



Andragoški center Republike Slovenije
Slovene Adult Education Centre

NOVIČKE



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▲ SAEC EVENTS ● Slovene National Programme of Adult Education ● Evaluation of Trials in Adult Education ● We Completed the Survey for the National Research into *Adult Literacy and Participation in Education* ● Functional Literacy of Roma in Hungary (I.) - the Presentation of a Project ● Functional Literacy of Roma in Hungary (II.) - the Training for Teachers ● A Global Community of Adult Education Through Information and Documentation: Action Plan for the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) ▲ SLOVENE ADULT EDUCATION SCENE Is a Society of People of all Ages our Future? ● Vocational Guidance at the Crossroads: International Conference on Vocational Guidance ● Public Work Programme *Learning Assistance for Participants in the Primary School for Adults* ● *First Steps to Employment* Study Circle ▲ SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE ● Developing Programmes for Adults ● Science: Significant Human Research Potential ● Internet: Logging on to the Global Network ● Natural Heritage: Encouraging Rural Development ● Association Agreement with the EU Takes Effect

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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 information:
 - 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.
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SAEC EVENTS



Slovene National Programme of Adult Education

Do adults in Slovenia have enough knowledge and skills to work successfully in a changing domestic and global environment? Do we have enough opportunities for continuous training and learning, and do we exploit these opportunities?

Figures show that we are behind the developed countries of the European Union, and that this gap is increasing. In terms of achieved level of education, the adult population is at the bottom of the list, and the gap is largest at the foot of the educational pyramid. For example in 1993, 24 percent of the population of Slovenia had completed 4 or 5 year secondary school, while in France the figure was 33 percent (1989), the Netherlands 36 percent (1990), Finland 40 percent (1989), the USA 46 percent and Germany as high as 61 percent (1989). These figures speak for themselves, but we can also add data on the average number of years of education (figures for 1992): in Slovenia, 9.6 years; Belgium, 11.2 years; Denmark, 11 years; France, 12 years; Germany 11.5 years; Norway, 12.1 years.

The gaps are thus large, while the figures on the level of education of adults provide a partial answer to the question of whether adults are prepared to study. The desire for education is dependent on the achieved level of formal education (as well as on age, socio-economic status, status in the workplace, sector and size of the company). Research in other countries on the proportion of employees receiving education for work needs shows that two to three times as many employees who have completed secondary school participate in education as those with primary school education or less.

Investment in education and responsibility for learning cannot be left to the free initiative of individuals and companies, an approach characteristic of the 80s, and one we still frequently hear concerning adult education. Steering measures at the national level are essential to increase investment in knowledge, to motivate adults for lifelong learning and education, and to develop educational provision in order to reduce at least slightly the gap in this field. To promote this sort of activity, the Slovene Adult Education Centre produced the Professional Basis for the National Programme of Adult Education. The government Expert Council for Adult Education has already accepted it, and it is awaiting discussion in the National Assembly.

The Professional Basis stipulates three global goals of the national programme; the authors gave them equal status, and they should be achieved by 2010. The first goal is that the state, through developed non-formal education, should enable the

majority of the population to obtain knowledge to improve the quality of their lives, become more informed and more cultured and civilised, to preserve cultural traditions and national identity, to allow the coexistence of different cultures and to protect the environment. Achieving the second goal would mean increasing the proportion of adults with at least secondary vocational education from 57 percent to at least 65 percent, while the proportion of adults with secondary vocational, professional or general education should rise from 38 percent to at least 43 percent. The third goal states that the state and other social partners will ensure workers different forms of and opportunities for education: to increase the achieved level of education and qualifications, to preserve, update and deepen knowledge and skills, and to develop and use top-level knowledge. They will also introduce different motivation factors to increase the readiness and opportunities for education and training for all employees and for at least 70 percent of the unemployed.

It will probably not prove difficult to reach agreement in the National Assembly on the fact that the need for adult education is real, and that conditions must be provided which can meet this need. In order to do so, we must ensure the development of three important factors. First, we need to develop an appropriate educational structure consisting of a network of programmes, a network of organisations for the development and implementation of programmes, a network of trained adult-education personnel, an advisory network, an information network, a research and development network and promotional activities. Motivational measures will have to be adopted aimed at companies, individuals and local communities to develop supply and demand in adult education and to increase investment in adult education. The operation of social partners and government departments in achieving the goals of the national programme of adult education must also be co-ordinated. This co-ordination, with the active co-operation at the local level of companies and individuals, could cause important shifts in adult education.

Let us now look at the state and direction of development of adult education at the local and national levels and among companies and individuals. Until now, the majority of measures and initiatives have taken place on the national level and were intended to improve workforce quality through measures of the active employment policy, modernisation of the system of adult education through updating of educational legislation and the introduction of initiatives, and measures for adult education in legislation in other fields (the economy, agriculture, forestry, tourism, science). At a time of increased investment in education as a whole, the share of funding for adult education has not risen in line with increased needs. For comparison, we can provide the share of gross domestic product spent on adult education in some other countries. In Denmark at the start of the 90s it stood at 0.47 percent, in France 0.32 percent, in Germany 0.32 percent and in the United Kingdom 0.23 percent. Taking account of the fact that these shares were even higher in the mid-80s, the proportion of gross domestic product spent on adult education in Slovenia, at 0.08 percent (1995) becomes even more insignificant. Thus much the same thing holds for adult education as applies to general education: the shortfalls from the past must

first be removed, and then funds must be earmarked for development initiatives and to maintain the agreed extent of activities.

The development of paths to ensure that each citizen has opportunities to learn at all stages of life is not exclusively dependent on state measures, which remain ineffective without the co-operation of the local community. According to World Bank calculations, knowledge or human capital accounts for 64 percent of natural wealth, while in a survey conducted by the Adult Education Centre the majority of Slovene municipalities were not aware of the advantages they would have if their population was better educated. Perhaps the addition to article 21 of the Law on Local Self-Government (Off. Gaz. 74/1998), which stipulates that the municipality "should create the conditions for adult education important for the development of the municipality and for the quality of life of its inhabitants", will help change things on this level.

Even the situation in companies is not encouraging, and is becoming less so. In the seventies, companies developed education for employees in a developed network of educational programmes and education centres, and in powerful development services in employers (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia) and in trade unions. At least 1 percent of gross personal income was allocated to education, and some self-management agreements set an even lower limit. Last year, a survey of 30 companies (half of them large companies) showed that just 6 percent of companies invested more than 1 or 1.5 percent of gross salaries in adult education. In the other companies, the figure ranged from 0.1 to 0.5 percent. Statistical figures indicate that expenditure per employee in 1995 was below the level from 1976, while the need for education has increased considerably in the interim. In such conditions, individuals were quickly forced to take financial responsibility for their own education. Ten years ago, 40 percent were paying for their own education; by 1994 the figure was already 70 percent.

The picture is thus not even slightly rosy. The national programme should be adopted as soon as possible in order to create the opportunity for effective measures at all levels and to allow us to catch up with the more developed countries within ten years.

