.si](mailto:polona.tratar@ric-nm.si)),  
Novo mesto Guidance Centre



Three adult education guidance centres celebrate their fifth anniversaries

## Development of quality work in guidance centres

The first five guidance centres (Koper, Maribor, Murska Sobota, Novo mesto and žalec) marked their fifth anniversary last year; three more join them this year at that milestone – Jesenice, Postojna and Zasavje.

Last year, guidance activities gained a visible place in the European document on adult learning entitled *Adult learning: It's never too late to learn*<sup>1</sup>, which cites ensuring quality information and guidance as an important factor in eliminating barriers to individual participation in education. Here in Slovenia, the latest strategic document *Lifelong Learning Strategy in Slovenia*<sup>2</sup> states in one of the ten strategic cores that we should offer lifelong guidance to people who want to learn or who are learning.

Right from the launch of the guidance centres, two basic objectives were set: to offer adults quality, professional and comprehensive information and guidance, and to link as many local adult education and guidance service providers as possible into the network, thereby ensuring quality, comprehensive and coordinated operations.

All guidance centres together with partner organisations thus strive to offer free, confidential and comprehensive information and guidance to all adults who want or need it, to support their education and learning.

The success of the guidance centres is demonstrated by the fact that in the last school year more than 15,000 individual interviews were held and more than 4,500 adults took part in group forms of guidance (all work in guidance centres was undertaken by the full-time equivalent of 18 professional staff).

The figures show that:

- Services prior to inclusion in education continue to dominate (68%), followed by services during education (24%) and after education (8%);
- The majority of adults visit guidance centres in person (59%), with 35% using the telephone and 6% using electronic or ordinary mail.

1 Communication from the Commission, *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn*, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 23.10.2006, COM(2006)614final, [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lll/adultcom\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lll/adultcom_en.htm)

2 *Lifelong Learning Strategy in Slovenia*. Ljubljana : Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia and Education Research Institute, 2007

One of the guidelines for future work we wrote last year was that the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) and the network of guidance centres would particularly strive to further develop the quality of guidance work. The quality of the work of guidance centres is regularly monitored by SIAE and the guidance centres themselves. As activities have expanded and become more complex<sup>3</sup>, we decided to improve and extend the existing quality assessment methods.

With financial support from the Ministry of Education and Sport and the European Social Fund, we began developing and implementing a comprehensive quality assessment and development model in guidance centres. This year, we designed the starting points for quality development in guidance centres<sup>4</sup>. **The three basic starting points**, to which we paid particular attention in defining the quality of guidance centres, are: accessibility, quality, and results achieved and effects of guidance services.

**Three objectives** follow from these starting points, serving as the basis for determining the approach to quality assessment and development:

- Adults have access to guidance for education and learning;
- Adults are provided quality guidance services for education and learning;
- Guidance activities effectively contribute to adult participation and success in lifelong learning.

This forms the basis for the development in cooperation with guidance centres of a comprehensive model for quality assessment and development, which will define key processes and subprocesses, and the results and effects we meet in guidance centres, as well as the relevant standards, indicators and quality criteria. The model is designed on a combined approach incorporating elements of both internal and external evaluation. Next year we will begin gradually establishing the model in practice.

With the aim of ensuring that we achieve these objectives of guidance activities, our system is designed according to the principles of awareness of responsibility for quality, inclusion of various interest groups in quality assessment and development processes, transparency of guidance activities, planned and systematic approach, targeting further development of guidance activities and creating an atmosphere conducive to the culture of learning and quality.

Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MA ([tanja.vilic.klenovsek@acs.si](mailto:tanja.vilic.klenovsek@acs.si))  
and Jerca Rupert ([jerca.rupert@acs.si](mailto:jerca.rupert@acs.si)), SIAE

<sup>3</sup> Last school year, the fourteen guidance centres operated at 33 other sites in addition to their main offices. Most of the 'extended' activities took place within the framework of the activities of Lifelong Learning Centres.

