

# e-novičke

Winter 2012

**Dear readers,** please find attached the Winter edition of the online bulletin edited by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), available also at [http://www.acs.si/bulletin\\_e-novicke](http://www.acs.si/bulletin_e-novicke). The content briefly presented here is a result of our creative energy and momentum. We wish you pleasant reading, Nevenka Kocijančič, executive editor, and Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, editor-in-chief

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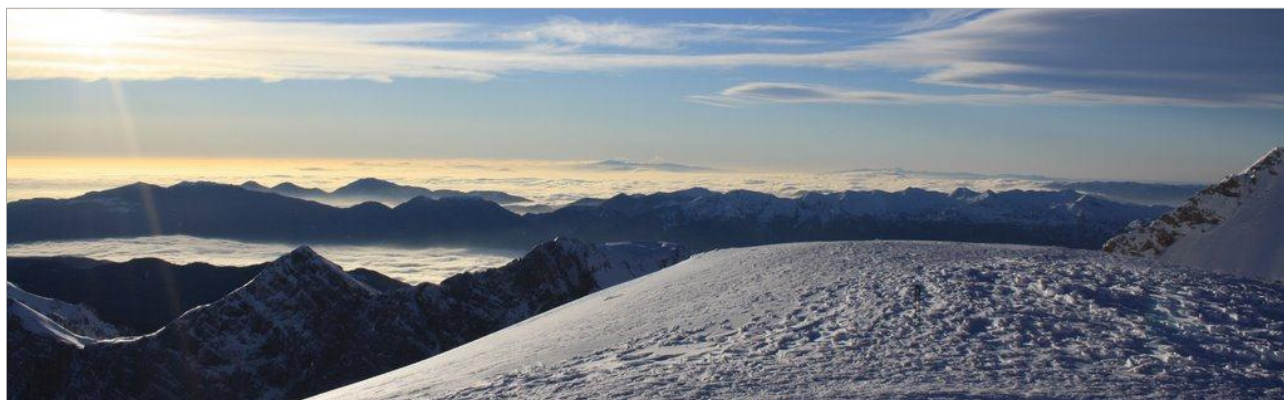
## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Dear friends!

In many ways, 2013 will certainly be an exceptional, landmark year – in part also because we will be marked by the integration of public institutions in the National Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for the Development of Education.

I hope that you too will have an outstanding year in accepting learning challenges, rich in achieving personal wishes and generously endowed with the little pleasures that brighten your day. For 2013 I wish you abundant luck, health and success; may December's luxury and joy remain in your hearts throughout the year, and may tolerance and love enrich your daily lives and work.

Andrej Sotošek, MSc, SIAE director



(photo: Matjaž Šemrov)

## SIAE PROJECTS AND EVENTS

### Pilot implementation of expert external evaluation in educational organisations for adults

In 2012 the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education introduced a pilot implementation of expert external evaluation in two educational organisations for adult – Murska Sobota Adult Education Centre and Šentjur Adult Education Centre. Expert external evaluation complemented the processes of internal quality assessment in the organisations, since they gained external feedback on the quality of their work in specific areas, including recommendations for further development. The expert external evaluations were carried out by six expert external evaluators, selected in a public call, together with colleagues from SIAE.



In June 2012 we held a preparatory meeting for educational organisations, and in September 2012 we conducted training for expert external evaluators. Expert external evaluators carried out the

entire process of external evaluation, which includes an overview of a self-assessment report prepared by the organisation, preparation of interviews, visiting the organisation, carrying out interviews and in the end drawing up an expert external evaluation report.

Regular monitoring of activities together with the December meeting, where we evaluated the pilot implementation, will enable us to draft the proposal for placing expert external evaluation within the system of quality in adult education.

More: [http://kakovost.acs.si/incentives/external\\_evaluation/](http://kakovost.acs.si/incentives/external_evaluation/)

Alenka Jurič Rajh ([alenka.juric.rajh@acs.si](mailto:alenka.juric.rajh@acs.si)), SIAE

### **Henning Salling Olesen appeals to Minister Turk to preserve the independence of the SIAE**

On 26 July the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport informed the representatives of public institutes of a planned merging, intended to generate savings and greater efficiency. Since the anticipated quality support should “help all educational institutions, from nursery schools to universities, achieve a breakthrough for Slovenia in the area of education ...” we draw attention to the role of adult education and the SIAE. We fear that with the merging of institutes and termination of the SIAE, Slovenia will lose a great deal:

- The loss of the current close links with the network of providers would hamper the adult education system and destroy effectiveness on the local level.
- We would lose our international recognition and the explicit commitment to the development of adult education.
- Implementation of the concept of lifelong learning would be brought into question – the SIAE has implemented it and decisively contributed to its fulfilment – and we are committed to it under the EU strategies!
- Close to 350,000 participants in adult education in Slovenia (and 1 million currently not participating) would lose high-quality support and the cornerstone of their lifelong learning; in all probability Slovenia would lose its current outstanding position on the EU scale.

These and similar dangers are understood by the representatives of international associations. The President of the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults – [ESREA](#), Henning Salling



Olesen, sent a letter at the beginning of November to Dr Žiga Turk, Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, in which he writes that ESREA supports maintaining the independence of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. In the opinion of the Society, in the past 20 years of its existence, the SIAE has played a remarkable and active role in European research in the field of adult education. Throughout that time it has enjoyed an outstanding reputation in Europe, having cooperated in the organisation of many ESREA events, the latest being a conference in September this year in Ljubljana. For this very reason they express surprise at the fact that the SIAE would no longer exist as an independent institution.

The members of the Society are aware that all European governments are under financial pressure, and are therefore trying to function more sparingly through structural changes, but they point out that through such a reorganisation, certain potentials linked to research in adult education will be lost. They stress that adult education is a specific field of education. The announced measure would destroy the professional integrity and proven successful organisation of the operations to date of the SIAE, and would thereby do great harm to the substantive and organisational integrity of the systemic addressing of adult education. The creation of such educational research areas is a long and slow process, so the damage done would have long-term consequences for the development of adult education in Slovenia, which currently plays an important part in the European area for what it has achieved, especially given that it is a small and young country.

[The letter from the President of ESREA](#) can be viewed [on the SIAE website](#), which shows all the letters of support.

Summarised by Mateja Pečar ([mateja.pecar@acs.si](mailto:mateja.pecar@acs.si)), SIAE

### The LLinE journal publishes an article on employee education during a recession



[LLinE](#) is a European publication aimed at the advancement of adult education, lifelong learning, intercultural cooperation and best practice research.

The latest issue, which is devoted to the financing of lifelong learning, features an article by our staff member *Jasmina Mirčeva MA*. In this article the author presents the results of SIAE research *Effects of the economic crisis on education for the needs of the labour market and the influence of education as a factor of recovery*, and more precisely the impact of the recession on the level of educational participation of employees and the impact of financing employee education and training in terms of overcoming the crisis. The presentation of the current state and analysis of the

behaviour of companies during the crisis involved the use of qualitative and quantitative methods and primary and secondary sources. The quantitative analysis yields facts regarding education and training of the active population in Slovenia before the crisis began (2007), in the period when negative economic growth started (2008) and when the situation stabilised (2009). The companies offering education that were subjected to analysis were divided into three groups: those that were seriously affected by the crisis, those that were affected only partly, and those whose performance was the same or even better. The analysis of the effects and results of interviews conducted with management staff enabled us to distribute these companies into three ideally typical models, based on reactions to the crisis and on financing employee training. The 'survival' model involves organisations that made cutbacks in all areas. In some places this began specifically with limiting investment in education, despite the fact that education for human resources is necessary and important. The second model of organisations is also marked by cutbacks, but investment was maintained in education. They actually allocated less than previously for education, but at the same time they sought possibilities for financing education from regional, national and other sources. Furthermore, these companies got involved in providing 'internal' training, which was previously provided by external organisations. The last model comprises companies that remained fully committed to human resources development. These companies see the limited prospects in the market as a challenge – both for acquiring the necessary skills and for seeking new business contacts. The managers of these companies are aware that in

turbulent times, the quality of their human resources is of vital importance, and they are prepared to invest in them, as well as in new skills for all employees. They regard lifelong learning not as a right or privilege, but as a necessity and commitment. Rejecting training is for them a serious breach and neglect of their professional obligations.