Olga Drofenik, Maja Korošak, MA, SAEC



Evaluation of Trials in Adult Education

In 1998, the Slovene Adult Education Centre began preparations for the implementation of a new project involving the evaluation of new and updated educational programmes for adults. The new education legislation introduces the concept of trials



in educational practice. This allows us to simultaneously implement on a trial basis new and updated educational programmes, thereby assessing their suitability and effectiveness. Monitoring the trial implementation of educational programmes allows us to judge, both during the implementation and after completion of the education of the first generation of participants, whether the new educational programme has been suitably prepared and whether certain changes and additions are required before it is finally introduced into education practice. Evaluation of trials of educational programmes is thus a very important instrument with which we can assess the quality of new adult education programmes.

Progress of work to date

In 1998, we developed a methodology for monitoring trial implementation of "Catering Trade and Tourism" higher professional education programmes for adults. We paid particular attention to ensuring that we included in the evaluation all subjects which could provide us with useful information on the quality and suitability of the new educational programme.

During the preparation of the methodological plan, we invited the Professional College of Catering Trade and Tourism in Bled to participate; both programmes are provided there, since the school has direct experience of programmes relevant for the introduction of this type of innovation in education. Constant co-ordination with the school will also help to ensure that the education process is not overly interrupted during evaluation in the field.

In accordance with the decree on the verification of public recognised educational programmes for higher professional education through a trial and from the field of work of the Slovene Adult Education Centre and the Vocational Education Centre of RS, the work is divided between the two institutes.

The determination of the suitability of the goals of the programme, the suitability of the curriculum, the balance between subjects and the professional qualification of lecturers is the task of the Vocational Education Centre of RS.

The areas which the Adult Education Centre will cover extend primarily to the assessment of educational programmes in terms of their suitability for adult participants in education or in terms of the specific features of adult education which we advocate in adult education practice. This comprises monitoring and assessment of the suitability of the forms and methods of work defined in the programme, the organisation and implementation of education, the education and training of lecturers and tutors of practical education, the suitability of methods of verifying and evaluating knowledge, etc.

In the second half of 1998, we developed for this purpose tools with which we will collect data on educational programmes. We developed the following instruments: guided interviews for leaders of educational programmes, guided interviews for

lecturers, questionnaire for participants and a questionnaire for practical education tutors.

In order to monitor throughout the educational process the introduction of the educational programme in practice and its suitability, we divided the field evaluation of a particular implementation into three stages: first year, second year, and at the end of the education.

In 1998/99, as part of the project we began preparation of the evaluation of the following adult further education programmes being implemented on a trial basis this year:

- higher professional education programme in Mechanical Engineering and Construction provided by the Celje Professional College;
- higher professional education programme in Electronics provided by the Velenje Professional College;
- higher professional education programme in Mechanical Engineering provided by the Novo Mesto Professional College.

In January and February we will conduct introductory visits to the professional colleges which are the providers of trial implementation of these educational programmes, and will co-ordinate the progress of evaluation with them.

We will collect data on higher professional adult education programmes and on proposals to add to the programme in an intermediate evaluation report, which we will prepare within three months after the end of the first year, and in the final report, which we will prepare six months after the end of the education of the first generation of adult participants in the relevant educational programmes.

Tanja Možina, SAEC



We Completed the Survey for the National Research into *Adult Literacy and Participation in Education*

In September and October 1998, the Adult Education Centre conducted a survey on a sample population as part of the national research project *Adult Literacy and Participation in Education*, which is part of international research into adult literacy. Slovenia has thus joined the group of countries implementing the second phase of the international literacy research project, together with Norway, Denmark, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Italy, Finland, Switzerland and Chile. This is the first objective testing of adult literacy in Slovenia with the aid of international methodology, which has been translated, adapted and tried in advance in our cultural space.



Implementing the research for a large sample was a demanding task, both organisationally and methodologically, and required extensive and precise preparations, since, in addition to the instructions which apply to research on large samples in Slovenia, we also had to take account of the instructions set by our international partners. Following the instructions, we attempted to ensure the quality of the data obtained, meaning data validity, reliability and comparability. One part of the preparations for the implementation of the research was pilot testing, which we carried out successfully in March 1997. The research was also demanding as it involved testing a population; in carrying out the survey, our researchers had to respect the precise written instructions on the conduct of the conversation and the test part of the survey. Furthermore, it was difficult to get the chosen respondents to participate voluntarily in testing of writing and arithmetic, and so the surveyors were specially trained to attempt to create a non-stressful test situation.

The field work part of the research project consisted of these main tasks: preparation of test instruments, selection of a representative sample and training of a network of pollers, control of and support for pollers during the survey, control of the quality of returned questionnaires, encoding of open responses, evaluation of the tasks in the test part of the survey, data entry and production of international files.

The test instrumentation for the research consists of two parts: the primary questionnaire, through which we collected social and demographic data on respondents, and the test part, which requires respondents to solve arithmetic and written tasks from daily life. In the first part, the poller asked respondents using the Primary Questionnaire, while in the second part, respondents had to solve tasks in the presence of the poller without the aid of a calculator and without calling for help from a family member. We tried out the questionnaire in a pilot test in March 1997, amending it in line with the analysis prepared in Canada and the USA.

The Statistical Office of Slovenia prepared a representative sample population comprising 4,290 persons aged between 16 and 65, who were then surveyed at home. Participation in the research was voluntary, and the selected respondents were notified in advance in writing of the research and of the visit by our poller.

In the survey and the selection of pollers, we worked with the Media Research Institute from Ljubljana. We used 170 pollers for the survey from all over Slovenia; they prepared themselves in advance using pre-prepared material before attending a one-day training course in small groups. Each poller had at most 26 respondents on their list. Throughout the survey, we monitored pollers in the field and supervised the authenticity and quality of returned surveys. We got 3,000 respondents to participate so that the response rate was almost 70 percent, which meets international requirements.

We specially trained a group of 13 people in the Adult Education Centre; once we had verified the quality of the questionnaires, they encoded the open answers and

assessed the tasks in the test part of the questionnaire. Assessment was especially demanding and time-consuming work, since the assessors had to take account of a range of instructions and assess tasks in a completely identical manner. To ensure equal assessment in all countries, each participating country must assess 350 task books from another country. Slovenia was allocated Hungary, so two of the assessors we trained were Hungarian speakers, who are at present completing the assessment of the Hungarian task books.

The last two tasks at this stage of the research must be completed in the first two months of this year: data entry and preparation of international files according to instructions. By the end of February, we must send the file for analysis at the Statistical Office in Canada, where the data will be verified and the "refined" file will be sent to the Office of Testing and Education in Princeton, USA. We expect the first results on adult literacy in Slovenia in the middle of the year. The international report on the research should be released before the end of this year. At the same time, we will prepare the national report with the results of the research in which we will present data on the levels of literacy and on the social, demographic and economic characteristics of adults at individual levels in Slovenia, as well as on the characteristics and scale of adult participation in education.

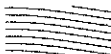
Ester Možina, MA, SAEC



Functional Literacy of Roma in Hungary (I.) The Presentation of a Project

In the middle of last year, the Adult Education Centre began co-operating in the international development project *Basic Education as the Path Back into Society in Hungary*. The project is run by the Danish trade-union education organisation AOF and involves the Hungarian Folk High School Society (HFHSS), where the educational programmes will take place, and the SAEC. The project is financed by the *European Union Phare-Lien programme*.

