



Andragoški center Republike Slovenije
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

NOVIČKE



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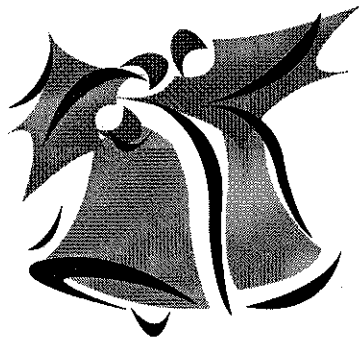
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PROGRAMME BASIS OF NOVIČKE

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



it is a great privilege for the seventh time to be able to wish *Merry Christmas* and the very best in the coming year, which at the same time is the beginning of a new millennium. *We* are proud of the time we have spent together with you and are hoping that our being together, learning together and learning from each other will continue in the years to come.

Colleagues from Slovenia would like to wish you success and happiness in the coming year. *May* the new millennium see the fulfilment of your wishes and desires regarding either your personal or professional life, and let's all work together to a better future for adult education as a whole.

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



SIAE EVENTS



Fourth Lifelong Learning Week in Slovenia

The Lifelong Learning Week (LLW) has become a common constant of organisations and individuals working in the field of education and learning in Slovenia - be they those who enrich the knowledge of others or those who are themselves involved in learning. For the fourth year running, the third week of October (18-24 October 1999) saw people of all ages and from all walks of life involving themselves in learning. In a great variety of formal and informal environments, many different opportunities for learning and education were presented, the lifelong learning strategy was promoted, while the learning achievements and expressions of creativity of people of all generations were celebrated at a number of locations.

The event was once again co-ordinated by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education of Slovenia in co-operation with the National Lifelong Learning Week Committee at the Ministry of Education and Sport. A great variety of providers combined their enthusiasm and efforts at this all-Slovenia event - large and small, formal and informal institutions, associations, clubs, those for whom learning is the main activity and those for whom learning is merely the side-effect of another activity. The varied palette of providers, whom judging from their responses are already 'friends of the LLW', this year numbers 375. If we take into account the fact that the first Lifelong Learning Week in 1996 was only carried out by 54 providers, this year's figures are indeed encouraging. Also encouraging is the structure of providers involved this year. They cover all generations and a multitude of areas of public and private life. Once again, societies and clubs, private educational institutions and people's universities, secondary and primary schools and nursery schools, libraries, universities of the Third Age, study circles, knowledge exchanges, energy and agriculture advisory offices and similar, represented the bulk of the participants. The now-established method of work was repeated, where co-ordination of the event was handled in individual localities and regions by municipalities or larger educational organisations, while the list of sub-providers of the Week was surprisingly long and varied.

The National LLW Committee's recommendation that certain events of the Week should be themed, given that this year we are celebrating the International Year of the Elderly, met a response from many providers. They organised opportunities for young and elderly people to meet, and devoted several workshops to transferring knowledge of many different types from older generations to younger and vice versa. Thus among LLW providers we find universities of the Third Age and an old people's home and society, and on the other hand a

nursery school in which pre-school children have paid special attention to thinking about their grandparents.

We estimate that this year there were nearly 1900 events, which once again can be divided up into different groups. In order to present themselves to the broadest possible public and to the numerous target groups, many educational institutions, knowledge exchanges, independent learning centres and other institutions organised open days, presentations of educational programmes and projects, lectures, and so on. They tried to encourage participants to join in learning workshops and creative workshops and gave them the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test. This year again saw a large number of accompanying events such as exhibitions, cultural and social events, book presentations, visits, meetings, etc. An increasing number of providers offered information and advice and answered the questions of the public by phone hotline and over the Internet. It is particularly worth mentioning an activity which was carried out by a large number of providers for the first time this year: they gave away books, textbooks, and magazines, or organised book fairs and book sales with considerable discounts.

The variety of providers and events once again confirmed the fact that learning does not only take place in school but throughout our lives and everywhere. Visitors to the events were able to learn how to assert themselves in the world of business, how to change from being unemployed to being an independent businessperson, how to provide for their spiritual growth, to eat healthily and have a healthy lifestyle. The purpose of many of the events was to illustrate the efforts that are being made, and the possibilities available, for the preservation of our cultural, natural and technical heritage, the transferring of old customs from generation to generation, re-animating and preserving the identity of our towns and villages, and so on. Not just the gaining of new knowledge, but also training in how to use our formally and informally acquired abilities most effectively and assert them most successfully, how to use not only our intellectual skills but also our emotional intelligence, how to conduct ourselves, how to communicate... all of these were the themes of events during this year's LLW; the emphasis was therefore not only on what to learn, but also on how and what to do with this later.

Once again this year the LLW spread beyond the walls of its organisers to shopping centres, shops and trade fair centres; many presented themselves on stands and with posters, others went into the field to study the cultural, historical, geographical and other beauties of their surrounding area. For the first time, some LLW events took place outside the borders of Slovenia. In the future we hope to co-operate as much as possible with Slovenes living outside the borders and with the inhabitants of neighbouring countries.

Closing events have also slowly been establishing themselves in the LLW, and again this year providers dedicated them to a review of findings and experience and to the gathering of critical comments, but also to cultural events to round off the week's events. The experience and knowledge gained by the providers at the local level, as well as the four years of experience



of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in the role of event co-ordinator, will of course contribute to the planning of the jubilee, the fifth Lifelong Learning Week, in 2000.

We are currently preparing a report on this year's LLW and on the basis of surveys we are analysing various aspects of this year-round project. As in previous years we will publish our findings in a special issue of *LLW Novičke* sent out with the spring edition of *Novičke*. You will also be able to read about how Slovenia is to take part in the first United Nations Adult Learners' Week.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc., SIAE



Study Circles - 'Reading with Manca Košir'

In the last thirty years the greatest difficulty is not a decline in reading skills but a worsening attitude to reading (Paul Kropp, author of *Educating the reader*).

Most important are the spiritual adventures on which you set off by reading and talking (Ingram Hartinger, Austrian poet and writer)

Study circles for spreading reading culture are part of the study circles project of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, which commenced this project in 1992 in the basis of experiences in Scandinavia. The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education has linked up with Dr Manca Košir, who in the 1998/99 season ran successful reading clubs at Cankarjev Dom under the title 'Read with Manca Košir'. Following her 'model', a network of study circles aiming to spread reading culture is springing up all over Slovenia.

We are noting a world trend of a worsening attitude to reading - especially of literary works - and we are observing, despite the relatively strong reading tradition in Slovenia, less interest in literature even in our country. It is worth drawing attention again and again to the exceptional importance of the development of reading abilities and to the fact that the age of mass media does not favour this development. Pleasing to the eye, noisy, superficial, entertaining, short and fast - this is the operating formula of the media simulacrum. The brilliance of the outside world and fascination with appearance. Reading a book demands a different world: isolation, silence, peace and depth. Rather than looking outwards, it looks inwards. An inner dialogue with oneself, and while reading, the imaginative painting of one's own images.