This summary can be condensed into two main findings. In a period of recession, investment in key competences grows mainly among management staff and experts, those newly employed and those whose positions are changing. Downsizing of staff levels is felt firstly by those without the necessary knowledge, skills and competence.

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

### Education on offer for adults 2012/2013

Based on the analysis of education on offer for adults presented in the [Review of Education on Offer for Adults 2012/2013](#) (in Slovenian language), we summarise a few of the main findings.

By the end of October, the Review contained presentations of education on offer by 272 adult education providers (of which 33 were new providers). They published the planned provision of 4,255 education and training courses. The indicators will still change before the end of the academic year, since education providers have the possibility of continuous entry of new data.



The Review publishes the education on offer from what are in composition very diverse education providers – from educational organisations to institutions providing adult education only as a supplementary activity. The biggest providers include private educational organisations, secondary schools with adult education departments, higher vocational schools and folk high schools, while other institutions also offer a wealth of educational activity.

Programmes involve predominantly non-formal education for general needs, leisure and work, while there is a wealth of courses offered to gain a higher level of formal education and to obtain national vocational qualifications. The content of the courses is quite diverse (26 different subject areas and 294 sub-areas under the Classification of education contents). There are courses predominantly in the field of the humanities (especially learning foreign languages and computer skills, personal development courses and business and administrative skills).

Courses are aimed at various target groups, including both the general public and more specific target groups (the unemployed, elderly, entrepreneurs, employees, persons with special needs, aliens and various ethnic groups).

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## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### New international project studies the effects of non-formal adult education

In November 2011 the SIAE started working on a new research project entitled *Benefits of Lifelong Learning – BeLL*, which is supported financially by the European Union through the programme Lifelong Learning – Studies and Comparative Research (KA 1).



This project, which will be concluded in November 2013, is being coordinated by the German Institute for Adult Education – Centre for Lifelong Learning in Leibniz (DIE) in a consortium with British and Finnish partners, who are beginners in researching this field. The project group comprises three universities, three private and one public research centre and one adult education provider organisation.

The Adult Education Society of Serbia will collaborate in all phases of the project as a silent partner. The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) is the leading partner in transferring the project results into practice.

In the project we research the complex links between adult participation in non-formal types of education and the direct effects of their participation in such education on their prosperity and on the society in which they live. The research does not focus on the economic effects of learning (higher earnings or greater revenues from taxes), but studies the **social** (greater inclusion in social support, more efficient networks, better health and greater inclusion in society) and **individual effects of learning** (better self-image and greater self-confidence).

This is the first international research project to bring together comparable quantitative and qualitative data on the measurable effects of involvement in non-formal adult education. Based on empirical data, policy planners will be able to make more appropriate decisions, adult education will be more present in education policy, and most importantly we would like to encourage investment in the frequently marginalised fields of adult education. Another equally important aim of the project is to evaluate the concept of ‘effects’ in the context of European comparative studies and to obtain data on the nature and interpersonal links of such effects.

Data on the effects of non-formal learning will be collected directly from adult learners through a questionnaire and in-depth interviews using a common methodology. We are counting on being helped to gain access to adult participants in non-formal education by educational and other organisations that are leaders in adult non-formal education in Slovenia.

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

## European Peer Review in Guidance and Counselling in Adult Vocational Education and Training (EuroPeerGuid)

SIAE participated with partners from Portugal and Finland in the project [EuroPeerGuid](#), whose main purpose is to expand the peer review methodology to adult education guidance and counselling. In the project we:

- prepared a European Peer Review Manual for Educational and Vocational Guidance for Adults;
- participated in international training for conducting peer reviews in Lisbon;
- provided national training in our organisation for peers and included guidance centres;
- tested the peer review methodology in guidance centres in Finland, Portugal and Slovenia;
- organised the final conference of the project in Lisbon (photo).

In Slovenia the peer review methodology was tested in May 2012 in the ISIO guidance centres of Žalec, Ljubljana and Murska Sobota. Two international reviewers from Finland participated.



The evaluation of the project showed that all those involved in the project had a positive experience that has greatly contributed to the professional development and personal growth of the participants. The peer review methodology has been successfully transferred to the field of counselling in adult education, with some additional new steps in the method and some new tools to use. Recommendations based on experiences from different international peer reviews were taken into account in the revision of the Manual, which can be viewed on the website of the project.

Alenka Jurič Rajh ([alenka.juric.rajh@acs.si](mailto:alenka.juric.rajh@acs.si)), SIAE

## Future Forum 2012

[The Austrian Association of Folk High Schools](#) (VÖV), this time in cooperation with the [Bavarian Association of Adult Education Centres](#) (bvv) organised between 9 and 11 July in the German town of Seon the fourth international conference [Future Forum](#) (FF), with the subheading *Society without a middle class? Adult education out of bounds?* On the invitation of the co-organisers, experts from other European countries, mainly members of the Central European FF network, took part.

The tone of the conference was set by acclaimed speakers, including *Prof Dr Sergio Bologna*, sociologist and author of publications on the labour movement, *Ralf Holtzward* of the Federal Agency for Labour, *Walter Huber*, head of the human resources administration at Siemens, and the Berlin journalist *Ulrike Herrmann*. Their sociological and economic views were linked to adult education, and its future was discussed, by representatives of Austrian, Bavarian and other adult education practices, including by the highest representatives of the co-organisers, *Dr Gerhard Bisovsky* (VÖV), *Wilhelm F. Lang* (bvv) and *Uwe Gartenschläger* (dvv international), as well as others.



An awareness was formed that middle class demand for adult education was actually falling slightly, and above all it was increasingly tied to work. Adult education can be an important partner in the active employment policy, but it must furnish itself with information on demand trends in the labour market and adjust what it offers accordingly. To this end, research approaches need to be pursued to shape an adaptable vision of lifelong learning for all social strata and for people of all ages, wherein one should not forget



general, non-formal education and training, evaluation and recognition of knowledge obtained through non-formal avenues, and a strengthening of the capacity to accept change, successful responses to it and triggering change. In the knowledge that entirely new methods and forms of institutional and individual cooperation are being established (self-organisation and adaptable, mobile, team and project forms of work), raising public awareness is also extremely important.

The programme and materials from FF 2012 are available [on the FF website](#).

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### **Impressions from the closing conference of the Eur-Alpha project in Bonn**

On 4 September a conference in Bonn entitled *Literacy Learning – its place in Europe: The issues and concerns of learners and tutors* marked the end of the three-year project [European Network for Adult Literacy and Numeracy – Eur-Alpha](#), which we briefly presented previously in [e-Novičke Spring 2012](#).

The closing conference was attended by educators from Slovenia: a representative of the Velenje Folk High School and teacher in the adult literacy programmes, *Mirjam Šibanc*, two of her participants in the programme, *Antonija Jeraj* and *Ivana Benda* (photographed together with Michael Power from Ireland), and the author of this article, a representative of the SIAE.





The main focus of the conference was a presentation of project results:

- [\*The learners' MANIFESTO\*](#) – this was prepared by adult participants in education from several European countries, and in it they wrote what and how they wish to learn;
- [\*The Charter\*](#) – compiled by teachers in adult programmes, and in it they summarised their years of experience in working with adults;
- [\*Enhancing the power to take action\*](#) – this includes an example of a successful programme participant from Slovenia.