The basic goal of the project is the development of a programme of basic education (functional literacy) and the development of programmes for the labour market for unemployed and functionally illiterate adults, and their experimental implementation in the predominantly Roma communities of north-eastern Hungary. The programmes will enable the social reintegration of the selected target group and entry to the labour market. The literacy programme should include 72 participants, while the programmes for entry into the labour market and for obtaining vocational qualifications should cover about 600 participants.



The broader purpose of the project mainly encompasses the following:

- greater training for Hungarian partners in two areas of their work: education and administration, specifically in the development, implementation and evaluation of educational programmes and other initiatives providing preparation for work and employment for the selected target group (less educated, functionally illiterate, unemployed),
- strengthened co-operation between the Hungarian Folk High School Society and the numerous other non-governmental Roma organisations in the Roma communities on development projects, which will enable the social and economic integration of the target group to the benefit of both the Roma and Hungarian communities,
- dissemination of the results of the project among non-governmental organisations in the international network of partner countries,
- creating the conditions for the development of a network of educational programmes and programmes for the labour market for the needs of the populations of these regions, and
- ensuring co-operation between the project providers in Hungary and the network of adult education centres and representatives of governmental and non-governmental Roma organisations in the communities where many Roma live; this means the active participation of around 30 members of the Hungarian Folk High School Society and around 50 representatives of ethnic non-governmental and governmental organisations (since 1993, minorities in Hungary have had their own self-government authorities on the regional and national levels; these take care of the needs and interests of minorities); this co-operation should contribute to connections and joint operations between Roma and non-Roma groups and individuals.

In the first stage, the programmes will be experimentally implemented in three north-eastern Hungarian regions. They will later benefit regions in other countries: Romania (Cluj), Serbia (Subotica), Slovakia (Bratislava), Ukraine (Usgorod), Croatia (Zagreb) and the two partner countries in the project, Denmark and Slovenia.

The target group in the experimental project consists of functionally illiterate adults from Roma communities in three regions in eastern Hungary and unemployed people in the same regions. Around 120,000 Roma live in this area of Hungary in ghettoised settlements with no developed educational provision. Only 34% of Roma children over 15 have completed secondary school, and only 0.2% of adults over 15 have completed tertiary education. Even the government admits that Roma achieve considerably worse educational results, but a lack of funds is blocking the introduction of essential measures in the area of educating the Roma population.

Unemployment among Roma is also considerably higher (by about 40%) than among the rest of the population, and Roma unemployment in individual settlements reaches 90-100%. It is estimated that for the majority of Roma, the only means of survival is social support or unemployment benefit.

These three regions are dominated by poverty; exclusion represents a major threat to an ever greater number of families, especially in areas dominated by agriculture and heavy industry. Roma families have much worse living conditions than the rest of the population. In these areas, the Roma, in terms of education, social status and quality of life, are in a far worse position than the other inhabitants of the region. There are also conflicts and tensions between the Roma and the other inhabitants, and discrimination and even racist attacks against Roma.

The project is run and co-ordinated by the Danish partners, who also do the work on developing the labour market programme and train staff to implement these programmes. The HFHSS is entirely responsible for the preparation and implementation of experimental literacy programmes, for the preparation of the textbook and reading material for participants of the literacy programme, and for the preparation of the teacher's handbook; through this project, the society will develop and strengthen the network of literacy, adult education and labour market programmes. The Slovene Adult Education Centre advised our Hungarian partners in preparing the functional literacy programme and in preparing and publishing all three handbooks. We are directly responsible for the preparation and implementation of the training programme for the first group of teachers who will implement the experimental literacy programme (see next article), and for training, consultation and evaluation in the preparation of teaching materials for participants in the functional literacy programmes. In addition, SAEC employees and outside staff will also be able to play an active part in seminars and the international symposium in Hungary.

Olga Drofenik and Ester Možina, MA, SAEC



Functional Literacy of Roma in Hungary (II.) The Training for Teachers

»Engem ne emljen a magasaba senki,
ha nem tud addig tartani,
még tényleg megnővök,
Guggolj ide mellém, ha nemcsak hallani,
de érteni is akarsz,
hogy közel legyen
a szívdobogásunk.«

(Birtalan Ferenc)

*"Don't raise me to the heights,
if you can't keep me there
while I grow up.
Crouch down next to me, if you want me,
not just to hear, but also to understand,
that the beating of our hearts will be near."*

(Birtalan Ferenc)*

In the town of Nyregyháza in eastern Hungary, close to the Ukrainian and Romanian border, training was held from February 5th to 8th 1999 for teachers and writers of material in the literacy teaching programme. The programme arose as part of the Phare Lien project, and will serve to include Roma in the labour market and in society. It will take place in three Hungarian regions where the problems of Roma unemployment and social exclusion are the most prominent. In addition to Hungary and Denmark, Slovenia is also participating in the project, having accepted the role of advisor for the area of functional literacy teaching and training of teachers and authors of material in this field.

Together with our Hungarian colleagues from the Hungarian High Folk School Society, we prepared two four-day workshops, and have already carried out the first. The second will take place in March.

The February workshop had two main goals. First, it was our joint purpose to consider the needs of the target group the programme is intended for and to consider how to convert these needs into goals for a literacy programme. We also discussed methods and forms of teaching adults in literacy programmes, the image of the teacher and the status of participants. We presented project learning and principles for designing learning materials.

On the other hand, the workshop should also consider materials already prepared for the needs of the literacy programme: Compendium, Student's Handbook and Teacher's Book. The material was prepared by three authors and an editor. In the

* This poem was read by one of the Hungarian teachers at the end of the workshop.



evening, the material was presented to teachers, who assessed it based on their own experience, expectations and knowledge gained in the workshop and added their suggestions. They found that it was almost impossible to prepare in advance materials which would satisfy all the various needs of the learning groups who will meet in the programme. Teachers will continue in the future to have an extremely important role in the implementation of the literacy programme by adapting and supplementing the material. The teacher is more of a promoter and advisor than a source of knowledge. Learning in the literacy programmes must also have directly applicable value in life. It does not involve rote learning, but learning which allows participants a better and more independent life in society. Programme participants must take part in the creation of the programme and must be invited to express their needs, interests and values.

The four days we spent with the Hungarian teachers and authors of materials passed quickly, although we literally worked from morning till evening (9 am to 9.30 p.m.). The group was exceptionally open, constructive, critical and enthusiastic. Most of the teachers were well aware of the conditions in which Roma live. Some teachers are advisors, others teach Roma children. Only four of the group had experience of adult education, but their approach to problem solving made it seem that they had long been working with adults. This in fact shows us that adult education derives from democratic relations. If those doing the teaching are democratic, then there is no fear that they will forget those who are learning in designing the teaching process. The principles of adult education are becoming increasingly important in teaching children, since every time we learn we also learn about mutual relations and formulate an image of ourselves.