Study Circles

The study circle is a form of informal group learning for adults. It involves learning for pleasure about topics which are not offered by formal organisations or institutions. As well as concrete



knowledge and skills, study circles provide a broader understanding of the subject being dealt with and offer the possibility of personal development. Work in circles works through co-operation, along democratic principles, through the method of dialogue.

Participants help each other, combining the experience of all the members of the circle. They themselves decide about the progress of the circle in accordance with their own needs and expectations. The content and forms of circles vary. Study circle participants to date have involved themselves with various recreational activities, handicrafts, tourism, ecology, cuisine, ethnology, cultural/historical activities, foreign languages and many other subjects.

At the first meeting of the circle the members agree what they want to learn, and set themselves educational and action goals. Together they prepare a strategy of how to acquire knowledge: what books they will read, a list of experts to invite, and a list of institutions to visit. Since the most important task of the study circle is socio-cultural animation, the participants through their acquired knowledge constructively enrich the local and regional environment, either by organising exhibitions or round tables, issuing publications of various types, preparing news articles and press releases, or by producing items for the radio.

The role of the mentor trained to work in a study circle is not the same as the role of the teacher in a school. The mentor is just one of the participants, responsible for communicating the methods of the study circle; his tasks are more administrative, he leads the circle and sees that its work is systematic and organised.

Study circles usually contain between five and fifteen people, a number which allows each individual to work actively and express his or her own opinion. Participants become members of the study circle voluntarily. There are no grades, and the participants do not receive formal qualifications or awards. Most important are the encounter (as the great philosopher Martin Buber says: 'All genuine life is an encounter'), the common search for knowledge and the dissemination of this knowledge into the environment. Consequently, participants acquire new knowledge for themselves and for the benefit of the public, since one of the fundamental tasks of study circles is to activate the environment, to transfer knowledge outwards as broadly as possible, and to motivate people for learning. As Buscaglia exclaims: 'Learning is the greatest joy. Learning is fantastic, since when you learn something new you also become something new.'

Reading with Manca Košir

The 'Reading with Manca Košir' study circles differ from other circles mainly in their pre-determined plan - spreading reading culture as pleasure. Let us briefly sketch the main aims of this circle:

Target population. The participants of study circles are those adults who need reading, the sharing of reading experiences in the community and the spreading of the 'reading bug' into



the local and regional environment and the broader Slovene environment. A circle can have up to 12 participants.

Aims and goals. It involves socio-cultural animation and education in the local environment, work in the community and for the community. One of the main goals is the spreading of reading culture, bringing people together so that they read more and enjoy sharing their reading experience. Learning to read will be connected with the practice of writing - for all types of mass media and interconnection of reading circles. In short: activate the environment!

Tasks. Circles must last at least 20 hours. Participants must read at least one book (in Slovene) a month, as a rule a work of Slovene literature. The leaders and mentors of the circles suggest some titles in co-operation with Dr Košir, taking into account the interests of the participants. The participants report on the books they have read and discussions in the study circle: in the local, regional or national media (press, radio television). They prepare events and report to other study circles around Slovenia on their encounters with guests (poets, writers, essayists and other public figures from the world of writing). They forge contacts with schools, libraries and local companies, where they initiate discussion of the work of circles and the spreading of the 'reading bug'.

Methods. This is informal learning and the development of democratic communication. Therefore: dialogue, public participation by every member of the circle, discussion, work in pairs and small groups, organisation of visits (literary meetings, bookshops and libraries, Slovene theatrical performances, visits to the cultural departments of the mass media, etc.), writing reports on work, and press releases.

Evaluation. After the first year of work by the circles, a professional evaluation will be carried out both by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and within the framework of the 'Education for the media' project led by Dr Košir and her colleagues from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Ljubljana University.

The organisation of the 'Reading with Manca Košir' study circles took place in October 1999. In response to modest advertising, over a hundred book lovers from all over Slovenia interested in training as study circle mentors phoned the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Unfortunately we were only able to accept 25 of them - mainly because of our limited resources. They were selected on the basis of their application forms and the area they lived in - in accordance with our wish to have circles dispersed around the whole of Slovenia. The selected mentors vary in age, since we chose both students and pensioners. The education structure of the future mentors also varies, from secondary school to university. It would however have been nice to see more men applying.

As I write, training is already under way. The interest and motivation of the participants is high and they are doing very well. This encouraging climate is thanks to both highly motivated mentor candidates and experienced lecturers.

Following the expert evaluation we shall use the data to plan an expansion of the 'Reading with Manca Košir' study circles in coming years, as we increase the number of study circles in line with interest and financial possibilities.

Dr Manca Košir, Faculty of Social Sciences, Darijan Novak, SIAE



Family Literacy Programme at Primary Schools

Contemporary society places increasing demands on the individual with regard to reading and writing skills, both in the workplace and in the domestic environment. Compulsory schooling for all children up to a certain age does not in itself guarantee a level of literacy which satisfies the growing needs of the individual, while existing methods of supplementary literacy training for adults have not shown the expected results. The programmes have come about as the result of a search for effective approaches to raise the level of literacy of the population.

The expression 'Family literacy programme' is used for very different educational approaches which stimulate the development of literacy in all family members, which develop reading culture and reading interests in the family, etc. The guiding principle of family literacy programmes is that by simultaneously raising the literacy level of parents and children it is possible to break the circle of 'intergenerational preservation of the level of literacy'. Research into literacy shows that the level of literacy does not change from generation to generation within individual classes of society and that children achieve a level of literacy which corresponds to the literacy level of their parents.

Family literacy programmes

Family literacy programmes are planned so as to teach parents how to contribute to improving the reading and writing skills of the whole family. They rest on the assumption that improving the parents' literacy level improves the literacy level of their children and gives them better possibilities for their future education. The programmes do not highlight illiteracy and individuals but direct the whole family to the maximum interaction in activities which include reading and writing skills. Joint reading and writing activities and positive motivation are key elements of the programmes.

With most parents who help their children with their school work, it is not that they have problems connected with reading and writing technique, but they do not know how to process what they have read together with their child, or how to formulate written texts. If family literacy programmes only manage to help parents in this area (enabling them to tackle a text themselves), this is already a great achievement.



Motivating parents to work with the children can take various forms. Most parents want a better future for their children, with a better level of education and greater economic success than they themselves have achieved. The experience of those running the programmes shows that the desire of the majority of parents who join family literacy programmes is to help their child but at the same time to acquire something for themselves in the area of reading and writing skills.

The interest in their children's education which parents show by actively preparing themselves to help their children with their school work has a favourable influence on children and increases their motivation for learning.

Professional literature describes various family literacy programmes which differ in terms of whom they are aimed at, methods used and duration.