<sup>4</sup> Vilič Klenovšek, T., Klemenčič, S., Možina, T., Dobrovoljc, A.: *Izhodišča za razvoj kakovosti v svetovalnih središčih za izobraževanje odraslih* [Starting Points for quality development in adult education guidance centres]. Ljubljana : Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, 2007



## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

### International experience in the literacy area **International Reading Association conference in Berlin**

The 15th conference on literacy, organised every two years by the International Reading Association, was held this year in Berlin from 5-8 August and was entitled *Checkpoint Literacy*. The conference was attended by between 450 and 500 professionals dealing (in part) with literacy: teachers, librarians, researchers, programme developers ... The conference had three plenary talks and roughly two hundred other presentations, including ours.

All three plenary talks were exceptionally interesting:

- In the first talk, *Dr Andreas Schleicher* presented the results of secondary processing of data from the *PISA research*<sup>1</sup>. The talk was extremely interesting: participating countries were ranked based on children's success; detailed analysis also showed the effectiveness of the education system, for example in eliminating the effect of the socio-economic status of families on children's educational success. One particularly interesting but worrying conclusion was that in most countries, the evaluation of the teacher is the most *unreliable* predictor of a child's success.
- In the second plenary talk, the established international expert *Dr Pirjo Linnakylä* presented the Finnish education system, which PISA found to be the most effective. She stressed that Finnish teachers are extremely independent in their work (schools have no fixed curriculum, no fixed textbooks etc.) and at the same time extremely effective, since the great majority of Finnish children achieve high scores in literacy tests. The key to success clearly lies in continuous teacher education and training, which develops the ability to precisely diagnose a child and consequently ensure effective work.
- The third and final plenary speaker was *Dr Allan Luke*. He spoke of the links between literacy and poverty, the value of international research and the project he conducted in Singapore. In this project, he studied the method of learning in schools, showing that the quality of knowledge of children is extremely low, even though they scored well in PISA.

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<sup>1</sup> PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) is an international research project carried out every 3 years by the OECD (first research conducted in 2000). The research measures the literacy of 15-year-olds in participating countries (Slovenia first participated in 2006).

The remaining presentations were of varying levels of interest – some (fortunately a minority) speakers had nothing new to say, while others confirmed our experience and our work; there were also some that gave us new ideas for further development of our programmes and our work in general. It was interesting to note that in Germany they have developed a family literacy programme which is almost identical to our *Family literacy programme*. Their experience with programme participants is also very similar to our teachers' experiences with participants. Such and other similar discoveries confirmed to us that we are on the right path.

And some presentations were truly inspiring:

- One such was the Irish presentation of research<sup>2</sup> on literacy practises of current literacy teachers. The purpose of the research was to determine the profile of teachers who decide to work in literacy programmes. It was shown that literacy teachers are individuals who read a lot in childhood, that their families had various learning activities etc. A need was shown for training for literacy teachers to work with people who did not grow up in such surroundings. Teachers cannot approach working with such participants from their own experience; instead they must know how to approach their participants' experience.
- The next interesting presentation was also from Ireland. *Martin Gleeson* presented the system of early literacy education in connection with promoting reading activities in the family environment.
- The activity presented by the representative of the Croatian reading association *Maja Krtalić* gave us an idea for further work. In rural parts of Croatia, the association organised reading workshops for children and simultaneous talks intended for parents on ways to work with children. Volunteer library study students are trained to work with children, while experts in the area of literacy development worked with parents. We will certainly adapt some of the activities presented and incorporate them in our further efforts to improve the literacy of the Slovenian population.

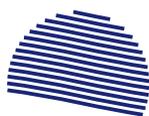
Our presentations (*Dr Livija Knaflič: What do parents learn in the family literacy programme?* and *Ana Ileršič: Rural literacy programme in Slovenia*) were based on evaluation of two programmes: *Family literacy programme* and *Rural literacy programme*. We distributed questionnaires to participants and teachers in the programme, processed the data obtained and presented the findings of this small-scale evaluation at the conference. We were satisfied with our presentations, which were attended by professionals working in the area of adult literacy. We found all around the world we come to almost the same conclusions in preparing and implementing literacy programmes, and we face similar dilemmas. We will present the findings of the evaluation in a future issue of *Andragoška spoznanja*.