The Nyregyhaz workshop also brought us something else. All of us who took part were aware that the problem of illiteracy and exclusion of individuals and whole sections of the population from the active operation of society is a global problem and that it should be treated as such, since we can learn a great deal from each other. We were also aware that the problem of functional illiteracy is closely linked to other social problems, such as exclusion/neglect of individual social groups and access to education, and that again it should be solved as such. Literacy teaching is thus not a task which can be solved in a vacuum; it requires parallel solutions to the concrete living problems of the individual, where literacy is the first step, but is not in itself sufficient. As Paulo Freire, one of those to whom the next decade of literacy is dedicated (Unesco, Hamburg 1997), said, we must also think critically about society - knowledge or behaviour is always torn between two interacting contexts. The first is represented by our reality - the world in which we live with all our relationships - while the second is represented by the dialogue in the learning group. In this dialogue, the teacher must invite the students to observe and critically consider reality, while at the same time encouraging them to actively participate in the community.

Natalija Žalec, SAEC



A Global Community of Adult Education Through Information and Documentation: *Action Plan for the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN)*

In the Winter 1998 issue of *Novičke*, we reported on efforts initiated by Unesco's Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in Hamburg in 1997 (CONFINTEA V) concerning the international networking of adult education documentation and information services:

- the publication *Developing a Network of Adult Learning Documentation and Information Services: Directory of Members 1998* by Ursula Giere, Unesco Institute for Education, Hamburg; a free copy of the Directory is available from UIE, Hamburg;
- the fellowship programme bringing together fellows from Africa, the Arab states and Eastern Europe to draft proposals for regional action plans for the above-mentioned Network,
- the Expert/Steering Committee Seminar convened by the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg in October 1998, where participants from all over the world shared their expertise on adult education documentation and information services, and established a concrete and feasible action plan for international networking.

This article discusses the Action Plan for the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN). It consists of a statement of intent and of objectives, as well as of the first steps of implementation. The article contains draft regional plans for seven regions around the world; special emphasis in this article will be given to the regional action plan for Europe.

The Action Plan is based on the broad understanding of adult learning developed at CONFINTEA V: *"Adult education is concerned with all means of human needs and aspirations. It is as rich and colourful as life, life wide and lifelong, reaching far beyond activities usually associated with the education sector, and it strongly relies on the capacity of the individual not only to adjust to but also to bring about social change."*

As a result, information-based decision-making on the personal, national, regional and international levels is a prerequisite for the development of a learning society. Policy-makers, researchers, educators, learners and many others have to be provided with fast and easy access to high-quality information on adult learning opportunities so that they can meet the challenges of the future. Adult education information and documentation centres cannot satisfactorily fulfil their task of

providing such information, due to a lack of adequate financial and human resources. In some parts of the world, such centres have yet to be developed, while elsewhere, existing centres have only limited opportunities for exchanges. World-wide exchange of information on adult education and learning as foreseen in the Action Plan means that everybody participating gives and takes in accordance with their cultural background and level of technological development. The purpose of networking is therefore to facilitate efficient communication and co-operation between adult education information-documentation centres around the world.

In the Action Plan, the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) members have committed themselves to achieving the following objectives:

Awareness raising – to create and promote awareness of adult education documentation and information on the national, regional, and international levels by providing users with reliable and urgently needed, high-quality information, identifying reasons and motives for networks, encouraging authorities, including researchers, educators, legislators, and decision-makers, to utilise the network, identifying the need for information and documentation services.

Linkage and co-operation – to establish links between stakeholders on the national, regional, and international levels in order to promote co-operation and build alliances with all existing adult education networks.

Capacity building – to create and/or strengthen the capacity of adult learning documentation centres and information services on the national, regional, and international levels by strengthening human resources, assisting in securing educational materials, financial resources, and basic infrastructure, and by promoting the integration of new technologies with traditional means of communication.

Access and equity – to develop a user-friendly adult learning resource base which is balanced in terms of geography, gender and the needs of different users, gives access to different organisational forms depending on users' needs, and includes continuous improvement of the collection and dissemination processes which integrate new technology with traditional methods.

Bank of knowledge for adult learning – to develop a coherent picture of adult learning by linking the diverse aspects of documentation activities in order to facilitate sharing concepts, documents, information and experience by promoting the concept of adult education as a field of study and practice, reconstructing the body of knowledge in line with the CONFINTEA V definition of adult learning, and enhancing knowledge of adult learning in national, regional, and international organisations.

The first steps for the implementation of the Action Plan concern the management of the Network and the realisation of short-term and medium-term priorities. The Unesco Institute for Education is to continue its leading role, and with the help of the Steering Committee Members' criteria for membership of the Network, a list of responsibilities for members is to be established. One of the tasks concerns inter-

sectoral links and links with international organisations - the 1998 Directory is to be updated and enlarged.

The creation and maintenance of a website for ALADIN and the production of an electronic version of the Directory and e-mail links between Members are some of the shortterm priorities, along with the establishment of co-sponsorship for specific projects designed for the implementation of the Action Plan in different parts of the world. The groundwork for the development of new documentation centres is to be created, e-mail links for members without Internet access are to be developed, and focal points to facilitate regional and cross-regional links, based on language, geography, subject specialisation, and other factors, are to be identified.

Midterm priorities concern the publishing of the Directory of Members in other venues, the identification of free publications and the creation of an archive of copies, the reconstruction of the body of knowledge in line with the CONFINTEA V definition of adult education, the creation of fellowship programmes and study visits, and the production of electronic materials while supporting the exchange of traditional documentation.

Draft regional action plans for seven world regions have been established to support the implementation of the overall ALADIN action plan with priorities to be achieved by June 1999. Priority tasks for Europe were defined in the draft regional plan as follows:

- the directory of ALADIN members is to be updated and enlarged from the European point of view, based on the uniform questionnaire and in co-operation with existing networks, the European Adult Education Association (EAEA) and the Slovene Adult Education Centre (SAEC), the latter as the focal point for Eastern and Central European countries and the Baltic states (RICAER - Regional Information and Documentation Centre for Adult Education Research);
- a conference for the European region dealing with information-documentation networking in the field of adult education is to be organised by EAEA and the German Association of Adult Education;
- a virtual office is to be established to allow access to information and documentation, create links, facilitate communication and co-operation, and raise awareness; this task is to be performed by the European Adult Education Association via the Internet.

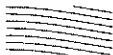
One of the medium-term tasks is the creation of a homepage for RICAER with links to the ALADIN web pages, the production of 'value-added' materials and the establishment of pro-active services to help raise awareness about the meaning of adult learning in general, and about the supportive role of information-documentation services in particular. The exchange of information carriers among members has been identified as an ongoing activity.

Within the next few months, we can expect some of the results of these tasks, in particular the RICAER homepage located at www.acs-saec.si under the heading CONFINTEA. The questionnaire which will enable information-documentation centres to join the ALADIN network will also be available at this Internet address. The Summer



issue of Novičke will have an article on the progress of the ALADIN project in the European region. In the mean time, please feel free to contact the author for any information concerning this topic at the following e-mail address: zvonka.pangerc@acs-saec.si.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, M.Sc., SAEC





SLOVENE ADULT EDUCATION SCENE



Is Society of All Ages our Future?