Family literacy programmes can be divided into two groups: (a) parent involvement programmes and (b) intergenerational programmes. Programmes which only involve parents have an indirect influence on the development of literacy among children. Intergenerational programmes are designed to allow children and parents to act as colleagues and/or schoolmates, and work with them can be separate or in the form of joint meetings. Parents learn simultaneously how to improve their own reading and writing skills and how to work with children in developing their literacy.

One possible classification of family literacy programmes is in terms of how old the child is when his or her parents begin a family literacy programme. Initially the programmes were intended for the parents of children starting school. Recently, however, the parents of younger children have been recommended to join literacy programmes (in the United Kingdom one programme of this type goes under the banner 'A Picture Book for Every Child at Nine Months!').

The programmes are designed for specific target groups of parents: the unemployed, immigrants, the poor, parents with no formal education. Methods and content follow a pre-determined framework; in practice it has proved that methods always need to be adapted to the group following the programme. The duration of programmes also varies and is conditioned by the goal set. Professional literature describes some programmes which have lasted a matter of weeks and others which have lasted several years but which along with family literacy have included other material such as learning the official language of a country, employment possibilities for immigrants, information on the possibilities of social assistance for poor families, etc.

The programmes also differ in terms of where they are held. There are several possibilities: in school, or within the framework of the local community (municipality, local community). Those running the programmes are for the most part teachers trained in adult education, and very effective results are obtained if they co-operate with the child's teacher.

Family literacy programmes also have a specific effect on other areas of the individual's activity, and learning is not only restricted to the area of literacy. Through reinclusion in the learning process, parents reawaken their memories of education and become aware of their experience through learning. Their fresh experiences help them better to understand their children and be more inclined to help, and to look for learning methods that are more effective than scolding and punishment. Within the framework of joint activities and co-operation, good relations can develop between parents and children which are then transferred to other areas of family life.

Family literacy programme in primary schools in Slovenia

This academic year the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education developed a family literacy programme and began running at the Livada and Nove Jarše primary schools in Ljubljana. The programme is aimed at parents who would like to help their children learn to read and write but do not know how. These are parents who left education many years ago and who have not used reading and writing skills in their work or in their domestic environment, or parents who for various reasons have not received an education and whose knowledge is not sufficient for them to help their children's literacy.

The programme is called **'Let's read and write together'**. It is aimed at the parents of children in the first three years of primary school and comprises ten meetings with parents. The meetings are conducted by two teachers trained to work with adults and to run family literacy programmes. The meetings last an hour and a half and take place in school libraries.

Conclusion

Family literacy programmes train parents to help their children learn to read and write, and at the same time improve the literacy level of the whole family. They contribute to better literacy in the family and in society, and develop a reading culture among parents whose children will be able to transfer to subsequent generations.

The trial introduction of the family literacy programme **'Let's read and write together'** at two primary schools aims to check the planned programme and then develop it at other primary schools around Slovenia. More detailed information on the family literacy programme is available from the project leader Dr Livija Knaflič at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in Ljubljana, tel: +286 61 184 2592, e-mail: Livija.Knafllic@acs-saec.si

Livija Knaflič, SIAE





THE SLOVENE ADULT EDUCATION SCENE



Training and Study Programmes at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

At the start of this year the Educational Service at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) prepared 'Starting points for the preparation of training and study programmes at the GZS' and 'Instructions for the preparation of GZS programme components'. The training and study programmes which we shall prepare will be intended for employees and shall answer the needs of the companies which our members. Their interests and needs are collected and arranged via the proper associations.

The methodology for the preparation of GZS programmes conforms to the Law on the Organisation and Financing of Education. They differ from public educational training programmes defined by the Minister of Labour in that they are not compulsory either for the participant or for the employer. They conclude with an external test - an exam at the Chamber. Participants passing the exam receive a document from the Chamber, which has the character of a recommendation.

The Importance of GZS Training Programmes and the System of External Testing

The existing Law on the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) enables us and at the same time obliges us to organise education and training for management and specialist personnel.

In preparing the lists of professions which are prescribed as 'orders' for the preparation of public educational programmes for the acquisition of a level of professional or specialist education (i.e. for educational programmes), we find that companies have significantly greater needs for new knowledge than can be crammed into the 'order' for an educational programme.

The public (or formal or state) education system, which we design as social partners under the leadership of the responsible ministries, is mainly aimed at the young, who receive education in schools, and at adults who wish to gain a level of professional or specialist education. This area of education is the responsibility of the Minister of Education. Educational legislation also envisages training and specialisation programmes, for which the Ministry of Labour, the Family and Social Affairs is responsible. These are aimed at adults who by following this route will have the opportunity of acquiring a profession, as mentioned by the law. The Ministry of Labour, the Family and Social Affairs devotes most attention to tackling



the problem of unemployed people and the system for confirming professional qualifications (development of a certification system).

At the state level no-one devotes special attention to the 'everyday' needs of the companies which express their needs and inquire about the possibilities of training for specific jobs or special knowledge in a profession - in short, about forms of additional education and training aimed at employees.

Needs for knowledge among employees are very varied and depend on the previous education of employees, the size of the company, technological changes, organisational changes, the required level of production quality, the production process, products and services, etc. Companies as a rule inquire about short, intensive forms of training which ensure higher quality work and better co-operation among employees, training in the use of machines, appliances and tools, or additional training in dealing with people and things. Many of the forms of training described were provided in the past by education centres at companies or educational organisations which prepared training in accordance with the needs of the client companies. As a result of the reorganisation of the economy there are only a few education centres today capable of such tasks. Many small and medium-sized companies are appearing, and these have different needs and too few human and financial resources to be able to 'afford' the training they need.

At the Education Service of the GZS we are planning a system that will fill the gap which has appeared in the range of programmes on offer. We shall organise and co-ordinate the preparation of individual training programmes and exams to test and confirm ability, when needs for new knowledge or training appear at the level of new associations.

GZS programmes providers will not be defined or verified. We expect that as well as adult education organisations, providers will include other organisations and companies.

The programmes will be published, and in this way we shall enable suitably trained and interested organisations to carry them out and prepare participants for the exams. Participants will also be able to take the exam if they meet the conditions for enrolment in the programme even if they do not take part in the programme itself.

The group which puts the programme together generally includes representatives of the profession and education planners who have experience in adult training and education.

The aim of the preparation process is the preparation of a standard of knowledge which the individual has to achieve after completing the programme. The programme will enable the individual and the provider to achieve the necessary standard of knowledge by the shortest, easiest and most effective route. The parts of the programme not specially defined in the rules on exams to test and confirm ability and which must be taken into account by exam candidates, will be considered a recommendation in the case of training being organised. Standards of knowledge are set by the responsible professional association, while the general programme elements are set by the Education and Personnel Board at the GZS.



We prepared the first programmes at the suggestion of the Tourism and Catering Association, the Small Business Association and the Technological Development Service. We prepared the necessary groundwork for the preparation of programmes and stipulated the programme elements and the required standards of knowledge.

On a trial basis we shall organise exams for:

- Tourist guide training programme
- Tourist group leader training programme
- Foot massage training programme
- Specialist training in the correct handling of substances in refrigeration and air-conditioning technology
- Specialist training for those working with electrical installations, machines and appliances.