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2 The research was presented by *Siobhan Cahillane-McGovern*.

The conference represented an opportunity to acquaint ourselves with international activities in the area of literacy – from presentations of new programmes and research to examples of good practice. We feel that attending the conference helped us establish and evaluate our own work, and at the same time gave us impetus to further develop this area. We await the next conference in Portugal in 2009 with pleasure.

Ana Ileršič ([ana.ilersic@acs.si](mailto:ana.ilersic@acs.si))  
and Dr Livija Knaflič ([livija.knafljic@acs.si](mailto:livija.knafljic@acs.si)), SIAE



## International movement of learning festivals **International Adult Learners' Week in Manchester**

The *Hamburg declaration on the future of adult education* and the *Action Plan* for adult education (both final documents of the celebrated conference *Confinteava V*, 1997) recommended that United Nations member states should organise an *Adult Learners' Week*, and that this should become an international event. In November 1999, a resolution of the general conference of Unesco introduced the concept and event *International Adult Learners' Week* (IALW) and linked it to the *International Literacy Day* (8 September). The first international week took place at the opening of the world trade fair *Expo 2000* in Hanover; similar events have been organised since with the intention of increasing awareness and establishing this world movement:

- Brussels, Belgium (2001): meeting of European national coordinators and evaluation of European festivals of learning;
- São Paulo, Brazil (2002): meeting of national coordinators of festivals of learning from various regions as part of the Third Brazilian Literacy Week;
- Bangkok, Thailand (2003): IALW in connection with the *Confinteava V Midterm Review* conference;
- Cape Town, South Africa (2004): IALW in connection with the South African festival of learning and a conference *Adult education and literacy for democracy and citizenship*;
- Oslo, Norway (2005): IALW in connection with the Norwegian festival of learning and the conference *Education for all in the age of rising mobility: implications for adult education*.

This year's International Adult Learners' Week was held from 20-23 September 2007 in the city of Manchester in the UK. It was organised by National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), United Kingdom, and the Unesco Institute for Lifelong Learn-

ing (UIL), Hamburg, Germany. One special feature of this event was the participation by many representatives of adult learners, who formed a varied group mass of almost 110 participants together with national coordinators of festivals of learning from more than 20 countries around the world and representatives of the profession and politics. Slovenia was represented by *Boris Bregant*, SIAE award winner for outstanding learning achievements in adult education (2005), a former mayor of the Municipality of Jesenice, and *Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik*, national coordinator of the *Lifelong Learning Week*.

The conference, entitled *Reviewing a global advocacy network on the way towards Confintea VI*, was opened by the directors of the two host institutions, *Alan Tuckett* and *Adama Ouane*; they were followed by a formal speech by the British minister of lifelong learning, further and higher education, *Bill Rammell*. *Sue Nielsen*, director of the Canadian association of adult learners addressed delegates on behalf of learners.

The main theme of the conference was presented by *Bettina Bochynek* from UIL, coordinator of the international movement of festivals of learning. She presented the development of the movement and set out its advocacy role, established in preparation for the *Sixth International Unesco conference on adult education, Confintea VI*. Further light was shed on the topic by *Greg Pert*, national coordinator of the Adult Learners' Week (ALW) in Australia, and *John Gates*, representative of the British adult learners' network.

The most important papers on the second day were the talks by *Enver Surty*, the South African deputy education minister, on adult education as a driving force for development and political change, *Monika Kepe* from the European Commission on the Lisbon Strategy, the *Education and Training 2010* programme and the *Adult Learning Action Plan*, and *Edicio de la Torre* from the Philippines on adult education and its significance for the *Education for All* movement (Dakar 2000). This part of the conference was rounded off by *John Denham*, British Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, who spoke by video of the greater involvement of learners in formulating adult education policy.