Recently, as we were discussing with some city councillors the ways in which authorities in other European cities support their third age universities, when we mentioned *education for voluntary work of the elderly*, they interrupted us in trepidation: "Just don't say that they will do anything. Many consider non-professional work of the elderly, or perhaps the very existence of the civil society, as a cost, a burden, and not as a compulsory part of the successful, democratic operation of society as a whole.

How can we promote the idea that old age is not a statistical fact or merely a pre-death period, but much more: *a period of life in which a person is above all a human being and only then an old individual*? How can we develop an interest in the elderly and old age in a society of rapidly developing technology and rapid changes, where slower, older people cannot be bearers of "attractive" knowledge and where old age is a topic usually avoided? How well do we know old age and ageing? To what extent is knowledge of the elderly built into school textbooks, daily newspapers? Apart from medicine, is there any other field dealing with this issue? Is there anyone particularly interested in those young elderly who unprepared stepped in the period of retirement? The University of the Third Age and the Gerontological Society of Slovenia, with international support, are now preparing a *programme of pre-retirement education*, but this is not enough.

We should be interested in the elderly people's skills and development potential as well as their crisis. When we talk about lifelong learning, we frequently forget that education in the third or fourth age is a part of it. Moreover, can we talk of an *integrated policy on age and ageing* in a society in which by 2020 the proportion of elderly will be higher than the proportion of young people and in which generations of the elderly have been evolving, but policy remains the same as before: social protection? Even the name speaks volumes.

Age discrimination

Research has shown that, despite employers' claims to the contrary, the number of jobs is not growing and frequently under social and economic pressures older workers are dismissed. Nevertheless, the truth is that the number of jobs can only increase as a result of economic growth. In this regard, questions concerning age discrimination against people can affect everybody, even young people, and the only

way to oppose such discrimination is greater awareness of age issues in society. Why do certain faculties and colleges have an upper age limit on enrolment? Why, despite the constitutional provision that all people are to be treated equally, do we encounter age restrictions for job applications? To illustrate this point, when was the last time that a primary or secondary school hired a teacher over fifty? Most of the times, rejection leads to the idea that a person over fifty is simply too old to take on a job, and his or her experience, creativity and diligence are overlooked, while in young people these features are important selection criteria. The panel committee rejects an elderly job applicant usually not knowing exactly why, or simply because of stereotyped negative views of old age. Such views have no connection whatsoever with the individual person; rather they demonstrate poor level of awareness in our societies.

Older people are usually subject to such views *before retirement*. Other people start talking about them in the past tense, they list their past achievements, they acknowledge their "contribution". Those who are close to the person are encouragingly sympathetic, other, less favourable, according to many authors wait staring with not a hint of a desire for the job to become available and social power to be reallocated, perhaps to their benefit. In theory some describe this as a "social clock". In different countries this clock strikes differently. It is however unbearable that people usually behave according to the law on retirement age. Consequently, education for later life should be a matter of our immediate attention. This is true of the elderly and all other generations, since as Simone de Beauvoir said "Old age is the future of us all." And our own old age is dependent on the extent to which across all generations we are aware today of the question of old age and ageing.

Thus *old age is not a time concept but is more a question of social pressures*, and it is in this area precisely, that we can do a great deal through education. Moreover, as we recently said to the Estonian colleagues, *education for the elderly can significantly influence the education of other generations*, as has been the case in Slovenia. Back in 1984, the Third Age University developed the *first Slovene concept of study circles for life* (previously, we only had production study circles in factories). It induced and wrote down findings on the dynamics of learning groups and diverse methods requiring co-responsibility of adult learners, not just in the implementation of the programme but also in its development. Through education of the elderly, we managed to reintegrate culture into education in general and today it is precisely culture (particularly personal and local culture) that is a pre-condition for globalisation. Namely, as we view it, globalisation is a process that has to start from somewhere, i.e. from well modelled cultural identity, be of a place, of a community or an individual. As a result of the cultural education for the elderly, the Department of Pedagogy and Andragogy of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana launched education for local and regional development.

Why do we not simply allow older people to continue their lives, which is the fruit of their labours in previous periods. Old age can be a time of continuing learning

and work for the community. It is also a time of development of cognitive skills, provided that they can be used in such work. Why should older people be dependent and subject to "social-protective care for the elderly", when they know a lot and are capable of a great deal, and want it too? All we need is not to be tempted to *block their right to continued life and work*. This is due to lack of awareness and we are perhaps not so different of Sicilians who pushed their fathers into their graves in the 17th century. Such manners of renouncing life and creativity inevitably induces us into thinking that our societies are not "so developed after all". Moreover, there are many ways in which, through education and public media, we can encourage greater awareness of issues concerning old age and coexistence with other generations. This year is a year of *society of all ages*.

Dušana Findeisen, MPhil, University of Ljubljana



Vocational Guidance at the Crossroads*

International Conference on Vocational Guidance

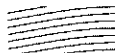
From 5th to 7th May 1999, Bled will host an international conference "Vocational guidance at the crossroads", an associate conference of the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG).

The joint organisers of the conference are: the Employment Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovene Adult Education Centre, the Vocational Education Centre of the Republic of Slovenia, the Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, the National Observatory of Slovenia, the Leonardo da Vinci - Slovenia programme, PHARE, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Chamber of Small Business of Slovenia.

Through this article, we would like to invite everyone working in adult education to attend, since one of the themes of the conference will be vocational guidance for adults (including the provision of information and advice on vocations, the development of work paths and information and advice on education).

Slovenia too is facing the new reality, where individuals in the course of their careers change jobs and their area of work several times. This requires constant decisions on the right "vocational path" (the first or a changed - new - profession) and in the same

* In our practice and theory, the term vocational orientation is being introduced instead of vocational guidance as it should have a broader definition of all activities in decisions on vocations and career development, from information, vocational advice, help in choosing educational programmes, receiving clients, forwarding return information, etc. Terminology questions will form another of the themes or discussions in the plenary presentations, working group papers and round tables at the conference.



context decisions on the choice of the appropriate education or vocational training. Every individual, as well as all advisory and other institutions which help individuals decide on their vocational path and education, must adapt to these altered conditions. At the conference, we will attempt to find answers to questions relating to the development of advisory work in this field in the future and to connections in this regard to ensure that the work is effective and adapted to the needs of clients.

The purpose of the conference is:

- to present modern guidelines of professional development in this field,
- to exchange experiences of the planning and organisation of vocational guidance services in different countries,
- to present methods, techniques and concrete forms of work in vocational guidance,
- to promote co-operation between different institutions, and
- to promote the search for new approaches in the development of vocational guidance in Slovenia.

The conference will work in plenary sessions, in working groups and in round tables. Slovene and foreign experts will be invited to address the plenary session, while everyone who would like to present their knowledge or concrete experiences to others is invited to participate in the work of the working groups and round tables. Abstracts of papers must be sent no later than the end of February 1999, while writing instructions can be obtained from Barbara Gregorič, Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, Glinška 12, Ljubljana (Tel.: 061 302-751 or 302-752; email: barbara.gregoric@ess.gov.si).