The first two programmes were defined by the GZS on the basis of the Promotion of Tourism Act (Official Gazette, No. 57/98), and thus the exam timetable will also be subject to the provisions of this law. The Tourism and Catering Association is rapidly making preparations at the GZS for the issuing of licences for tourist guides and is preparing executive regulations.

Barbara Krajnc, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia



Information and Careers Advice Centre

The Information and Careers Advice Centre is the result of efforts over a number of years to provide numerous users with good quality and up-to-date information on careers and routes to a career. The idea of such a centre first appeared at the National Employment Office in 1992, when we recognised the advantages of such a way of working. In 1996 the experimental information and careers advice centre project was included via the Ministry of Labour, the Family and Social Affairs into the Phare technical assistance programme.

The Information and Careers Advice Centre (CIPS) is designed for:

- young people who for various reasons do not have access to information and careers advice
- unemployed people who need information and more in-depth careers advice while looking for work or opting for further education
- redundant employees, so they can avoid unemployment
- employment advisers, careers advisers and other employees at the National Employment Office who will be able to use the library and other aids for their own education, since because of the nature and variety of careers available, they can no longer become



acquainted with them and their requirements via contacts with employers. All of this will enable them to achieve greater efficiency in their own work.

The CIPS library contains:

- career descriptions
- information on education and training possibilities (full-time and part-time education, certificates, specialist training, re-qualification)
- information on possible financial assistance for education and training (national scholarships, Zois scholarships, various foundations, loans, etc.)
- information on the possibilities of employment in a profession (job vacancies, number of job-seekers registered at the National Employment Office, etc.)
- information on movements on the labour market
- instructions on how to look for employment (handbooks on writing applications, interview technique, etc.)
- computer programmes for the independent planning of a career path.

As well as information in written and computerised form and videos, the following forms of help will also be possible at the CIPS:

- individual advice on planning a career
- individual advice on planning education
- careers lectures
- talks with employers
- short workshops organised by the National Employment Office.

Network of information centres

The name NRCG or National Resource Centre for Guidance does not say much. Every country in Europe (with a few exceptions) has one such centre. The concept is the same as that of the CIPS in Slovenia. In 1993 a network of these centres was set up in the EU and each centre provides its citizens with information about the other countries in the network. The functions of the NRCG are the following:

- to provide information about education, initial and further career training
- to advise individuals who wish to train for a specific period in other EU countries
- to provide information about the possibilities of career training to other EU countries, particular to other NRCGs
- to organise seminars for careers advisers
- to design databases
- to cooperate on international careers information and/or career guidance development projects
- to cooperate at fairs and other events whose purpose is to enable the public better access to services.



They stress that the NRCG network is not intended for an exchange of information on workforce requirements, since this would overlap with the work of the EURES network. The NRCG network does not want duplicate and overlapping information, and thus for the most part collects already prepared information which it acquires from other institutions, and only prepares information which does not already exist or which has been unsuitably prepared. Membership of the NRCG network has the following advantages: easier access to specialist knowledge, contact with events in Europe, easier transition to new standards, etc.

What is Slovenia's position in this network? As well as EU members, future members which meet the conditions for full membership of the Leonardo programme can apply for membership of the NRCG network. Slovenia met these conditions in 1999. At the beginning of September we sent the requisite documents to Brussels.

Co-operation and Interconnection of the CIPS with other Institutions

From the very outset we have been aware that we would not be able to provide all information ourselves. We have asked for assistance and co-operation from the following:

- Ministry of Education and Sport
- Education Institute
- Professional Education Centre
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
- Chamber of Small Business
- Slovenian Institute for Adult Education
- other ministries, chambers and associations
- employers.

Much information has also been gathered with the help of the daily press and the Internet.

Zlata Šlibar, National Employment Office - CIPS



Development activities and initiatives of the Regional Centre for Development, Zagorje

At the suggestion of the director Tomo Garantini we visited the Regional Centre for Development in Zagorje where some of the key activities of the centre were presented, along with the tools that have been developed at the centre to make them more successful in the restructuring of the economy in the Zasavje region. The centre operates in a region which is encountering difficulties deriving for the most part from the unfavourable demographic picture (low population growth and a high index of ageing), from its emphatically



industrial character, and from a high rate of unemployment. The education structure of employees is likewise unfavourable, since the majority of employees have secondary school education or less. For this reason the primary activities of the centre are mainly aimed at overcoming the stagnation in this region of Slovenia and at creating conditions for faster economic development. Employees are aware that balanced regional development is one of the key development policies of the European Community.

The following organisations work within the centre: the Zasavje Guarantee Fund, which is supposed to help in the reorganisation of existing companies in the Zasavje region and in the setting up of new, fast-growing companies; a business premises exchange; a technology park, as a form of stimulating enterprise based on advanced technology. The centre also co-operates in the work of small business zones and connects together supplementary activities on farms in this demographic risk area.

In co-operation with the National Employment Office, the Regional Centre for Development, Zagorje, carries out the following activities and supports the following funds:

- The Zasavje Labour Fund is aimed at preventing redundant employees from sliding into unemployment and thus preventing all the accompanying social and psychological consequences arising through unemployment.
- Job-seekers club, where the unemployed learn how to write job applications, how to prepare for interviews and how to acquire skills which make it easier for them to find a job. The function of the club is therefore to make its members as capable as possible of independently tackling the problems relating to unemployment.
- The centre offers micro-loans at favourable interest rates for unemployed people who begin working as self-employed persons, and for small commercial companies which employ an unemployed person.
- It develops public works in tourism, with the help of which the centre hopes to research tourist services in the Zasavje region, their potential and the possibilities of more rapid development.
- It co-operates with the National Employment Office in the drawing up of business plans for those unemployed people who want to be self-employed.

The key project begun at the Centre at the start of the year is a development strategy for five municipalities. The strategy will be a signpost in the development of Zasavje, and will also propose the easiest way to realise goals in accordance with possibilities and the costs of the region. The development programmes of this strategy include enterprise, ecology, infrastructure, power supply, development of technology and education. The education programme is extremely important since because of its industrial stagnation the region is losing educated people. The aim of the education programme is to reverse the drain of knowledge from the region, while the method mainly involves strengthening practical business knowledge.



The Regional Centre for Development, Zagorje, also encourages informal education and learning projects and less traditional and less conventional forms and methods of acquiring knowledge and skills. Also currently relevant here is its co-operation on study circle, knowledge exchange and youth learning projects and on certain other projects of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Co-operation with the Regional Centre for Development, Zagorje, would probably also be of interest to other organisations which encourage the co-operation of the local population, support new approaches and possibilities for learning, and finally for those organisations who could directly or indirectly contribute to overcoming the concrete problems of the region such as unemployment and the brain drain.