In the day's second plenary session, speakers from different continents presented the basic features of their festivals of learning: speakers were *Nani Zulminarni* (Indonesia, Asia/Pacific), *Nouhoum Diakite* (Mali, Africa), *Vilma McClennan* (Jamaica, Latin America/Caribbean) and *Mercedes Garcia Martinez* (Spain, Europe). The presentation was rounded off by an insightful promotional video on the ALW prepared by the festival coordinators of NIACE, Wales.

Next came group work, which was initially intended for a retrospective, i.e. a comparison of festivals of learning and definition of experience gained and examples of good practice. Four working groups were made up of festival coordinators and representa-

tives of learners; the author of this paper moderated one such group. Subsequently, the two types of participants separated – national coordinators focussed on defining future prospects for the learning festivals movement and its importance for the *Confintea VI* conference, while in their working group, adult learners began drafting a charter on the role of learners to provide a basis for discussion at *Confintea VI*.

Despite initial divisions – two camps emerged, one defending a more global, political aspect, with the emphasis on the need to secure the conditions for the acquisition of basic skills by around 800 million people around the world, the other supporting a more operational aspect of the learning festivals movement as a driving force for the establishment of adult education and lifelong learning – we managed to formulate common positions. These concern:

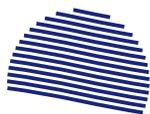
- A distinct emphasis on the role of learners, who should join together in local, national and international networks, and whose views should influence policy formulation, the profession and practice of adult education, as well as planning of learning festivals;
- The acquisition of suitable financial and other forms of support from politicians at all levels;
- The role of the media as an extension of the profession and adult education and lifelong learning policy;
- Linking the learning festival movement to other political agendas (*Education for all, Millennium Development Goals, International Literacy Day* etc.);
- Establishing partnerships and strategies, and others.

The conference was concluded by the representative of the Uruguayan ministry of education and culture, *Jorge Camors*, who announced that the first Uruguayan festival of learning would be held in December 2007.

The conference was supported by an exhibition of festival promotional materials from around the world, and throughout there were plenty of opportunities to establish and enhance personal contacts and to exchange useful ideas and approaches that we will be able to apply to our own learning festivals.

The organisers promised to make conference materials and reports with detailed conclusions of working groups available within a month or two on the website of the international learning festivals movement: <http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/>.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc ([zvonka.pangerc@acs.si](mailto:zvonka.pangerc@acs.si)), SIAE



## End of the international project

### What have we learned from *EMMA*?

In the summer issue of *Novičke* I wrote about the *European Network for Motivational Mathematics for Adults (EMMA)* project, financed from the *Grundtvig 4* programme. The project ran for two years and supported the development of a network of European adult numeracy professionals. The project ended in September. Taking this opportunity for a review, I ask myself what have we learned by taking part in this project?

In the project, we took part in **two study visits**, one to **London** and the other to **Copenhagen**. The latter was particularly interesting, as we learnt about work in the area of adult numeracy from various aspects; we heard presentations and took part in discussions with politicians, researchers, principals or directors of educational organisations, teachers and participants. One particularly interesting aspect was how in Denmark the educational process involves social partners (ministries, employers, trade unions etc.), whereas in Slovenia education is still largely the domain of the Ministry of Education and Sport. We were most enthusiastic about the part of the visit where we attended a numeracy programme for airport employees, when we also had the opportunity to talk to participants. They gave and described essentially the same reasons for taking part in the programme, satisfaction with the programme and the effects of the programme as expressed by 'our' participants in the *Adult Literacy Programmes prepared by the SIAE*. Speaking personally, the whole visit again reminded me why we do what we do, and particularly who we do it for.

After the Copenhagen study visit, in September the partners attended the **closing conference in Florence**. A number of interesting papers were presented at the conference: learning mathematics using dialogical learning; presentation of a family literacy programme in Sweden; how mathematics is portrayed in the media ... More than new ideas, the conference confirmed to me that the path we have chosen in the concept of literacy programmes is the right one. Not that it's the only right path, but it is certainly one that enables participants to acquire useful knowledge, which should be the aim of any educational programme.