All organisational questions (applications, fees, hotels) should be addressed to Albatros Conference-Tourist Agency, Ribenska 2, 4260 Bled, Slovenia (Tel.: + 386 64-741-101 or + 386- 64 741-010).

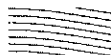
The conference will be held in Slovene and English. All plenary papers will be simultaneously translated in both languages. Papers and discussions in working groups will be consecutively translated.

Tanja Vilič Klenovšek, MA, SAEC



Public Work Programme Learning Assistance for Participants in the Primary School for Adults

We understand adult basic education to mean the acquisition of the knowledge and skills which are essential to understand life in a social community and the acquisition of social and life skills necessary for responsible operation in society. In



his book *Terminologija izobraževanja odraslih (Terminology of Adult Education)*, Dr Zoran Jelenc also defined adult primary education as adult basic education.

We probably do not need to stress the importance of well-mastered basic arithmetic skills and literacy for further education. Adults, or rather younger adults, have under the law (the operation of primary schools for adults is legally governed by the Law on Primary School and the Law on Adult Education) the right to freely choose the path, contents, form, means and methods of education. At the end of the programme, they must of course achieve the same standards of knowledge as provided by (regular) education of children and young people.

Explanation of the programme of assistance

Judging from experience, participants in adult education who attend the primary school for adults frequently have learning difficulties. Unfortunately, help with learning cannot be provided as a regular activity, since teachers at the primary school generally work as outside staff. The primary school for adults, in its current organisational form - which among other things also restricts the number of participants - does not foresee (educational) advisory services which would provide learning help*. Participants in the primary school for adults need it, since it was precisely because of their insufficient knowledge that they were included in this institution. Judging by the experience of teachers, exclusion from regular education is frequently a consequence of:

- social, family conditions,
- unadapted behaviour,
- lack of work habits,
- personality problems.

Estimates by the director suggest that more than 20% of participants in the Primary School for Adults at the Adult Education Institute Maribor, Adult Education Centre, need learning assistance. It should be based on the principle of voluntary participation. We wish to emphasize that learning assistance is intended for those (as a rule younger) participants attending class-subject forms of education in which less attention is paid to independent learning, although that is in fact the end goal of adult education. For precisely this reason, in co-operation with the Employment Institute of RS and the co-ordinator of public works - the Made company - we prepared the public work programme "Learning assistance for participants in the primary school for adults".

At the level of planning and scheduling of the public works programme, the following were involved: director of the primary school Jože Gomolj, the director of general education Zdravka Jurhar, expert consultant Miloslava Kaššek and adult education consultant Alenka Sagadin. In the preparations, we took account of the needs and goals of two target groups:

- candidates who will provide the *public works programme* (providers), and

* Diana Roškar, Primary School for Adults at Adult Education Centres, Adult Education Findings, 1996/4

- *adult education participants* attending the primary school for adults (users of learning assistance).

Contents and general goals of the public works programme

The public works programme ensures providers opportunities for new knowledge and personal development. Some of the most important are:

- the acquisition of new educational and psychological knowledge and experience;
- personal development as a "side effect" of meeting and communicating with younger adults;
- important social integration of unemployed providers.

In accordance with these conclusions, we also set general goals for the public works programme concerning programme users with learning difficulties. These are:

- overcoming learning difficulties and ensuring greater learning success of participants in individual subjects, applying the method of gradual guidance from individual instruction in individual subjects to advice for independent learning;
- improving interpersonal relations, communications skills and the self-confidence of participants ("side effects" of education);
- improving motivation, attitudes to learning of participants in the primary school for adults, gaining a positive experience of learning, promoting curiosity.

The contents of the learning assistance given by providers thus cover the typical work and tasks of participants of public works which are particularly important for the employer (in this case, the Employment Institute of the Republic of Slovenia). These include:

- (educational) preparations for individual assistance to participants in the primary school for adults, in the social or natural sciences;
- individual assistance in learning or individual instruction outside the regular timetable of education (explaining, clarifying learning materials);
- suitable communication with education participants (personal consultation, information or guided talks and informal talks.);
- informal meetings or useful ways to spend free time with participants of the primary school for adults (possible joint visits to libraries, cinema presentations, independent learning centres or other institutions which promote lifelong learning and advice on independent planning and organisation of learning etc).

We anticipated candidates with higher (VI) levels of education from a range of subjects to act as advisors (guiders of learning promoters). Candidates must have a feeling for working with people, suitable communications skills and basic knowledge of computing, which is required for successful work in the independent learning centre.

Short training programmes

We planned a short, 16-hour training programme covering a detailed presentation of the Primary school for adults at the Adult Education Institute Maribor Adult Education

Centre prior to the start of implementation of the public works programme. The emphasis of the presentation, provided by the director of the primary school, was placed on comparison with regular primary schools. One important aspect of the training was communication with adult participants in primary education, which was carried out by the Advisory Centre for Children, Young People and Parents, and practical trials of various techniques of independent learning.

Prospects of the public works programme

In preparing the public works programme, the customer must be informed of the employment opportunities, i.e. the transition to regular activities. This type of learning assistance and informal meetings with young people could mean a valuable educational experience for candidate providers of the public works programme, and could motivate some of them to undergo teacher training. This in the long term would increase opportunities for employment in education: in a dual school organisation, perhaps as a practical teacher ...

The *Learning assistance for participants in the primary school for adults* public works programme was successfully organised at the start of November. Providers of public work provide learning assistance working half-time, with their work evaluated in the form of teaching hours. Participants of the primary school for adults already use learning assistance. The evaluation of the programme, which will take place in accordance with the contents and schedule, will provide more information on the effects of learning assistance and on the achieved goals set in the programme.

Alenka Sagadin, Adult Education Institute, Maribor Adult Education Centre

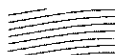


First Steps to Employment Study Circle

We live at a time which is undoubtedly not the most favourable. Every day we encounter the problem of unemployment, which so often seems so far away until it happens to us. Shock, anger and a feeling of powerlessness are the first signs which in the long term lead to material risk, the loss of self-respect and fear of the future.

Looking for a new job (or a first job) requires a great deal of effort and determination, so at the INVEL company, we decided to try, together with unemployed people who are willing to take their fate in their own hands, to seek the fastest path to employment, and began to organise the *First steps to employment* study circle.

Under the leadership of the tutor, Selma Filipančič, we formulated together with participants employment goals which were of great help to them in guiding and



improving the quality of their search for new employment. We prepared different forms of effective job-seeking, such as: telephone calls, which job-seekers normally don't use, we wrote various forms of quality applications and spent a great deal of time on communications training; these help participants carry out effective telephone and employment interviews.

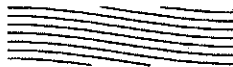
Through our daily activities, we have established concrete ties with potential employers (primarily with the help of the use of informal sources), and we soon established that we had trained for effective independent job-seeking.

Within the study circle, the principle of self-help was strongly expressed, while participants regained self-respect, which they had recently lost, through the group, which tried to help each individual find a way out of their vicious circle. Good mutual relations and progress in communication with employers were obvious, since many established promising contacts, and two participants found employment while the circle was operating, a fact which increased motivation and the willingness to work in the circle.