Jasmina Mirčeva, SIAE



Enterprise Action for Young People

In June, Racio Celje d.o.o held the second workshop for unemployed young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing in Kranjska Gora. The title of the workshop was 'How to set my professional and personal goals for the future'. It took place in co-operation with the National Employment Office and the National Association for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. The company carries out a range of educational and motivational programmes for various categories of unemployed people, while a great deal of attention is devoted to the young. In September 1998 we carried out this programme for young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing for the first time, continuing with it in June 1999. Nine young people, from Koper, Maribor and Velenje, joined the previous generation to have learnt the importance of enterprising action in the new, competitive world.

The aim of the workshop is to stimulate creative thinking, enterprising action, the recognition of business opportunities in the environment and the setting of goals for the future. Young people today tend not to know how to set goals for their future - something which is no surprise given that changes on the labour market are so rapid and sudden that they are hard to follow. However they must themselves assume the responsibility for their behaviour, by appearing successfully on the labour market and thus ensuring their future. For young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, this is even more difficult, since their opportunities for basic education are poorer, as are their possibilities of employment. But they too encounter the same difficulties as all other job-seekers, if not even greater difficulties. Thus the company came up with the idea of alternative forms of education for this target group. One of them is the five-day programme that goes under the banner 'How to set my professional and personal goals for the future'.



With the help of interpreters Nataša Kordiš from Ljubljana and Oto Hrašnik from Celje we were able to introduce them to new and unknown subjects and actively include them in the work required by the workshop. Because this is a very specific group, a range of difficulties appeared which we overcame using various methods. The subject matter is communicated via slides, pictures, short conversations, role-playing, brainstorming, and individual and group training, to name just some of the methods. Everything is useful, provided that the material is comprehensible and binds the participants into one 'spirit' which works harmoniously throughout the programme. This takes place with the help of the logical connection of relevant subjects. At the beginning we get acquainted with enterprise as a philosophy and lifestyle, and then by creating enterprise ideas and a business plan in groups, we form small potential enterprise teams. The work is very demanding for everyone who is encountering enterprise for the first time, but to our participants it presents a new challenge, an insight into methods of formulation, and above all active group work. The third and fourth days are given over to softer topics. The fundamental questions which serve as a guide are: 'Who am I?', 'What kind of person am I?', and 'How can I be successful in interpersonal relations?' These are questions which encourage young people to think about how much and what they themselves they can do to improve their position on the labour market and in life generally.

Once we have been acquainted with enterprise and know ourselves well, it is time for a 'reckoning'. To the subject matter we add background - events on the labour market - and then end with setting the first steps for the future - both professional and personal goals. For some this is overcoming weaknesses or supplementing less distinct personal characteristics, for others this is completing a stage of education, discovering new professional goals or even possibilities for self-employment. Just as we, as the providers of the programmes, must have a set goal at the start, so the participants must have a goal at the end, and one that is as concrete and as feasible as possible. The work goes on every day, and is varied by sports and other free-time activities. In this way we care for both mental and physical health. At the end of the day no-one feels sleepy or tired. We are constantly driven by the discovery of the new, the forming of friendships and mutual trust, or simply by being with other people.

Every workshop encourages us to go on - both the participants and the providers. Every group has its own special charm and spirit. It contains unique people who give a great deal and enrich us. Encountering their difficulties challenges us to look for new solutions, and this is something we do not avoid. We are planning another programme for young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and a joint meeting of all the groups who have already taken part in the programme, so that they can form mutual links, exchange opinions and try and put into practice one of the ideas formulated in the workshop.

Alenka Leskovšek, Racio Celje



INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION



Lifelong Learning, Liberal Adult Education and Civil Society

This was the title of a conference organised by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Finnish Adult Education Association during the Finnish presidency of the European Union. It seems that such conferences are to become standard practice for those presiding over the EU. The Helsinki conference, organised by the Finns in July this year, was the first and addressed **»New Dimensions of Learning and the Information Society«**. The second, described below, was held in Turku, and the third was in Tampere from 18th–19th November dealing with vocational education. The theme was **»New Challenges in the Co-operation between Vocational Training and Working Life«**. In the year 2000, when the EU Presidency passes over to Portugal, one of the conferences is scheduled for May or June dealing with basic skills for full and active citizenship and work.

The conference in the maritime city of Turku was attended by more than 200 participants. The majority of them were from the host country, but the conference was also attended by representatives from EU member countries and from countries waiting to join, as well as EU officials. On the second day of the conference the participants were addressed by the President of Finland, Mr Martti Ahtisaari. It must be said that the conference was extremely well organised and prepared. The plenary sessions were combined with workshops and visits to institutions which were connected with the themes that each workshop was covering. Eight workshops were organised dealing with:

- personal development (intellectual): languages, information technology etc.;
- personal development (practical skills): arts and crafts, self-expression, the arts, physical culture;
- value based views of the world: ideological, ethical, religious, political;
- local and regional development;
- democracy and organisational education;
- liberal adult education: preventing marginalisation and promoting of employment;
- »A second chance«;
- the »third age« and learning.

The only time the organisers »went wrong« in their planning was when they planned the time allotted to workshops, although nothing can be said regarding the actual content of the workshops. The goals which were set regarding this part of the conference were too high. The idea was for the conference to come up with messages for the EU Presidency and with

recommendations for the new Socrates II programme, known as Grundtvig (period 2000–2006), which is aimed at adult education. The recommendations were supposed to address the management of the programme, priority fields and content. This was not an easy task since a misunderstanding of some kind seemed to have arisen. When preparing for the conference, what participants had understood was slightly different from what was expected. They had presumed that they were to present the situation in their countries and the priorities set by the state in their respective field. This was what, with some exceptions, happened. The participants presented their systems of adult education without giving too much attention to liberal adult education. Being involved in the workshop dealing with personal development and language education connected to Information Technology and intellectual development of an individual (and all this connected to the title of the conference Liberal Adult Education), the problem we had to deal with was a terminological one – what do we understand by the term »Liberal Adult Education«.

Nevertheless the organisers did achieve their aims. From eight workshops they received eight messages for the EU Presidency and eight recommendations for the Grundtvig programme. And, this was achieved in response to an unusual demand. The co-ordinator and leader of the workshop part of the conference was the Controller of Strategic Planning for the Finnish broadcasting company. His demands were as follows: each workshop should come up with one message and one recommendation. Both should be very short, 15 words at most, so that they could be prepared using »Power Point« software and shown on the screen while the rapporteur was reporting to the plenary. This was successfully achieved. The presentations were short and to the point, and were projected on the screen while the rapporteur was speaking.