Project participants illustrated what it means to live in Europe today if you lack adequate education, employment, money and power to change your situation. They see this as a political issue and problem, so their messages were aimed at those who make decisions.



The messages from the *Eur-Alpha* project are important for Slovenia. Educators of adults and programme participants can find in them confirmation that in Europe we are not alone in our efforts, and we may draw inspiration from them for continued work. Everyone together, and especially policy planners, should understand the words of the European Commissioner for Education,

Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, *Androulla Vassiliou*: *“Investments in improving the literacy of citizens of all ages are economically justified, since they bring individuals and society tangible benefits that can be defined in the long term in billions of euros.”*

We invite you to have a look at the [video](#), which showcases the event and the project itself.

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

## **We attended the Conference on Literacy**

The two-day conference *Literacy for All*, which was attended by the SIAE director, Andrej Sotošek, MSc, was organised by the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture and the European Commission as part of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and was held on 5 and 6 September in Nicosia.

A presentation was given of the report of the [high-level expert group](#), which the European Commission established to analyse available data, assess the most effective policies and define methods for achieving the common goal – improving the level of literacy, since this is of vital importance for improving people's lives and for developing knowledge, innovation and the economy.

[\*The report\*](#), unveiled at a conference in Nicosia, provides examples of successful literacy projects in European countries, as well as spotlighting individuals who have overcome the taboo of illiteracy and transformed their lives. *Androulla Vassiliou*, the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, said: *»We are living a paradox: while reading and writing are more important and relevant than ever before in the context of our digitised world, our literacy skills are not keeping up. We urgently need to reverse this alarming situation ...«* ([closing speech](#))

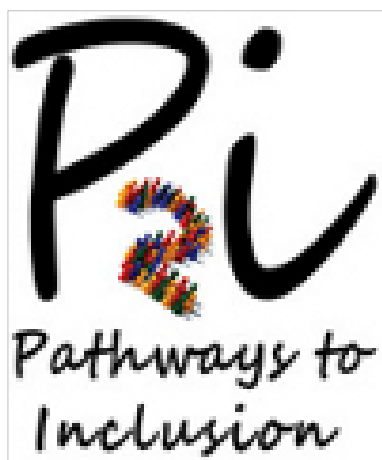
More information can be found in the [press release](#) (European Commission, 6 September 2012) and on the [website of the Cypriot Presidency of the EU](#).



We invite you to have a look at the two-minute [video recording](#) of the speech by Dutch Princess Laurentien, the goodwill ambassador for literacy and head of the high-level expert group, on literacy day.

Summarised by Nevenka Kocijančič ([nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si](mailto:nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si)), SIAE

### **Inclusive education and learning: challenges and opportunities**



On the invitation of the organisers – the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities ([EASPD](#)) and the Hungarian Lifelong Learning Association – on 13 and 14 September 2012 we attended the closing conference in Budapest for the multilateral network Comenius – [Pathways to inclusion](#) (P2i). The event was intended to provide an overview of the situation in the area of policy and practice for inclusive education, to present the results of the three-year cooperation of 11 European partners, including the Dolfka Boštjančič Centre for Training, Work and Care in Draga pri Igu, and to frame responses to current challenges. Around 250 participants from 30 countries represented institutions for persons with special needs, their users, educational organisations, universities, societies and many others.

In the workshop entitled *Lifelong learning for all – answers to the challenges of the financial crisis*, the author of this article spoke about the Slovenian approaches to raising awareness of the importance of education and improving access to lifelong learning for all. I presented to participants the *Lifelong Learning Week* and the campaign *Role Models Attract*, and using a video portrait of a 2012 SIAE award recipient, Jože Pirh, I stressed how their and our missions have many common points.

The greatest attention and approval at the conference was given to those participants who themselves are persons with special needs. Their stories were moving and at the same time inspiring. You can find more on the conference on its [website](#), which will also soon publish papers and a manifesto about inclusive education,

offering recommendations to all participants to establish a more inclusive education system and society as a whole.

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## International scientific conference in Ljubljana

From 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of September an international scientific conference was held in Ljubljana for the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults – ESREA. The conference, entitled [\*Intergenerational solidarity and education of older adults in community\*](#), was organised by the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Arts (in cooperation with CMEPIUS) and with the financial support of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport and the Slovenian Research Agency, ARRS.

This was the third scientific conference within the newly established Network on Education and Learning of Older Adults – ELOA, which is part of the ESREA association.



The keynote speakers on the opening of the conference were: the vice-rector of the University of Ljubljana, *Prof Aleš Valič*, the vice-dean of the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts, *Prof Dr Vojko Gorjanc*, chair of the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Arts, *Prof Dr Janko Muršak*, and an initiator of the ELOA network, *Prof Dr Bernhard Schmidt-Herta* of the University of Tübingen (photographed below).

Of the approximately 80 participants at the conference, more than half were from abroad, coming from 11 European countries and from Australia and Hong Kong. Introductory papers were presented over the three days by acclaimed experts from various European universities: *Dr Ana Krajnc* (Slovenia), *Dr Peter Jarvis* (UK), *Dr Marvin Formosa* (Malta), *Dr António Fragoso* (Portugal), *Dr Ann-Kristin Boström* (Sweden) and *Dr Barry Hake* (Netherlands). They raised many issues associated with adult education in different national contexts and in changing demographic, economic, social and political circumstances. The leading papers provided the basis for group work, where the results of their own research on the education of older people and intergenerational education were presented by 33 experts from various countries, including eight presentations of European projects in this field (under the auspices of CMEPIUS).

On the evening of the opening day, conference participants were hosted by the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum, where members of the Slovenian University of the Third Age presented the work of older volunteers in various cultural and other institutions around Slovenia. One of the older volunteers led conference participants through an exhibition entitled *I, we and others: images of my world*.

Alongside the diverse expert programme, the conference offered sufficient scope for researchers to network and forge agreements on future cooperation.

Dr Sabina Jelenc Krašovec ([sabina.jelenc@guest.arnes.si](mailto:sabina.jelenc@guest.arnes.si)), Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana, Department of Educational Sciences

### Participation in the international project European InfoNet Adult Education III

The general objective of the Grundtvig project [\*European InfoNet Adult Education III\*](#), which will run from October 2012 to September 2015, is to maintain a comprehensive information portal on adult education in Europe. This includes an exchange of information on best practices in participating countries and on European adult education projects. The project involves the participation of 35 partners from the 27 EU Member States and some associated countries (Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey).



The SIAE will work on the project as a correspondent, and will also cooperate in spreading this information.

Mateja Pečar ([mateja.pecar@acs.si](mailto:mateja.pecar@acs.si)), SIAE

### We participated in the regional conference on lifelong learning and informal adult education

A regional conference entitled *Lifelong Learning and Non-formal Adult Education in South East Europe*, organised by the regional office of dvv international for South East Europe (SEE) in Sarajevo from 3 to 5 October 2012, was attended by 74 delegates from 13 countries.

The fundamental aims of the conference were:

- to present and analyse the situation in lifelong learning and non-formal adult education in the countries of South East Europe,
- to present best practices,
- to map out a path of closer regional cooperation and
- to formulate a common strategy of further systemic and expert development in the region.

From Slovenia, the event was attended by SIAE representatives *Andrej Sotošek, MSc*, the director, and *Jasmina Mirčeva MA*. We invite you to read the [conference report](#) (in Slovenian language), prepared by *Andrej Sotošek*.





A [press release](#) (3 October 2012) has been published and we invite you to browse through the [conference material](#) published on the website of dvv international.