The *First steps to employment* study circle is one of thirteen circles which we have been successfully organising for five years, and is not the only one we organised last year. The *Commercial contracts*, *Guide to my rights and responsibilities*, *Good communication - the path to success* and *New Year decorations and gifts* circles all aroused a great deal of interest for this type of learning and transfer of knowledge among participants, while the positive evaluations, opinions and desire to be included in the next circle undoubtedly encourage us to organise study circles in the future.

Ivanka Filipančič, Invel Velenje





SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE*



Developing Programmes for Adults

Despite the situation improving over the last few years, thanks mainly to new legislation and the contribution of education institutes, establishing a public network to promote, adult education remains one of Slovenia's key development priorities for the future.

This is confirmed by data from the last census conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. 46.5% of people aged over 25 in Slovenia had only finished primary school or less and, according to the Office's Survey on the Active Population carried out in 1996, 41.2% of people had the same level of education among the active working population.

Given this educational attainment structure of the population as whole and the active population in particular, together with the high proportion of jobs being done by unsuitably trained people (over 30%), adult education is of key importance. Nevertheless, the situation has improved over the last few years. Apart from the positive contribution of adult education institutes and the Slovenian Adult Education Centre, a more suitable legal framework has also been laid down.

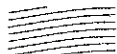
The law defines adult education as a public service that can be provided by public services institutions, departments of other public education institutions, and other organisations and private entities provided they have signed a contract.

The Law on Organising and Financing of Education adopted in 1996 sets up a framework for establishing the adult education public network. It should enable adults without elementary education to finish primary school, and adults with finished primary school to attend one year of additional training. The Law on Adult Education adopted in the same year required Parliament to propose a national programme. In accordance with the Law, each year the government should adopt an annual programme of activities, whilst institutions responsible for implementation of the programmes should be selected by the ministries concerned through public invitations for tenders. The same law also establishes the Expert Committee of the RS for Adult Education.

Establishing the public network

The share of adult education in the structure of public expenditure on education is only 2.5% (0.1% of GDP). However, the share is increasing, the Institute of

* All articles in this chapter are abstracts from Slovenia Weekly, December 21 - February 13, 1999



Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD) says. Market resources, mainly through contributions of those being educated, still account for over 90% of financial resources. Considering its expansion, adult education can be viewed as involving great employment potential and an entrepreneurial challenge for organisers and providers of such programmes, according to IMAD.



Science: Significant Human Research Potential

According to data based on records kept by the Ministry of Science and Technology, in 1999 there are in Slovenian research organisations some 753 research groups, currently employing 7,085 researchers. Most research groups - 335 - are active in the field of technical sciences.

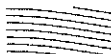
With regard to the status of the research organisation, 15% of the researchers work within national research institutes, 34% within the University of Ljubljana, 9% within the University of Maribor, 22% in other institutions and 20% in business companies. These research organisations currently employ 7,085 researchers and young researchers.

According to their educational structure, among them 31% are doctors of science, 22% are masters of science and 47% are university graduates.

The group of National Research Institutes comprises 16 research institutes established by the Government which are of national importance. In the public research institutions, 90 research groups are active, namely 27 groups in the field of natural sciences and mathematics, 30 groups in technical sciences, 13 in social sciences, 13 in the humanities, 5 in agricultural sciences and 2 in medicine. These institutes employ 1,034 researchers and young researchers on training.

Among Slovenian researchers, 31% are doctors of science and 22% are masters of science.

Within 26 members of Ljubljana's University, 255 research groups are active, namely 39 groups in the field of natural sciences and mathematics, 97 in technical sciences, 16 in medical sciences, 42 groups in agricultural sciences, 38 in social sciences and 23 in the humanities. The University employs 2,412 researchers, mostly university teacher-researchers. These are the people engaged in both, pedagogical and research work. The number also comprises the full-time researchers and young researchers on training in the research groups.



Technical researchers in the lead

Evidence that Slovenian science is particularly active and successful in the field of technical sciences is reflected in data kept by the Ministry of Science and Technology. Accordingly, most of the 753 existing research groups in Slovenia, currently employing 7,085 senior and young researchers, are working in technical sciences (45%), followed by natural sciences (17%) and social sciences (13%).

Generally, each company in Slovenia has one R & D group. The majority, i.e. 127, are active in the field of technical sciences, 21 in natural sciences and mathematics, 12 in social sciences, 5 in medical sciences, 9 in agricultural sciences and 1 in the humanities. (photo: inside oil company Petrol's laboratory)

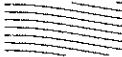
According to the collected data, most research groups - 335 - are active in the field of technical sciences, 124 research groups in natural sciences and mathematics, followed by 98 in social sciences, 78 in medical sciences, 63 in agricultural sciences and 55 in the humanities. The structure of the research groups by sciences therefore shows 45% of them working in technical sciences, 17% in natural sciences, 13% in social sciences, 10% in medical sciences, 8% in agricultural sciences and 7% of them in the humanities.

90 research groups are active within the group of National Research Institutes, comprising 16 research institutes, namely 27 groups in the field of natural sciences and mathematics, 30 groups in technical sciences, 13 in social sciences, 13 in the humanities, 5 in agricultural sciences and 2 in medicine.

Within the 26 members of Ljubljana University, there are 255 research groups, namely 39 groups in the field of natural sciences and mathematics, 97 in technical sciences, 16 in medical sciences, 42 groups in agricultural sciences, 38 in social sciences and 23 in the humanities. Within the University of Maribor, which has 10 members, there are 86 research groups, namely 14 groups in the field of natural sciences and mathematics, 43 in technical sciences, 2 in medical sciences, 2 in agricultural sciences, 21 in social sciences and 4 in the humanities. The group of other institutions comprises 60 research organisations - institutions mostly performing research activities.

These are for example: The Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Mechanics, Milan Vidmar Electrolnstitute) as well as those institutions where research is not the main activity (for example: the Clinical Centre).

Business Companies include 175 R & D groups. Generally, each company has one R & D group. The majority, i.e. 127, are active in the field of technical sciences, 21 in natural sciences and mathematics, 12 in social sciences, 5 in medical sciences, 9 in agricultural sciences and 1 in the humanities.



Internet: Logging on to the Global Network

Internet-use indicators continue to grow linearly and Slovenia now has about 180,000 active users of the Internet, some 14 percent of the population aged between 15 and 65. A poll, conducted by Ljubljana's Faculty of Social Sciences, also showed that over 80 percent of big companies and 50 percent of small companies now have access to the Internet.

The most visited Slovenian sites are Mat'Kurja and the Telephone Book. Slovenian Internet users also often visit other public presentations (e.g. the Hydrometeorological Institute or TV guides). The largest access points are Siol and Arnes. The most visited foreign sites are Yahoo and Altavista.

These are only some of the newest findings of the research project on Internet use in Slovenia (RIS), conducted over the last 3 years within the Centre for Methodology and Informatics at Ljubljana's Faculty of Social Sciences. The results can be found at <http://www.ris.org/si> and also in the new book 'Internet in Slovenia'.