The area of literacy both in Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe faces dilemmas and professional issues that will in future need greater attention, including:

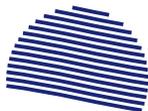
- Motivation of participants to enrol in literacy programmes,
- Testing, specifically whether testing literacy skills is necessary before a participant enrolls in the programme, and if so, what sort of testing,

- How to persuade social partners to participate, and to ensure inter-sectoral cooperation
- The direction of development of literacy systems in countries.

We discussed all these themes with project partners, but unfortunately there was never enough time for more concrete plans. These are important issues on which we SIAE staff must form an opinion, and on that basis determine further steps in the development of this area.

As project partners, we are now waiting 'only' for the writing of reports, arranging documentation and the like. The purpose of the project (to establish a network) has certainly been achieved, as we actually obtained a great deal of information on adult numeracy systems in other European countries. Most partners are willing to continue cooperation on the established web portal (<http://www.statvoks.no/emma/>), on new projects or other forms of partnership. For us it was extremely useful to meet numerous professionals from all over Europe and to exchange experience and opinions with them. All of these meetings gave us a number of future directions for consideration.

Ana Ileršič ([ana.ilersic@acs.si](mailto:ana.ilersic@acs.si)), SIAE



## Validation of informal and non-formal learning in the workplace

### **Concluding conference of the *Value of Work* project in Iceland**

The Leonardo da Vinci programme project *Value of Work (VOW)* finished at the end of November this year.<sup>1</sup> The last partner meeting was held in Reykjavik on 27 September 2007; at this meeting we reviewed the results of the project. Since the project tested methods and tools for assessing informal and non-formal learning, one of the outcomes of the project was the *Handbook of assessment methods and tools*, which together with other results is available at <http://www.valueofwork.org/>. As well as English, versions are also available in the languages of other partner countries, including Slovenian. Since competence standards are a prerequisite for the process of validating competences, we also wrote a *Handbook of competence standards*. The same website also hosts a *Brochure with guidelines on the assessment process for trade unions*,

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, the project also involved partners from the UK, Cyprus, Denmark, Iceland and Sweden.

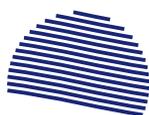
*employers, assessors and counsellors*. It also contains statements by users who took part in the assessment processes in partner countries. They view the assessment process as a positive experience that motivated them to continue learning, that represents a learning opportunity and an opportunity to recognise their own skills, making them more apparent to themselves and others, and that contributes to personal growth. The brochure contains a short summary of the external evaluation of the project. Both users and third parties (assessors, counsellors, trade union representatives, companies, and professional working groups) agreed that the assessment process is valuable for both employers and employees. They also thought that the process increases the motivation of employees to do their job well.

The next day, 28 September 2007, saw the closing conference of the project, which was in part intended for the general public, with talks given by a representative of the Icelandic ministry of education, the chief secretary of the Icelandic association of trade unions and other speakers. One such was *Prof Lorna Unwin* of the University of London, with her speech *Learning at work: worlds within worlds*. She emphasised that many people learn in the workplace, but that this learning is often invisible, and people are often not even aware that they're learning, and find it difficult to talk about. Assessing learning in the workplace spreads the message that learning is something positive, and thereby promotes lifelong learning. The context determines the nature of learning. She said that employers differ greatly, including in terms of how they organise work. Employers need to be encouraged to view the workplace as a learning environment and employees as potential. *Prof Lorna Unwin* told a story of truck drivers who sell sandwiches, a rapidly growing industry in the United Kingdom. As a researcher she accompanied drivers while they were working and was surprised at the complexity of the tasks they had to carry out while working: organising effective routes to clients, choosing products for particular clients, arranging financial matters, negotiating prices, arranging products on shelves, finding new clients, bringing so-called field intelligence to the director back at the office etc. Researchers found that the field intelligence of drivers is scarcely used in the office, and they learn little from it. *Prof Unwin* emphasised that the complexity of tasks and duties is increasing in the modern workplace. We could add that this is another reason to master all the key skills needed for successful participation in modern society. *Prof John Konrad* of Konrad Associates International spoke of quality assurance in the process of assessment of informal and non-formal learning. He said that quality assurance depends on the context in which the process takes place, and stressed that the assessment process must be simple.