Summarised by Nevenka Kocijančič ([nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si](mailto:nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si)), SIAE

## **Presentation in Brussels of Slovenia's approach to assessing and developing quality in adult education**

Under the auspices of the European Commission, activities were set in motion in 2012 for the preparation of a *European Quality Framework in Adult Education* (hereinafter the European Framework). A Thematic Group for Quality in Adult Education (Thematic Group) was formed, and this comprises recognised European experts in adult education and the development of approaches for assessing and developing quality in this area. In order to make the European Framework as useful as possible for Member States, at the beginning of this year the Thematic Group commissioned a study for the Dutch research institute Panteia, aimed at:

- analysing various approaches and models to ensure the quality of adult education in different European countries and
- drafting an expert basis and recommendations that can be used in the future by the Thematic Group in drawing up the framework on the European level.



Of 40 recognised examples, they chose 15 of the kind that can be instructive on the European level and can serve to offer components for designing the European Framework. The Slovenian self-evaluation model of *Offering Quality Education to Adults (OQEA)* was also selected. The Slovenian approach was examined and presented at the meeting with the European Commission in Brussels by *Dr Nemeth Balasz*, head of the adult education department at the University of Pecs (Hungary).

Of the 15 European examples of best practices, nine were selected (including the Slovenian) and presented at a pilot seminar on quality in adult education. The seminar, which was held on 10 October in Brussels, was attended by representatives of the European Commission in charge of the area of adult education, researchers and members of the Thematic Group for Quality.

Dr Tanja Možina ([tanja.mozina@acs.si](mailto:tanja.mozina@acs.si)), SIAE

## **Implementing the renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning**

On 23 October there was a gathering of national coordinators of European countries that had successfully applied in the closed call for the *Lifelong Learning* programme intended to implement the renewed [European Agenda for Adult Learning](#). *Tappio Säävälä* from the Adult Education Unit at the European Commission pointed out at the opening of the meeting that adult education was one of the political priorities on the

European and in many places on the national level. He stressed the importance of raising awareness among all sections of the public and coordinating stakeholders, two key aims of all our projects. The similarity and also diversity of these projects was highlighted in a comparative way by his colleague, *Martina Ni Cheallaigh*, who pointed out the advantage of small countries, since we have a better overview of the adult education network and more effective mechanisms for linking and synergy. She urged us to tie new activities as much as possible to existing ones. The collected summaries of project applications (29 in all, with involvement being declined by Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Switzerland) will soon be published on the [website intended for adult education](#).



Staff members from the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) acquainted us with the administrative and financial rules under which we must act in the two-year period of implementing planned projects. The coordinators then exchanged key substantive points in three working groups, in which we reported on whether our activities would also touch upon the professional development of adult educators, how we would approach promoting adult education for the target group of those with lower education and how we would set out the coordination of stakeholders on the national level.

The programme of the meeting was enhanced by a representative of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), *Gina Ebner*, who invited us to cooperate in their new project *ARALE* (*Awareness Raising for Adult Learning and Education*), financed in 2013 through the Grundtvig programme, Accompanying measures.

In the campaign to fulfil the *European Programme for Adult Learning*, the SIAE will be implementing a range of activities from September 2012 to August 2014 that will take place in a strong association with Lifelong Learning Week. For work purposes we have called this the *Learning Parade*, and we will report on the implementation of specific features of it in the Spring issue of e-Novičke.

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## **We took part in the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing group on indicators and benchmarks and conference on Evidence from secondary analysis of international surveys**

As part of the Cyprus Presidency of the EU Council, on 14 November Limassol in Cyprus was the venue for the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing group on indicators and benchmarks at the European Commission (SGIB). In the first part of the expert meeting, the greatest attention was focused on the [Education and Training Monitor 2012](#), for which we collaborated on its creation, and on other documents that accompany the issuing of the Commission Report – [Rethinking education](#). In the second part the presentations and discussions were focused on adapting the methodology of the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF), which we adopted from the field of employment, and which will shed light on established indicators (including adult participation in lifelong learning) from the aspect of different groups and additional, contextual indicators. Programmes of activities for the coming months were presented by Eurydice, CRELL and Cedefop, while Eurostat indicated

that the data framework for the involvement of adults (25–64 years) in formal and non-formal education and learning is now the Survey of Adult Education, which will be conducted every three years.

The SGIB meeting was followed by a conference on Evidence from secondary analysis of international surveys, which measures the competences attained by primary and secondary school pupils (TIMMS, PIRLS, PISA), the linguistic (ESLC) and civic competences of young people (ICCS), and from next year also the competences of adults (PIAAC). Around 180 participants from more than 30 countries gathered at the two-day event. *Pierre Mairesse*, head of the Lifelong Learning Directorate at the European Commission, stressed in his keynote address a new development that we have witnessed in the last two years: there is recognition of the vital importance of education and training (E&T) in overcoming the crisis, and two benchmarks in the area of education (attaining tertiary education and young people who drop out early) are among the overarching European benchmarks, while the European semester and country-adapted recommendations have become established, and the Commission together with numerous stakeholders has drawn up a new Message to the European Parliament (*Rethinking Education*) with seven very specific support documents. On the other hand he stressed the **complexity of the data** available, and the **abundance of data sources** provided by institutions within the Commission (Eurostat, CRELL etc.) and by external partners (OECD, IEA etc.). He set out the idea that the method of data gathering still belonged to the 20th century, and that we need to consider how new research will look in the face of significantly changed conditions in education systems.



The brief reports from the six working groups and the concluding panel part of the conference indicate that education systems are highly complex, and that despite the abundance of data sources and collected data, there are still many unknowns. An especially tough issue is measuring effects and quality aspects. There is a need for more numerous national and especially longitudinal surveys, as well as for secondary analysis, while at the same time they need to be linked together and intensified in terms of seeking explanations to individual phenomena, their possible causal relationships and so forth. There was also a focus on the fact that experts and politics are insufficiently informed regarding secondary analysis and its results.

The program, presentations and other information about the conference is available on the website <http://improving-skills.teamwork.fr>.

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## We attended the conference *One step up in later life*

From 19 to 21 November the European Commission held a conference on *One step up in later life: Learning for active ageing and intergenerational solidarity* with the aim of bringing together two processes:

- implementing the renewed European Agenda for adult learning, adopted last November on the basis of the strategies Europe 2020 and Education and Training 2020 and

- efforts to ensure active ageing and intergenerational solidarity by means of lifelong learning – reinforced as part of the European Year 2012.

The event involved around 200 representatives of the ministries of education and labour, adult educators, unions and companies, which benefit under the Grundtvig programme and other stakeholders from EU Member States and other countries, including Japan and Hong Kong. We were brought up to date regarding current events in education, such as the enhanced importance of education and training in overcoming the crisis, the issuing of the package of documents under the umbrella title [\*Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes\*](#), which will guide policy and the profession in the coming period, negotiations for a new programme of Erasmus financing for all, the European forum on beginning and continuing vocational education and training and more by the high representatives of the Commission: Commissioner *Androulla Vassiliou*, Deputy Director General of DG EAC, *Xavier Prats-Monne*, director of the Lifelong Learning Directorate: policies and programmes, *Antonio Silva Mendes* and the member of the cabinet for the area of employment, social affairs and inclusion, *Gyula Hegyi*.



In two panel discussions and plenary presentations, there were exchanges between representatives and politicians in the fields of adult education and social affairs, which is the main field covering the issue of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity. Most frequent mention was made of the topics of demographic change giving rise to an ageing society, political and professional efforts for active and healthy ageing, the right and duty of older people to lifelong learning, solidarity and interaction of all generations, intergenerational and intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and active citizenship (in light of the European Year 2013). In the accompanying programme, the representatives of various institutions presented 14 successful projects cofinanced under the Grundtvig programme, which dealt with the issue of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity.