The **messages** of the workshops were interesting, and were as truthful as possible:

- bridges, not barriers: information, communication, knowledge building through participation and collaboration to enhance mutual understanding;
- self-expression and other related subjects and other forms of learning-by-doing are basic human needs and have to be promoted;
- value based: equality, understand/respect difference, participatory democracy, mutuality, balance, plurality, emotional rootedness, critical thinking, empowerment, spirituality, sustainability;
- adult learning networks are best established at regional and local levels, based on comprehensive partnerships which require tailor made adult learning;
- trends challenging democracy: internationalisation of political decision-making; globalised economy outside the control of political authorities; impact of the media; increasing migration and nationalism; the gap between the *haves* and the *have-nots*;
- promotion of civil society: bridge the gap between private life of the individual and the public societal structure;



- the learner is the most important person in the learning process, which must be an empowering process;
- non-traditional learners question all ability to see and acknowledge their interests, their agendas and their outcomes;
- **SPINNER:** Support for quality of life; Political investment/policy; Involvement (active in society); Networking, New technology; European consciousness; Researchers – seniors as researchers into the third age.

Recommendations for the Grundtvig programme given by the workshops:

- all teacher education should incorporate characteristics of adult education promoting mobility and creativity;
- Grundtvig has to be closer to real life and better reflect adult learners' needs;
- prioritise marginalised groups, no limits to learning, new forms and contents, informal, non-formal, change institutions;
- develop European networks and new ways of learning through networks;
- break through the boundaries of methodological approaches;
- Grundtvig must support learning activities whether they take place in formal or non-formal settings;
- Grundtvig should risk more experimental, provocative schemes with partnerships;
- **STUDENT** – remember the third age students: Shared knowledge and expertise, Training, University for the 3rd age, Development is lifelong, Exchange of expertise and practice, Networking, Technological innovations used to recognise all the potential.

By way of a conclusion: in spite of the shortage of time allotted to the workshops the conference was a success. The organisers have promised to send us the proceedings of the conference and the workshops. Judging from the way they organised the conference there is no reason not to believe that this will not be so. So – let us wait for the report and for those present at the conference to relive once again the learning experience of the Turku event.

Dr. Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar, SIAE



The Only Chance is the Involvement of Those Concerned*

The social and cultural situation of the Gypsy population in Hungary is a special subject which arouses both enthusiasm and aversion. What is the reason for this? The „Gypsy issue“ became a neuralgic point in the course of political transformation as this population is one of

* Slovenian Institute of Adult Education, Hungarian Folk High School Society and Danish AOF Education Centre were partners in two years developmental project 'Basic Education as a Path Back Into Society' sponsored by Phare Lien Programme. The article is a contribution from Hungarian partner organisation.



the social groups that had been the hardest hit by the changes. At the same time the Gypsy population, which is quite divided by itself, was used as a new toy in the rivalry between certain non-Gypsy groups of the political elite. The lack of or confusion about national identity created in the decades of socialist rule was used as an additional weapon in the arsenal of modern political warfare in order to induce animosity on all sides. The chance of establishing tolerance, cultural pluralism and a multi-cultural social approach in shaping and strengthening the public opinion of the majority society towards Gypsies diminished in this atmosphere over-dominated by politics. In our opinion, conventional, or integrative attempts made by the majority of society concerning ethnic or linguistic minorities are doomed to failure in a world undergoing globalisation.

The other reason why we were attracted to this subject is the fact that it can be the best elucidated from the aspect of the most disadvantaged social groups that sustainable development, competitiveness, economic growth, the development of democracy and other goals set before us are endangered by growing social division, which is to be reduced in the interest of society as a whole.

Our third motive was the fact that we continuously witness that the system of formal and non-formal adult educational institutions is currently unable to reduce functional illiteracy and to counter the deficiencies of basic education. Apart from asserting that these problems should urgently be addressed, hardly anything has been done in practice.

We are convinced that the motivation of the Hungarian Folk High School resting on this conceptual foundation was the token of success when the staff of the Hungarian Folk High School and their Danish and Slovenian partners started to design the plan of this training project in 1996-97, which was implemented in 1998-99.

The balance of the pilot project

Beyond the formal and well-defined objectives one of the most essential results of the project activity is the fact that a change in attitude, which might have already developed in individuals, was effected and reinforced informally and on community level. What are the elements of this change? A positive approach to the culture of ethnic groups: *it is not a problem or burden to the majority of society but an advantage and added value*. Social marginalisation, exclusion and deviation cannot be understood if we only look for scapegoats, however, by looking for the reasons and by objective analyses they can be explained and partly eliminated. The development of self-confidence and solidarity and the ability to identify with the situation of others are the preconditions of all communication, in which we should express not only our expectations but also our personal responsibility as much as possible. The intellectual work done in the workshops did not end with the mutual development of these mainly »hidden« values mentioned above, but was continued with learning and practising practical professional procedures and techniques, with the analysis of results and making improvements. The number of Gypsy people in the target group and the extent of the



activity are not too large, the results of the courses are good (retention rate, motivation, satisfaction, achieved goals in studying), however, the output of the courses that cannot be measured is at least as important for the given target group. This includes the strengthening of identity and self-confidence, improved communication skills and behaviour cultured conduct, the recognition of the importance of learning and education as a positive experience and the local development of a positive inter-ethnic social atmosphere.

The working group as a result

The working group set up by the project leaders consisted of three co-ordinators, fifteen teachers, four authors, four researchers, nine labour market trainers recruited from the six project locations situated in the three different counties. A group of teachers' trainers from Slovenia and a group of labour market trainers from Denmark and two co-ordinators from the respective countries contributed to the teamwork. People with different professions, teachers and social workers formed a team which became a cohesive, integrated working group in the course of project activities. The participants became aware of the characteristics of community adult education and of the significance and content of methods and techniques that greatly differ from those employed in normal school education. The teachers acquired special competence in dealing with functional illiteracy in the ethnic group of Romany people characterised by a disadvantaged social position. In the course of the teachers' training, participants learnt a great deal from one another through the discussion of particular problems and situations that had to be faced in different settlements and learning groups. In the course of practising adequate professional skills in basic adult education, the relationship that developed between teachers and later between teachers and the target group was characterised by a high degree of empathy and commitment that developed. This was the most significant intellectual and moral output of the basic adult education development programme. The motivation of teachers was enhanced by the fact that they could contribute to the production of something new, they could be the co-authors of the teaching materials and the entire programme as well. The teachers also had to get accustomed to the conditions of international co-operation and learning together.

Results on an organisational level

In the *professional field* the Hungarian Folk High School Society was able to develop its organisational and professional knowledge and capacity in a comprehensive way in three regions. On the conceptual basis of lifelong education, out of school community education in the framework of folk high schools was successful at overcoming former frustrations experienced in schools, animating general basic adult education and ethnic identity as a way of social adjustment and building up self-confidence, which could be combined with training aimed at integration into the labour market as a precondition of vocational training or retraining. In a given situation, on a small-scale it was possible to work out an appropriate answer to the most significant dilemmas in the basic education of the adult population.



Formal adult education institutions and labour market training organisations are unable to do so today. It is one of the advantageous features of non-governmental organisations that they are capable of solving complex local problems by being locally present, non-formal and able to build up an open network with other types of organisations.