Three workshops were also organised as part of the closing conference of the *Value of Work* project. They were led by project partners and covered methods and tools, competence standards and project effects. SIAE took part in the competence standards workshop, outlining in conjunction with our external associate *Danica Hrovatič* our

experiences in the area of home care, where we undertook an assessment process for 15 home care workers. The closing conference ended with reports from the workshops and a debate that included the general public.

Dr Natalija Vrečer ([natalija.vrecer@SIAE.si](mailto:natalija.vrecer@SIAE.si)), SIAE



## Unesco participation in adult education programme

### **Challenges in adult education in Botswana and Slovenia**

In the first week of November, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) organised a professional visit by a delegation of nine representatives of the Ministry of Education of Botswana, Department of Non-formal Education and the University of Botswana, Department of Adult Education. This was the second project that we had prepared and carried out within the Unesco participation programme. The projects were related, since the visit was a continuation of professional cooperation among the same institutions regarding teacher training in the area of adult literacy in 2005. Participation projects, which by their nature are not-for-profit, in the area of adult education are promoted and cofinanced by Unesco, with the state involved in the project also providing funding. Both Slovenian projects were financially supported by the Office of the Slovenian National Commission for Unesco and Unesco Paris.

Even while implementing the first project, when SIAE staff trained adult educators in a completely new and unknown cultural, linguistic, historical and economic environment, we asked ourselves what adult educators from Slovenia could possibly have to offer colleagues from Botswana. During the few days we spent in Botswana, we listened to their needs and the challenges they face due to development problems and the desire for greater prosperity and improved quality of life, where the central issue is the prevention of disease (especially infection with HIV). We found that some of the issues we faced were very similar. We are both looking for an answer to the question of how adult education can contribute to economic development, ensuring sustainable development of local communities, improving the quality of life in all areas, and greater social cohesion in society. Likewise, we both ask ourselves how we can make education attractive and worthwhile for people of all ages and from all walks of society. Last but not least, what knowledge and skills do adult educators need for their new roles?

We prepared a one-week education programme for our Botswanan colleagues. The programme presented research and development work in adult education, and the system, policy and practice of adult education in Slovenia. So in addition to the SIAE, we also visited a number of other institutions and educational organisations around Slovenia in a desire to illustrate the system and forms of adult education, and allow our colleagues direct contact with adult educators and adult participants in education, as well as representatives of local authorities and those responsible for implementing adult education policy. We met representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sport, Sector of Adult Education, and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. The head of the Sector of Adult Education, *Elido Bandelj*, and the representative of the Ministry of Labour, *Andraž Zgonc* explained the role, statutory basis and national strategic documents and the work and plans of both departments in the area of adult education. We presented the status and development orientations of two public institutions, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training (CPI). The deputy director of CPI, *Mirjana Kovač*, talked to them about the development of the Institute, projects, partners and future plans. Her colleague *Urška Marentič* presented the system of national vocational qualifications and the procedure for designing vocational standards. Acting director of the SIAE, *Dr Slavica Černoša*, explained the status, work and projects of the SIAE, with particular emphasis on those aspects and projects that during our visit to Botswana we felt would be of interest for Botswanan adult educators. We wanted our colleagues from Botswana to see how some projects developed by SIAE are thriving in local environments, and the impact of these projects in their environments.