The second conference day was devoted entirely to work in eight groups, for which the tone was set by two to three opening papers, and there was a key discussion on the following topics:

- maintaining employability through learning,
- learning for healthy ageing and health promotion,
- (intergenerational) learning for active participation and volunteering,
- intergenerational learning at the workplace,
- the needs and motivation for learning: the role of the authorities on the national level,
- intergenerational learning in education and training,
- learning in later life for inclusion, prosperity and life transitions.

The key messages of the working groups are compiled in the [conference memorandum](#).

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## Visit by European Commission representative



On 23 November the SIAE was visited by a representative of the European Commission, *Klaus Körner*, who is the country-desk officer at the Education and Culture Directorate, responsible for monitoring and promoting progress in Slovenia (and also in Germany, Austria and Croatia) in fulfilling the programme *Education and Training 2020*.

The SIAE director, *Andrej Sotošek, MSc*, gave him a presentation of the work of our institute, as well as of plans to bring together public institutes under the new National Institute for the Development of Education. As a member of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks at the European Commission, the author of this article presented some key indicators in adult education, and also familiarised the visitor with activities that the SIAE will carry out as national coordinator for fulfilment of the renewed [\*European Agenda for Adult Learning\*](#).

*Mr Körner* mentioned the dramatic organisational changes being experienced by the European Commission and the Lifelong Learning programme. He noted that as a small and relatively young country, Slovenia was indeed facing some difficult challenges in this time of crisis, but he believes in our ability to exploit our potentials and also to improve our situation through association and rationalisation. Here he ascribes vital importance to establishing the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and clear and open mutual communication.

During his three-day visit to this country, *Mr Körner* also visited the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the Ministry of Finance, the Vocational Education Centre, CMEPIUS and some other institutions. He made reference to a multisectoral European Commission mission scheduled for the beginning of next year, and expressed the hope that he would be able to meet with the heads of the new institute and also with the representatives of public institutes, since such a meeting would be an opportunity to build an encouraging and cooperative attitude among stakeholders.

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## Representatives of Future Forum in Ljubljana

On 6 and 7 December the core committee of the Forum on adult education for the Central European countries met at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. *Oswald Rogger* from Italy, *Janos Toth* from Hungary, *Jumbo Klercq* from the Netherlands and the author of this article – but sadly in the absence of our Forum secretary, *Stefan Vater* of the Austrian Association of Folk High Schools – reviewed the activities to date for implementing the Forum in 2013. The international conference will be held this time from 3 to 5 July 2013 in Innsbruck, and will address the impacts of the socio-economic crisis and the role of initiatives in adult education to overcome it. At the meeting we also resolved that it should address the meeting of needs in the labour market in the widest sense, and the development of new competences, while at the same time it



lays the foundations for the Forum in 2014 in the Tyrolean city of Bolzano. Its main theme will be the professionalisation of adult educators, which is one of the key priorities of European policy for the coming years. In our conclusions we proposed to the wider committee some plenary speakers for both Forum events, and here I made the offer that Slovenia could contribute one example from our practice for each Forum.

We then discussed the draft application for the Lifelong Learning programme, since we wish to obtain financial support for our operations. In this case too, the priority is professionalisation. In our conclusions we advocated a reduction in the participation fees, and if this proposal is accepted, participation at these Forums will be accessible to a wider circle of Slovenian participants, both in terms of location and financing. Current information on the Forum for 2013 can be followed on the website <http://www.vhs.or.at/466/>.

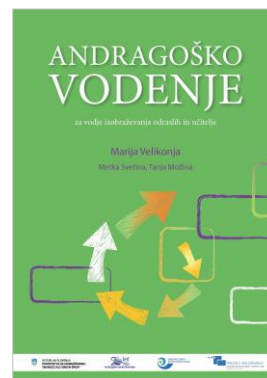
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## RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

### Adult education leadership

This publication is intended for adult education leaders and teachers. The publication defines the role of the leader of adult education; it discusses the teacher's professional development; it shows the influences brought into teachers' work by their concepts of learning and knowledge; and it presents the characteristics of adult participants in education, which the leader of adult education and the teacher of the adults need to know. Such professional principles are then placed in the context of procedures for drawing up and implementing the actual curriculum.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Andragosko\\_vodenje.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Andragosko_vodenje.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



### Basic and further training programmes of adult educators

This year we once again produced a brochure reviewing SIAE basic and further training programmes of adult educators. In addition to the basic programmes of adult education training, which offer the acquisition or enhancement of adult education knowledge and skills for planning and leading learning processes in groups of adult participants, the brochure sets out programmes of e-learning and basic and further training programmes that support the SIAE development projects.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Programi\\_andragoskega\\_uposabljanja\\_in\\_spolnjanja.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Programi_andragoskega_uposabljanja_in_spolnjanja.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



## Key competences of adults

This handbook, aimed at teachers and mentors, gathers together the brief contributions of various experts in the field of adult education, where a structured, simple and above all useful method is employed to explain the main aspects of the emergence, development and implementation of key competences in everyday teaching practice. The discourse and accessible design, which takes account of the customary practices of how vulnerable adult groups learn, are adapted to the most important criterion – the usability of the handbook.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Temeljne\\_zmoznosti\\_odraslih.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Temeljne_zmoznosti_odraslih.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



## Mosaic of quality

This publication offers an in-depth presentation of the internal system of quality in an adult education organisation, with recommendations for establishing and developing it, supported by a considerable range of aids and good practice examples. The conceptual basis and principles trigger a fundamental rethinking about the concerted development of quality in an educational organisation. A publication set out in this way guides the reader in a systematic way along the path of placing a system of quality in the activities of an educational organisation and defining, assessing and developing quality in educational organisations for adults.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Mozaik\\_kakovosti.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Mozaik_kakovosti.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



## Primary school for adults

This monograph is a result of a national evaluation study carried out by the SIAE and National Education Institute of Slovenia in 2011 and 2012. The results of the study are combined with theoretical insights into curriculum development, the characteristics of adults with learning and other difficulties, barriers and factors that hinder adults from vulnerable groups from reaching educational goals, teacher's career development, and provide suggestions and solutions for the future implementation of primary school for adults programme.



## Quality development in adult education

The brochure presents the SIAE projects about development of quality in adult education, and activities in the area of quality that we pursue. We familiarise readers with the ICT support that we have set up for easier implementation of self-evaluation processes, with the incentives for investing in quality, with publishing of professional literature in Slovenian language covering quality and with international cooperation. The brochure is bilingual, since in addition to Slovenian readers we wish to address professional English-speaking circles.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/drobni\\_tisk/Razvijanje\\_kakovosti\\_IO.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/drobni_tisk/Razvijanje_kakovosti_IO.pdf)



## Recognition of prior learning

In 2012 we published a promotional brochure or guidance tool aimed at participants in the SIAE basic and further training of adult educators, who would like to have recognition of the knowledge they have already acquired. It contains some basic pointers and information about recognition of prior learning for all those seeking to apply for recognition of knowledge acquired in our basic and further training of adult educators.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Priznavanje\\_ze\\_pridobljenega\\_znanja.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Priznavanje_ze_pridobljenega_znanja.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



## Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

This audio book from the collection On the Path to Life Success is a semi-documentary audio recording of the participants of programmes for vulnerable adults, with additional didactic elements. The concept for preparing the didactic material is based on the principle of linking into a logical whole a set of adapted interpretations of key competences and authentic statements of selected adults. Successful personal experience serves as a motivation to consider sense of initiative and entrepreneurship through the emotional embodiment in the story told. In technical terms, this audio book is the first such learning material, produced by the SIAE experts with the aim of it serving for the most vulnerable population groups.