The project was a challenge in terms of developing organisational management skills on local, regional and national levels since the quality and efficiency requirements defined by the objectives implied well-accorded planning, organising, cost planning, accounting, evaluation and feed-back not only between ourselves, but also with our international partners in the course of our (distance or on the spot) work done together. Finally, the capacity of the Hungarian Folk High School Society to take part in international co-operation was improved by being able to bridge differences deriving from cultural backgrounds, accumulated professional experience and expertise, to overcome language barriers and to establish »common consciousness« through work- and efficiency-oriented communication, to create the framework for the professional interpretation of similarities and differences. All this could not have been achieved without the empathic, and committed professional approach of the Slovenian and Danish partners.

The Hungarian Folk High School benefited from the programme *on a social level* too. We established close ties with other non-governmental organisations, mainly with Gypsy civil organisations in order to explore demands, reveal tensions and assert interests jointly. We also managed to win the support of the media and we had to learn how to articulate the same ideas repeatedly in different and simple ways in order to communicate the social significance of the subject to as many people as possible.

The results as well as the publicity of the programme going beyond local communities enhanced the social recognition of the Hungarian Folk High School Society *on the public administration and political level*. As a result the intention to grant government support was expressed, which facilitated the fulfilment of our co-financing obligations. The recognition of the programme was reinforced by the fact that the report on the monitoring visit of the independent expert from the PHARE-Lien office in Brussels as well as the analysis of the external evaluator commissioned by the Danish partner were both positive, and the EU delegation in Budapest also expressed interest in the programme.

About the further development of the programme

We consider the further, joint activity of the professional working group to be the most important element. The members of the working group have expressed their willingness to participate in the dissemination of the experiences and practice of the programme in organised forms such as teachers' further training and the training of project organisers. The working group has identified three main directions to be taken according to the existing knowledge and aspirations of target groups: **basic literacy training, preparation for grading examinations necessary for entering a higher class in elementary school and basic adult education combined with vocation-oriented training.**



At the final conference, participants of the teacher's training will be awarded a certificate issued by the three partners on the basis of their diploma work written about the training. The Hungarian Folk High School Society and the members of the working group have signed a contract concerning the extension and further development of the programme. Although the involvement of other communities and regions in this work has mainly been initiated within the organisational framework of the Hungarian Folk High School Society, the organisation is ready to co-operate with other institutions as well. Negotiations have been started with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education about the utilisation of the project results in their medium-term government programme aimed at the social elevation of Gypsy communities.

As functional literacy education and labour market reintegration training are needed not only by the Gypsy population in Hungary, the working group proposed that the learning material and teaching aids of the basic adult education programme should be further developed to address the needs of functional illiterate social groups of non-Gypsy origin as well. Steps have been taken in order to have the programme formally institutionalised. The working group would like to have the programme accredited within the framework of adjustment programmes provided by labour centres. In our opinion, there is also a possibility to put greater emphasis on basic literacy and adult education programmes and to obtain accreditation and support for them in the new act on adult education being prepared now. We intend to utilise the results of the project in higher education as well (teachers' training, training of adult education experts). The main task of the Hungarian Folk High School Society now is to extend and further develop the activity started in Hungary two years ago. At the same time both international partners have agreed to share our results with other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. We have considered various ways of implementation: introducing the complete programme and training a similar working group in a given country or exchanging experiences partially with the involvement of several countries.

János Sz. Tóth, President of Hungarian Folk High School Society



BOOK REVIEW



Adult Education in Croatian Society, Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka, Rijeka 1999.

The book *Adult Education in Croatian Society* was published recently. The publisher of the English edition is the Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka. The book is the result of scientific



research carried out by seven scientists dealing with adult education (Silvije Pongrac, Ph.D., Ilija Lavrnja, Ph.D., Boris Banovac, Ph.D., Anita Klapan, Ph.D., Sofija Vrcelj, Ph.D., Vidoje Vujić, Ph.D. and Renata Čepić, M.Sc.). They have been dealing with this issue for many years and in this book they present only a part of the results obtained while working on the project »Adult Education in Croatian Society Based on Social Changes« sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The book consist of eight papers discussing various issues of adult education in the conditions of transitional changes in Croatia. The structure of the problems studied has been implemented consistently despite the thematic scope. In that sense, the study of the problems of adult education begins with the observation of the development stages and the historical heritage of adult education in Croatia. It is followed by a study of social changes with special emphasis on the changes of the system of values in transitional changes and their repercussions on adult education. It also tackles the problems of individualisation and differentiation. The central part of the book deals with the major principles of adult education analysis and planning. The last part of the book presents the essential issues of adult education, such as: formal education and its relation to the other forms of adult education, elementary education, adult literacy and innovative learning in conditions of transition.

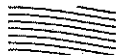
In the paper »Basic Characteristic of up-to-date Adult Education in Croatia« Silvije Pongrac and Ilija Lavrnja analyse the main features of education in Croatia in the context of social and economic changes. The authors give seven development stages as the basis using both description and critical – andragogical analysis.

»Adult Education in Croatia Based on Social Changes« is a paper by Anita Klapan in which she gives the analysis of social context of adult education, its achievements and the theoretical and methodological hypotheses of the research and of the results obtained by all the authors.

What follows is a paper entitled »Social Changes and Values in the Context of Adult Education« by Boris Banovac. Being a sociologist, Banovac deals with the general context of social changes and their influence on values and value orientations. Based on empirical research, he establishes relations between value orientations during transitional processes, late modernisation and adult education.

Ilija Lavrnja focuses his didactic interests on the questions of individualisation and differentiation in adult education. Considering different aspects of adult education, from the content, educational forms and technologies to the didactical – methodological strategies and methods, the author points out the almost forgotten, but still present problems of individualisation and differentiation in adult education.

Silvije Pongrac in his paper »Strongholds of Analysing and Planing Adult Education« discusses the existence of educational needs, educational conditions and possibilities and relations between them in andragogical situations. His analyses, comparisons and generalisations of this recurring issue of adult education are especially interesting.



The paper »Models of Formal Adult Education« by Sofija Vrcelj examines the development of formal adult education in Croatia, its perspectives and possibilities by bringing all these aspects into the context of the overall view of models of formal and informal education.

Renata Čepić in her paper »Adult Basic Education and Literacy« – conducts a research on the problems of literacy regarding the rapid changes in Croatia. The author also analyses the processes of adult literacy education world-wide, in countries in transition and in Croatia.

Vidoje Vujić in his article »Innovative Learning of Employees During Transition of the Economy in the Republic of Croatia« analyses various forms and aspects of innovative teaching, which includes changes in the education of personnel for economic changes.

The book »Adult Education in Croatia« includes a wide range of key issues of adult education in the conditions of transitional society. The works of all the authors have a specific theoretical – methodological approach, including the style of writing. Nevertheless, the consistency of the texts is what makes this book a whole, so in that sense it represents more a complete study than just a collection of works.