The RIS research project and the accompanying book were presented at a news conference on 18 January by Dr Vasja Vehovar, head of the RIS project and the editor of the book. According to Dr Andrej Kerlep, apart from the results of the project, the book offers a new, social view in understanding the Internet. Thus, after an introductory presentation of the technology used in modern networks, the reader is familiarised with communications experts' views of the Internet and three social perspectives: public administration, feminism and virtual communities.

Increasing role of Internet in business

According to the RIS poll, there has been continued linear growth of all Internet indicators as well of the number of users (companies, institutions, individuals), but Slovenia has not yet caught up to the most developed countries in the area of hosts. Growth in the number of people with access to the Internet has slowed down; on the other hand Slovenian companies are now much better equipped for the Internet - over 80 percent of big companies and 50 percent of small companies now have access to the Internet. However, the number of applications remains relatively modest, and so does the use of other more complex tools such as data bases.

Despite growing mistrust of virtual trading, more people - last year they were about 10,000 - are deciding to shop in online stores. In this way, some 10,000 people spent - mostly abroad - several million DEM, the RIS survey revealed.



Natural Heritage: Encouraging Rural Development

Since last September, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has been implementing the project *Po poteh dediščine (Along the Paths of Heritage)* in 14 Slovenian municipalities (Bloke, Cerknica, Cerklje, Dobropolje, Idrija, Kočevje, Kostel, Logatec, Loška dolina, Loški Potok, Osilnica, Ribnica, Sodražica and Velike Lašče). The project involves the comprehensive development of the countryside, with the main goals of finding new possibilities for rural development and to offer country residents extra income, mostly from tourism.

Apart from the Ministry, the project is supported by the British Government. Experts from the UK are also participating in its implementation, meaning that the project is in harmony with EU directives in the area of rural development. State Secretary for Agriculture and European Affairs Franc But said that this pilot project is also in accordance with the Slovenian agricultural reform programme, which calls for the formation of rural development projects at the European level. The goal of the *Along the Paths of Heritage* project is to stimulate economic development in the project area, and to contribute to related natural and cultural heritage protection.

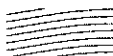
The Ministry of Agriculture will be able to use the experience gained in the project when formulating the development planning concept and regional politics. With parts of the rural development programme, Slovenia will directly compete for pre-accession aid in the area of agriculture (SAPARD programme). So far, the experts have visited 140 locations of natural and cultural heritage currently in the stage of evaluation and deciding on their appropriateness for wider presentation and promotion (through tourist agencies). The first stage, evaluation, is expected to be finished this summer.



Association Agreement with the EU Takes Effect

With the Europe Agreement coming into effect on 1 February Slovenia formally became an associate European Union member. According to Minister of European Affairs Igor Bavčar, Slovenia is ready to enforce the Association Agreement, including the many changes it will bring and the opportunities it will provide to the country and, in particular, to its economy.

At the news conference on 29 January, Minister of European Affairs Igor Bavčar, head of Slovenia's negotiating team Dr Janez Potočnik and representatives of the



Government Office for European Affairs presented the changes that will be introduced in Slovenia upon enforcement of the Europe Agreement.

According to Minister of European Affairs Igor Bavčar, presenting the main consequences of implementation of the Agreement at a news conference on 29 January, considerable progress has been made in Slovenia after a critical report on Slovenia was published by the European Commission, with many of the shortcomings already having been addressed. The Association Agreement replaced the 1993 agreement on co-operation between the EU and Slovenia and the 1997 interim trade agreement. The Accession Agreement was signed on 10 June 1996 in Luxembourg, the European Parliament ratified it in October 1996, whilst the Slovenian Parliament ratified it in July 1997. The first EU country to ratify the Agreement was Denmark (December 1996), and the last one was Greece (October 1998). All procedures for implementation of the Agreement were officially closed in December 1998.

The accession process has also been accelerated by the national programme to remove delays arising from 1998, and by the measures taken this year under which 82 legislative bills are to be passed within about a year, Bavčar emphasised.

200 new laws by the end of 2002

A comprehensive programme to get the country ready for accession by the end of 2002 was passed by the Government on 28 January, when the so-called *Acquis Communautaire* adoption programme was amended with a forecast of resources and foreign assistance required. The programme is not final and will be further amended, Andrej Engelman, Deputy Director of the Government European Affairs office said at the news conference. It now incorporates a list of 200 bills and about 870 subordinate regulations. About 1,900 staff will be needed to carry out all accession-related tasks so new employment is necessary. About 2.5 to 4 percent of GDP annually will have to be allocated to accession, with the European Commission contributing about one-sixth or one-seventh. The national programme will be sent to the Parliament and to Brussels next week.

Further economic liberalisation

Implementation of the Agreement will have consequences for movement of the labour force, the right to establish companies, for services and payments, for the movement of capital, competition as well as for economic and financial co-operation. A newcomer to the group of associate EU-members, Slovenia has already entered negotiations on full EU membership and set the year 2002 as the likely date when it will be prepared to join the 15-nation bloc. As a result, Slovenia has actually introduced several regulations before some time limits for them start running on 1 February.

Several periods of time start running with implementation of the Agreement. They can be divided into two groups, that is into four- and two-year transition periods.

While implementation of some regulations starts on implementation of the accord, implementation of others is due after a few years.

Reciprocity law enactment underway

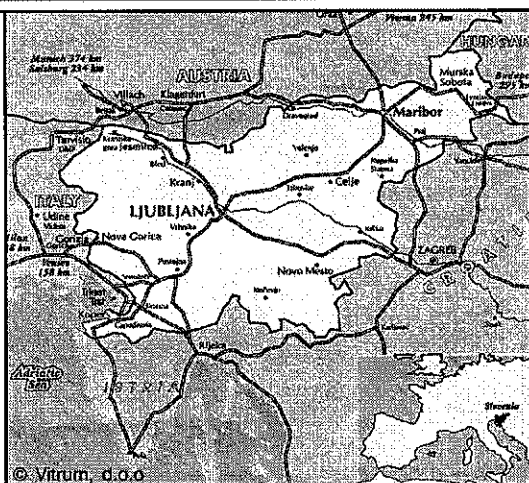
The Justice Ministry issued instructions to relevant courts and the notary chamber on 29 January to provide guidance when acting in cases of real estate purchase bids by foreign citizens for the time period prior to when Parliament passes the required legislation. The step was taken because the National Assembly has still failed to pass the bill regulating application of the Spanish compromise (Annex XIII) which opens Slovenia's real estate market up to foreign nationals.

The Ministry expects the Parliament to pass the bill setting out the ways of establishing reciprocity at its session on 4 February, Justice Minister Tomaz Marušič announced. Realising, however, that contracts may be signed in the interim, the Ministry issued instructions to the notary chamber and courts maintaining land registers. The latter will need to point out to their clients that they need to prove that the reciprocity condition is being met.

Area: (sq km): 20,256, **Population:** 1,990,600, **Population growth (%):** -0.3, **Density** (inhab./sq km): 98.3, **Population of Ljubljana (capital):** 330,000

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

F. Prešeren: The Toast, Slovene national anthem



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