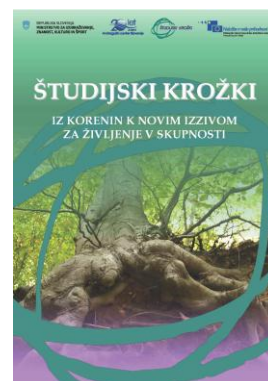
## Study circles

This publication, subtitled From Roots Towards New Challenges for Life in the Community adopts, draws from and enhances previous learning material. The first section was produced by the long-time head of Basic training for leaders and mentors of study circles. The second section written by the three authors presents the



main characteristics of study circles in the last twenty years: the predominance of ethnological content, the intergenerational structure of participants and taking account of the principles and processes of microlocal culture.

W: [http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Studijski\\_krozki.pdf](http://arhiv.acs.si/publikacije/Studijski_krozki.pdf) (in Slovenian language)



## SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

### Results of survey on continuing vocational training of employees in enterprises



The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia posted on its website the first results of an international unified statistical research project, Continuing Vocational Training Survey – CVTS. The sample survey reference year was 2010.

The results showed that in 2010, 36.5 % less funds were spent on continuing vocational training of employees in enterprises than in 2005. EUR 84.945 million (0.23% of GDP, 0.66% of total labour costs) was spent on continuing vocational training of employees in enterprises.

A total of 3,114 (40.8 %) of the 7,626 enterprises in Slovenia were what are called “training enterprises”. Among these comprises the major group are enterprises with 10 to 19 employers. This group represented over a third of all “training” enterprises and a tenth of all persons in paid employment in “training” enterprises.

As regards the size of enterprises, the fewest hours paid for programmes of formal and informal education and training were spent in enterprises employing 10–19 and 250–499 people. In these two groups employees attended on average between 27.7 and 31.4 hours of training. Most hours paid (62.4) were spent on training in small enterprises (between 20 and 49 employees). In the largest enterprises (1,000 and more employees) employees spent on average 27.3 paid hours on training.

More: [http://www.stat.si/eng/novica\\_prikazi.aspx?id=4806](http://www.stat.si/eng/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=4806).

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

### Continuing education in Slovenia

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia published the first data on continuing education in Slovenia in the academic year



2010/2011.

The study included 364 providers of continuing education in the academic year 2010/2011, which provided more than 20,000 different basic and further training programmes. The largest single number of providers was driving schools (30%). They were followed by specialised organisations providing adult education (29%), parts of enterprises, parts of schools and adult education centres.

In the observed period nearly 309,000 participants were registered. Less than 81% of participants attended non-verified programmes, especially programmes for the needs of performing an occupation (82% of participants) and programmes for general needs and leisure (15%). In the current public education programmes, most interest is shown in a variety of in-service training programmes for which prior education is provided (79%), and training at the end of elementary education (14%). Providers of education in the school year 3006 conducted language courses with 20,078 attendees. The greatest interest was in learning English and German.

More: [http://www.stat.si/eng/novica\\_prikazi.aspx?id=4840](http://www.stat.si/eng/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=4840).

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

## Adult Education Survey in Slovenia



The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia published the first preliminary data from an *Adult Education Survey* on its website. After a pilot survey in 2007, this survey was conducted for the second time throughout Europe in 2011. The survey sought to establish how much education is provided in Slovenia (and other European countries) for the purpose of gaining qualifications, and how far we are involved in types of non-formal education and occasional learning.

Included in the published results are disconcerting data on the large number of adults who believe that they do not need education. The reasons why adults did not pursue education differ somewhat by age: younger adults have to a greater extent cited family obligations, while those over 50 frequently cited age or state of health. The frequent reasons also include personal ones that are not associated with work. More than half the surveyed adults simply did not want to pursue education, since they did not need it for the job they were doing. The reason that they did not need education stands out prominently in all age groups. The lowest percentage (54%) is in the 25–34 age group, while it is equal at 65% in the other two age groups. Among all those who did not wish to pursue education, the reason that such education is too expensive was only in fifth place. This reason is given somewhat more frequently in the youngest age group (25–34 years) of adults.

More: [http://www.stat.si/eng/novica\\_prikazi.aspx?id=4896](http://www.stat.si/eng/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=4896).

Summarised by Nevenka Kocijančič ([nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si](mailto:nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si)), SIAE

## 90 years of Maribor Adult Education Centre

Maribor Adult Education Centre is a public institution with a rich history and tradition, offering its services to the public since 1922. This year we celebrate an important and prestigious milestone – the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



The rich tradition of our institution was established and developed with local educational needs in mind, and this continues to be the driving force of our development to this day. In 1922 the Adult Education Centre was founded with the goal of providing a base for the then emerging Slovenian intellectuals for whom they organised various lectures. After WW II Adult Education Centre began to provide education for people from all strata of society en masse. It was especially important in educating the workers of Maribor. By detecting the needs of the labour market, close collaboration with the Employment Service of Slovenia and with financial help from the state, we were able in the past 20 years to educate many of our vocational students for deficit vocations. As an active partner in the active employment policies we provided education and training for many people's first employment or career change, in this way actively contributing to social and economic integration and becoming one of the major social corrective factors for the local employment market. Maribor Adult Education Centre has come a long way since its beginnings - today we are an educational and guidance centre for adults, attentive to the needs of every individual, providing them complete education and guidance needed to reach individual educational goals.



We commemorated the 90th anniversary of Maribor Adult Education Centre on **14 May 2012** in Betnava Castle, where we also officially opened Lifelong Learning Week 2012 in Maribor.

On 4 October, the day before World Teacher's day, the Slovenian awards for education 2012 were awarded and Maribor Adult Educational Centre was presented with an award for its life's work. The Slovenian Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, *Dr Žiga Turk*, said in his speech that knowledge shapes the people and our society and that good knowledge cannot exist without good teachers.

Irena Urankar ([irena.urankar@azm-lu.si](mailto:irena.urankar@azm-lu.si)), Maribor Adult Education Centre

## Ceremony marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Koper Adult Education Centre

Koper Adult Education Centre celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 16 May. The ceremony took place at the Regional Museum in Koper. It was attended by representatives of all three Coastal municipalities and also by representatives of national institutions and adult education associations.



*“We are proud of the role we play in the local environment”* said *Alenka Grželj*, long-time director of this public institution in her address. It all started before the official establishment, with a series of small, informal adult education centres in the cities and hinterlands that had an educational and cultural role. Koper



Adult Education Centre has been an important factor and contributor to the development of coastal areas since its founding in 1961 (similar institutions were established earlier in Izola and Piran). The content of their programmes has varied over time and has been a reflection of economic, political and social conditions. However, social responsibility and the pursuit of quality education and useful knowledge for all ages has remained the focus throughout all those years.

Koper Adult Education Centre is today a regional educational, informational and counselling centre for adults from the Coastal area. Expertise and creativity allow employees to quickly react to the needs of individuals, communities and the economy. This has been evident also in times of economic crisis when, with the help of European and national funds, they are able to offer a series of cost-free educational and other complementary activities to individuals who would otherwise not be able to afford education.

The deputy mayor of Koper presented a prize to the director of Koper Adult Education Centre and stressed the close link between learning, knowledge and development of the local economy.

Kristina Udovič Kocjančič ([kristina.udovic@lu-koper.si](mailto:kristina.udovic@lu-koper.si)), Koper Adult Education Centre

### Improving Literacy project at Novo mesto Adult Education Centre

At Novo mesto Adult Education Centre (RIC Novo mesto), we carried out 33 programmes in the context of the project Improving Literacy in the academic year 2011/2012. The following programmes were performed: computer and digital literacy programmes for adults and adult literacy programmes for adult returners into formal education, for adults living in rural areas, for adults with special needs, for elderly (see photo), workplace literacy programmes, family literacy programmes, literacy programmes as well as two short programmes: dialogical reading circle and family literacy programmes for parents and preschool children.