We therefore also travelled around Slovenia, first to Prekmurje, and then to Tolmin. In Prekmurje we were received at Murska Sobota Folk High School, where director *Večna Laissani* and her professional colleagues presented their work, talking particularly about the work of the Guidance Centre and the *Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA) programme*. After the presentation, our guests visited the guidance centre and met a group of young people participating in the *PLYA programme*. They asked one of the *PLYA programme* participants to talk about his educational path; he stressed that his participation in the *PLYA programme* had been decisive, as he had completed secondary school and was continuing his studies at university. By way of introduction, *Bojan Petrijan*, the director of the municipal administration of Murska Sobota, emphasised the inclusion of adult education in the development projects of the municipality and region, saying that people are the greatest resource in Prekmurje. We continued our journey around Prekmurje in the village of Pomelaj, in the rural development core. Our host, director *Dragica Horvat*, together with locals and the director of DART, a private education company that is the co-founder of the rural development core, were waiting for us with a table laden with culinary delights from Prekmurje. This was followed by a comprehensive presentation of the concept of the rural development cooperative, the purpose of which is to revive traditional crafts in this area (two national vocational

qualifications have already been prepared), development, education and sale of home-made goods, either handicrafts (woven products from bast, thatched roofs) or food specialities from the local area (pastries, dried fruit, stuffed fruit or vegetables). Our hosts continued by preparing for our Botswanan guests a workshop on weaving goods from bast and a traditional baking workshop. The instructors were women from local villages who had gained qualifications as weavers and bakers through educational programmes within the rural development core.

In Tolmin, our hosts were the staff of the Soča Valley Development Centre, where mayor *Uroš Bežan* warmly greeted participants. The visit was continued by director *Roman Medved*, the dedicated staff of the development agency and participants in various projects. In their presentations, they clearly addressed the key development problems of the region, and how the development agency has responded to them through its projects. They made particular mention of educational projects that have encouraged participants towards specific activities that have enabled them to survive or earn more. At the same time, these activities are linked to the natural features and traditions of the region. They placed great emphasis on study circles that chose to concentrate their work on the rich geology of the region, processing whey as an underused product in cheese making, environmental food production and amateur painting.

Our guests from Botswana also had the chance to learn about the vocational programmes of the Biotechnology Education Centre in Ljubljana, where director *Tomaž Geršak* and his colleagues enthused them with a presentation of the breadmaking and bakery programmes. One interesting presentation *Evita Leskovšek* explained preventive measures and educational activities of the Institute of Public Health in Ljubljana in the area of prevention, treatment and living with AIDS. Last but not least, on a visit to the Beekeeping Association of Slovenia in Lukovica, the association's secretary *Anton Tomec* spoke of the tradition of honey-making and bee products in Slovenia, and about education to obtain the necessary knowledge for beekeeping.

At the end of the visit, our guests from Botswana expressed their delight at the reception and hospitality in Slovenia. Without exception they stressed that the whole visit was very relevant to their development needs, and they had had numerous ideas for new projects and possibilities for further cooperation between the two countries. Some of their proposals go beyond education, such as cooperation in planning the development of beekeeping, introduction of weaving useful products from bast, the introduction of milk processing and milk products, the further development of tourism with local food specialities (e.g. farm tourism), the development of standards in bread and pastry making. In the area of education they expressed a desire for cooperation between the University of Botswana and the University of Ljubljana Department of Adult Education at the Faculty of Arts and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in the area of development of adult-education staff, development of guidance activities for

adults, promotion of adult education, encouraging projects to involve young people who have left school. They would also like to be able to organise education for a group of adults in various vocational areas, in various crafts in Slovenia. We came to the joint conclusion that both countries need to secure funding to enable further cooperation in the area of education as well as the start of cooperation in other areas, such as the economy, crafts, culture, agriculture and others. We went our separate ways with positive feelings and optimism that we had learnt a great deal from one another, that we had established considerable mutual confidence and respect, and that this in turn has built the foundations for long-term cooperation between our two countries. And to conclude with the words of welcoming address of Ms *Marjutka Hafner*, secretary of Unesco Commission in Slovenia: "... my dear friend and colleague who is the ambassador of Uganda to UNESCO always says to me when he sees me ... my dear sisters I don't know why my heart is filled with joy when I see you here."

Estera Možina, MSc ([ester.mozina@acs.si](mailto:ester.mozina@acs.si)), SIAE

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



Andragoški center Republike Slovenije  
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education