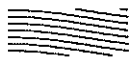
Due to the scantiness of recently published books on andragogy, this edition will be of great help to those who are directly or indirectly engaged in adult education, both theoretically and in practice. The publishing of the English edition will enable the dissemination of the results and the promotion of the research team outside the Croatian borders.

Anita Klapan, Ph.D.

(Translated by: students of the Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka)



SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE



Higher Education: 1,500 More Full-Time Students

The Ministry of Education and Sport published provisional information on enrolments in higher vocational colleges and under-graduate university programmes as well as information on the co-financing of post-graduate studies during the current school year. The first information shows that a total of 45,163 students enrolled into full-time programmes, somewhat over 1,500 more than last year; while 17,790 students entered part-time



programmes, meaning that there are 2,628 fewer enrolled than last year. According to Minister of Education and Sport, Pavle Zgaga, this should correct the generally held opinion that the number of part-time students is growing faster than for full-time students. This year also, most part-time students are enrolled in sociological, especially economic, programmes, so that this year Slovenia will remain one of the European countries having the largest share of students in sociological and business studies.

Growing Enrolment in Technical Studies

According to Minister Zgaga, enrolment in full-time sociological programmes is nevertheless moderating this year, with a noticeable return of students entering the first year of technical studies. Thus, the highest growth in enrolment compared to last year was recorded at Ljubljana's Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Maribor's Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology and the Faculty of Civil Engineering. This school year, Slovenia has three new colleges and five new programmes. Zgaga says that it is important that the programmes run outside Ljubljana and Maribor gain in both importance and number of enrolled students. Last year, the Slovenian Government adopted a resolution on the co-financing of post-graduate studies, which had not previously been systematically regulated.



Jobs and Training for 9,761 Disabled

Last year, social work centres and companies for professional training and employment of the disabled helped 19 percent more disabled people get jobs and professional training than in 1997, while financial aid and allowances were received by fewer people than in 1997. Among all children and youth able to claim social security services and allowances, most were from materially-endangered families (38.7%). The same was true of adults (63.6%).

Social Work Centres Employed 7.2 Percent More People

The disabled are trained and employed in two centres and 111 companies for professional training and employment of the disabled. These organisations employed or trained 9,761 people, 19 percent more than in 1997. This is in line with the national employment action programme for 2000-2001, which calls for higher employability rates of the population, mostly achieved by preventing further growth in long-term unemployment especially of the young, by enabling the acquisition of knowledge and skills and providing equal employment opportunities to men, women and disadvantaged groups.

More than half of the disabled (57.8 percent) were employed in various manufacturing programmes, and 42.2 percent in services. Most disabled were employed by textiles, wood-processing, metal, graphic and electrical industry programmes. Among services, the



most frequent were protecting of property and buildings, maintaining of equipment, buildings and services, and administrative-accountancy services. In 1998, 62 centres for social work employed 1,077 workers, some 7.2 percent more than in 1997.



Co-financing of 1,900 Postgraduate Students

For students at the two Slovenian universities and independent higher education institutes, 1 October marked the beginning of the new school year. In the 1999/2000 school year, the Ministries of Education and Science will co-finance the studies of students at the faculties of the Ljubljana and Maribor and also the study of postgraduate students.

Exactly how many students will be involved this year is not yet known, as enrolment deadlines have not yet expired. In the spring announcement for first-year enrolments, the two universities and independent higher education institutions offered 21,478 places, the most ever. There were 14,108 places for full-time and 7,370 for part-time studies. The first applications for enrolment were received from 23,678 candidates, plus 285 foreigners and Slovenians without Slovenian citizenship.

The Ministries of Education and Science decided that co-financing of second-year postgraduate studies will continue at 17 faculties of the Ljubljana and Maribor universities. All postgraduates who received a scholarship in the 1998/1999 school year and enrolling in the second year, a total of 783 students, will also receive a scholarship this year.

This year more than 250 postgraduate students will obtain the status of assistants and young researchers, who are co-financed separately.

Twenty faculties were chosen for the co-financing of first-year postgraduate studies: 13 from Ljubljana University, five from Maribor University and two independent higher education institutes. The funds available enable the co-financing of approximately 1,100 newly-enrolled students, which is a good quarter (26 percent) more than last year. As far as postgraduate studies are concerned, up to 1,900 students will receive assistance, i.e. twice as many as last year.

After 21 October, when the total number of all enrolled students is known, the ministries will again verify how many students at individual faculties will be granted co-financing. Besides, this year more than 250 postgraduate students will obtain the status of assistants and young researchers, who are co-financed separately.

Licences for Student Loans to NLB and NKBM

On 30 September, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs decided that licences to grant student loans will be given to Nova Ljubljanska banka (NLB) and Nova Kreditna banka Maribor (NKBM). These two banks were chosen as the best tenderers of 14 Slovenian banks applying at the beginning of August to the announced invitation to tender. The 13,100 lots



offered will be divided up between the two banks in the ratio 59 percent to NLB (7,713 lots) and 41 percent to NKBM (5,387 lots).



Employment: Priority in the 2000 Budget Policy

The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs presented the National Employment Action Plan for the years 2000 and 2001 and Strategic Labour Market Development Targets for the period up until 2006. According to Minister Anton Rop, the new documents are based on the specific features of Slovenia's labour market and on the EU's employment guidelines.

The biggest change from previous active employment programmes is that now the list not only includes activities to be carried out by the labour ministry but also other areas that help shape the labour market. The 1999 programme clearly defines the roles of the social partners in bringing the set goals to fruition.

The programme sets five long-term strategic goals to be carried out by the labour ministry and social partners by 2006: 1) higher education levels and reskilling of the labour force; 2) cutting friction unemployment and removing structural inconsistencies likely to emerge when the proportions of long-term unemployed (from the current 60 % to below 40 %) and unskilled unemployed (from over 47 % to 25 %) go down; 3) involving in active employment programmes all unemployed who have failed to find a new job after six months of unemployment; 4) reducing regional differences; and 5) cutting unemployment growth rates by at least 1 % annually in the 2000-2006 period provided faster economic growth makes it possible for the national unemployment rate to fall below 6 percent according to international standards and for the registered unemployment rate to drop below 9 percent by 2006.

Boosting Entrepreneurial Orientations

The National Employment Action Plan for 2000-2001 proposes four pillars: higher employability rates of the population, mostly achieved by preventing further growth in long-term unemployment especially of the young, by enabling the acquisition of knowledge and skills; promotion of entrepreneurship especially by boosting the entrepreneurial orientation of the young, women and rural populations; promotion of company and labour force flexibility especially by promoting the development of active social partnership; and providing equal employment opportunities to men, women and disadvantaged groups. A comparison of the main labour market indicators in Slovenia and the EU shows that Slovenia has on average a higher level of labour activity, especially due to the higher labour activity of women (Slovenia 64%, EU 60%). According to Minister Anton Rop, the Labour Ministry has also managed in budget negotiations to identify employment policy as one of the key priorities in the 2000 budget policy, and to establish technological development as an important government priority.