In these programmes, participants acquire knowledge and skills for dealing with everyday situations, better quality of living, higher competition on the labour market and to restart their education. In the last season, we provided free educational paths for more than 440 adults hungry for knowledge and 230 participants obtained formally valid certificates. A total of 2,600 educational hours were spent on the project.

The final evaluation showed that the participants evaluated the programmes, their content and the teachers as very good. One participant wrote: *“I enjoyed the company of other participants and moreover, I would like*



*to compliment the teachers. I was thrilled about the computer and English course and I would recommend the programme to all unemployed people.”*

Nina Novak ([nina.novak@ric-nm.si](mailto:nina.novak@ric-nm.si)), Novo mesto Adult Education Centre

## Winning project for EnerCities

Velenje Adult Education Centre, a member of the Association of Slovenian Adult Education Centres, won the prestigious Sustainable Energy Europe Award (SEE Award) in the field of education on the topic of renewable energy for the project EnerCities. The award ceremony was held on 19 June in Brussels during Sustainable Energy Week, and was hosted by European Commissioner for Energy *Günther H. Oettinger*.



The project was selected from 262 best European projects. It was developed under the auspices of the EU Intelligent Energy Europe programme. The three-year project was coordinated by the Dutch partner ROC Nijmegen, who also signed up the game for the contest. Velenje Adult Education Centre was the only Slovenian partner in the project. Our role was to participate in the development of gaming platforms, prepare teaching materials for teachers and promote the game in Slovenia.

Within the partnership we have developed a serious online educational game, where young people can build energy-efficient cities, but must pay attention to economic indicators and also people's satisfaction. Through Facebook, the game has now been played by more than 100,000 young people.

The game was also selected as the best online educational game in the Netherlands and has also received recognition from Savinjsko-Šaleška Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia for the best innovation.

More about the project can be found online at the website <http://www.enercities.eu>.

Brigita Kropušek Ranzinger ([brigita@lu-velenje.si](mailto:brigita@lu-velenje.si)), Velenje Adult Education Centre

## Three guidance centres celebrate 10 years of successful operation

The network of 14 regional adult education guidance centres (IGAE centres) was created to help adults find free information and guidance to support their education and learning. The centres help adults make decisions regarding their education, the organisation and flow of their learning, the planning of their further education path and regarding career development. They promote lifelong learning and link the adult education providers in a particular region.

Since 2008 the guidance centres have operated as part of the Lifelong



Learning Centres, whose activities are funded by the European Union through financing from the European Social Fund and by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. The project is being conducted as part of the *Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007–2013*, under the *Development of Human Resources and Lifelong Learning* and the priority *Improving the Quality and Effectiveness of Education and Training Systems*.

This year three guidance centres are marking their 10th anniversaries: Gorenjska, Postojna and Zasavje. Below we devote a little more space to the celebration of these anniversaries.

Andreja Dobrovoljc, MSc ([andreja.dobrovoljc@acs.si](mailto:andreja.dobrovoljc@acs.si)), SIAE

## Gorenjska Guidance Centre



Development of guidance activities in the Gorenjska region began ten years ago with the establishment of the Jesenice Guidance Centre, which provided comprehensive and confidential information and advice in the field of education to adult residents of six municipalities. After six years of successful work, in 2008 we expanded our activities to the entire Gorenjska region and took the name Gorenjska Guidance Centre.

In order to provide guidance to the widest number of adults we carry out our activities not only in the Guidance Centre office in Jesenice, but also at ten different locations all over the region. Guidance activities take place in libraries, schools, NGO's and other institutions. With the mobile guidance service at six access points we provide guidance to vulnerable target groups such as the disabled, blind and partially sighted people, drug addicts and people with mental health problems.

We are very proud of our guidance network, which includes local authorities, development agencies, chambers of commerce and handicrafts, business, employment services, schools, adult education organisations, NGOs and other stakeholders. The network is set up in a way that ensures the active participation of bodies who are deciding about local/regional development strategies, have great professional and political influence in the region and represent the interests of prime users in guidance services.

More than 6,000 clients and a number of other high-profile results, such as conferences and round tables in the field of guidance, proves that in ten years we succeeded in developing a sustainable concept that creates an open learning environment and increases access to lifelong learning in the region.

All this indicates the need for a long-term development concept, which will not be based on temporary project financing, but on stable long-term funding from the national budget.

Maja Radinovič Hajdič, MSc ([maja.radinovic.hajdic@lu-jesenice.net](mailto:maja.radinovic.hajdic@lu-jesenice.net)), Gorenjska Guidance Centre

## Postojna Guidance Centre celebrates 10 years with you



It is a great pleasure to say that an efficient advisory and information system in the field of adult education has gradually been introduced and implemented in the Notranjsko-kraška region over the last 10 years. This statement is based on figures and, more importantly, on the fact that many of our numerous clients have become repeat users of our advisory centre.

In recent years more than 5,000 users have contacted us. Our statistics show that 55% are women, the most frequent age group is 30–40, and as for education, those with vocational qualifications represent 28%.

Since the beginning we have succeeded in forming a varied network of professional and strategic partners, which includes local educational supportive and administrative organisations. Their cooperation has helped us to perform more efficiently. In order to promote our service, our articles on adult education are edited regularly in the local gazette. We also organise workshops, free of charge, to teach individuals techniques of learning and give them useful information about the best possible use of their own intellectual abilities. Led by the belief that knowledge means the power to find a way out of distress, we are optimistic about the future. We are planning to pay even more attention to vulnerable target groups, as they are the ones that need the most support and information for their successful personal and professional development.

Celebrating our first important jubilee, we want to thank all our users for their confidence. We also want to express our gratitude to our strategic and professional partners for their cooperation and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education for their excellent professional support, training and guidance.

Erika Švara ([erika.svara@zavod-znanje.si](mailto:erika.svara@zavod-znanje.si)), Postojna Guidance centre

## Guidance Centre in Adult Education in Zasavje



The Guidance Centre in the Zasavje region is one of the smaller Guidance Centres in Slovenia. Despite the fact that we cover a region with barely 45,000 inhabitants, we have recorded over 1,500 guidance services per year since 2008.

The value and benefits brought by guidance activities in adult education in our region can be found on every corner. They are manifested in the form of satisfied customers returning because they recognise the differences in communication and treatment compared with other institutions. Secondly, one can also notice good co-operation with local organisations, particularly in the collaboration of various institutions to collectively address the problems of individual clients. It is also manifested in the collaboration with companies, associations and other organisations to motivate adults to engage in education. We successfully transfer and incorporate valuable knowledge and experience we have gained through the project over the years into other programmes of adult education, and we are continuously improving the

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quality of work at the Zasavje Adult Education Centre. Ultimately, all of this is reflected in changed attitudes towards learning in the Zasavje region, where learning and knowledge are increasingly recognised as a value. Guidance in adult education is successful because from its beginning it has been professionally supported by the coordinator of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, who keeps us up to date with new knowledge and is constantly setting new challenges for us.

Nevertheless, anniversaries are a good opportunity for new plans. At the moment we are somewhat more reserved when it comes to planning, since the project of the Lifelong Learning Centre of the Zasavje region (the Guidance Centre in Adult Education in Zasavje is currently in progress within this project) expires at the end of next year. We hope that the positive effects of guidance activities in the local or wider area are not perceived only by us and that there will be possibilities of continuing them.

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### European Commissioner Andor at the BOB Institute for Education and Cultural Activities

On Thursday, 17 September 2012, or it may have been a few days earlier, we had an emergency at the BOB Institute. The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, more specifically the EU Cohesion Policy Directorate, informed us that the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, *László Andor*, would be visiting us. The BOB Institute was confronted with a “protocol” issue.

On the exact day, at 16:40 the Commissioner drove up in front of our door. Accompanied by the director of the BOB Institute, *Mojca Fajdiga*, and by the Acting Director General of the EU Cohesion Policy Directorate, *Matija Vilfan*, the Commissioner and his escort were invited to our premises (in the photo; photo: Ministry of Economic Development and Technology). After the initial greeting by *Matija Vilfan*, the Commissioner was introduced to the activities and mission of the BOB Institute: Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA project) and “The Store”, one of its projects which was carried out by last year's participants of the PLYA project. Then the former participant *Jana Urbanija* from Radovljica PLYA, and participant *Nejc Pokec* from Ljubljana PLYA, told their stories.



After the formalities the Commissioner took a tour of the facilities, and got to see the work that was the result of a previous PLYA project. We also presented him our vision and our current results from the project *Preobrat* (Turnaround).



The commissioner expressed his thanks for our efforts, and he was impressed that such small numbers of individuals could produce such a variety of things. He admired the graphic of the dragon on the t-shirts, the dragon puppets and the soap in the shape of a dragon head. He was especially impressed by our mobile stand (in the photo; photo: Ministry of Economic Development and Technology)



He immediately asked Nejc how many mobile stands could be made in case they might want them in Brussels.

The whole meeting was held in a very relaxed atmosphere. The Commissioner extended his visit for a couple of minutes but we are quite sure that his plane did not leave without him.

Simona Hodnik ([info@zavod-bob.si](mailto:info@zavod-bob.si)), Institute for Education and Cultural Activities BOB in Ljubljana

## Successful Slovenian Guidance Centre Days 2012

From 19 to 21 September 2012, Slovenian Adult Education Guidance Centres and the SIAE for the eighth year running organised Slovenian Guidance Centres Days. Together with partner organisations, all fourteen guidance centres prepared numerous mediafriendly events on opportunities for formal and non-formal education and learning in the new school year.

As many as 78 different events were held over three days. It should be noted that some took place before the official date, and some after the official closing. The centres organised various events, including:

- **knowledge stalls** in various public places, where together with partners they promoted the possibilities of education (the above photograph is from Žalec);
- **free workshops and courses**, aimed at various target adult groups;
- **expert events and consultations**;
- **contact broadcasts** on local radio and television stations;
- **open house days** at guidance centres.



In the joint newspaper [\*Info-ISIO 2012–2013\*](#) (in Slovenian language), along with various possibilities for education we presented new features in the education system, in guidance support and in help for adults, the prospects of cofinancing adult education and more.

The centres report very good responses and attendance, so we can sum up by adding that such joint events serve to raise the profile of guidance centres for adult education in local environments, while at the same time they promote the possibilities of education and learning aimed at various adult groups.

Andreja Dobrovoljc, MSc ([andreja.dobrovoljc@acs.si](mailto:andreja.dobrovoljc@acs.si)), SIAE

## Knowledge as a competitive advantage of individuals

A regional conference entitled ICAE Europa 2020 – New Skills for New Jobs was held on 17 October 2012 in the conference room at the Primus hotel in Ptuj. The conference was organised by the Ptuj Adult Education Centre.

The purpose of this year's topic is further effective collaboration between educators, creators of regional and national development and important business people in our region. Among the invited guests were (see photo below):

- The Mayor of the municipality of Ptuj *Dr Štefan Čelan*, who spoke about developmental superiority based on inventions and innovations;
- Tanja *Vilič Klenovšek, MA*, from the Slovenian Adult Education Centre, which emphasizes among other things that we should enable greater equality and equity of access in adult education;
- The director of the Science and Research Centre of Bistra Ptuj, *Dr Alexandra Pivec* attracted the attention of the participants by talking about the possibilities of the connection between business and higher educational levels, and she also introduced the key characteristics of the modern workplace;
- The Chairman of the Board Talum Kidričevo, *Mr Marko Drobnič* underlined the importance of technological and industrial knowledge as one of the priority elements of the Europe 2020 strategy;
- The successful entrepreneur and director of the Tenzor company, *Mr Miran Senčar* pointed out that special knowledge is the basis of competitive advantage.



We are aware of the seriousness of the economic crisis and we are faced with a difficult economic situation. But all this is a reason to get out of the crisis successfully through effective actions and mutual cooperation. We can only be successful if we act together. Knowledge and skills of individuals and the constructive cooperation of employers is the only way to increase employability, and this also contributes to the greater social inclusion of people and quality of life.

You are invited to read a [longer article](#) about the consultation.

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## Report on the Annual Consultation on Adult Education 2012

This year's Annual Consultation on 5 and 6 December involved close to 240 participants. In the place of the scheduled Minister, *Dr Žiga Turk*, it was opened by the state secretary, *Mojca Škrinjar*. She emphasised the role of adult education (AE) in eliminating deficits of various capacities to which the OECD has drawn our attention. In her speech, she presented the planned merging of public institutes as a project to establish coordination and synergy, and here she had the response that ultimately there is no need to physically merge institutes that are recognised as successful by domestic and foreign circles.



In the plenary part, there was major interest in the presentation of the none too encouraging socio-economic image of Slovenia (*Dr Alenka Kajzer, OMAD*) and the orientation in talks with the EU for the new period of using European funds (*Marjana Dermelj, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology*). Under the principle of general to specific, there was then a presentation of the Resolution on the National Programme of Adult Education (ReNPIO) 2012–2020 (*Boštjan Rozman Zgonc* and *Katja Dovžak, MA*, both from the Education Ministry, and *Peter Beltram, MSc, SIAE*).

The most important part of the consultation was the working group discussions. The first group produced a large number of useful suggestions for improving the ReNPIO, specifically on the topic of its vision, the inclusion of several departments, arrangement of the preliminary financial activity, inclusion of non-governmental organisations and societies, certain additional items (sustainable development, human rights, programmes for remote rural areas and so on), target groups (farmers, young adults etc.) and indicators. In the second group, participants discussed the situation and challenges of various networks in adult education, they emphasised the issue of inappropriate standards and regulations and advocated a clear definition of the public network, public interest and consequent public financing. The Education Ministry representative stressed at this point that this process must be gradual, and that a balance needs to be found between strict prescribing and autonomy. In the third working group, participants pointed out the excessively long and formalised procedures in evaluating and recognising non-formally acquired knowledge, the need for greater information flow, professionalism and clear lines of responsibility, and for the spreading of positive experiences of recognition in the area of formal education, and more besides.

On the second day, before the reports from working group representatives, participants learned about the inclusion of Slovenia in European AE policies (*Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, SIAE*), and then about the latest trends in the labour market and in the active employment policy (*Damjana Košir, Labour Ministry*), which are bringing numerous professional challenges for AE and requiring it to be increasingly flexible.

The head of the competent section at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, *Boštjan Rozman Zgonc*, rounded off the consultation with responses to previously posed questions that were condensed into six groups: the process of adopting the ReNPIO, AE for persons with special needs, the prospects for AE and making use of the ESF, the inclusion of providers in formulating AE policy, the market logic of AE and the merging of public education institutes. This was followed by a very high-quality discussion that jumped from the area of education to the area of labour and back, which was a clear reflection of the increasingly intensive connection between the challenges of the two sectors. We also touched on the issue of the fate of strategic documents that are waiting to be brought back to life: The Lifelong Learning Strategy (2007), the new edition of the White Paper (2011), the Expert Basis of the SIAE for Changes to Legislation on (Adult) Education.



The consultation was groundbreaking in that we discussed matters that will leave an important mark on the development of the field, while at the same time we frequently touched on the fact that we will bring these

matters to fruition in circumstances that will be significantly different owing to the envisaged merging of public institutes in 2013. The constructive and cooperative atmosphere nevertheless generated the hope that next year we could meet again in a similar composition, while we would make our best efforts, fortified by the considerations of this year's meeting, to fulfil our mission.

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