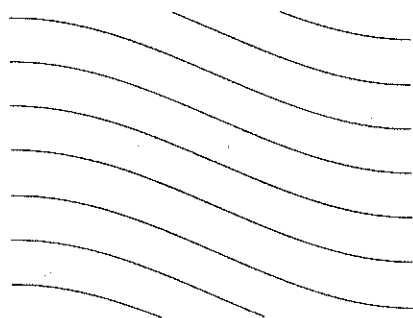


Andragoški center Republike Slovenije
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

NOVIČKE



SPRING 2000

▲ **SIAE EVENTS** ● Case study on media literacy in Slovenia ● Evaluation report on the implementation of the PLYA programme ● Report on evaluation workshop ● Study circles - how to continue? ● *Let's read with Manca Košir* study circles ▲ **SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE** ● The state, caring mother or wicked stepmother of adult education? ● Preliminary national development programme for 2000-2002 ▲ **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION** ● Determining and ensuring quality in educational organisations ● The first Week of Adult Education in Russia ▲ **SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE** ● Human development: 28th place among 174 countries ● Women better educated than men



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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SIAE EVENTS



Case study on media literacy in Slovenia

At the *Fifth Unesco international conference on adult education*, special emphasis was placed on the fact that in learning societies, lifelong learning societies, citizens are increasingly expected to have the ability to independently evaluate, analyse and learn with the help of information produced by the media. Modern trends thus force us to bridge the gap between media literate and media illiterate people. How this is achieved and with what means is one of the key questions of the transnational study of media literacy being undertaken by the Unesco Institute for Education and the Japanese National Institute for Education Research.

Slovenia is one of eight countries taking part in the study; this report provides the conclusions of the first phase of research. We have already sent a case study to the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg in which we outlined the state of media literacy in Slovenia.

After two months of actively collecting a wide range of data linked to the media and media literacy, we have described the state of media literacy in three basic chapters. I will summarise the most interesting findings.

In the introductory part we described and presented the formal system of education in Slovenia, including the most important statistical data on participants in education, providers, teaching staff and teaching aids available to nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, and higher-education institutions. We found that the amount of computer equipment grew enormously in Slovenian primary and secondary schools between 1997 and 1999. In 1999, primary schools had one computer for each 28 pupils, while in secondary schools the figure was one for each 9.5 children. 42 % of nursery schools, 87% of primary schools and 93% of secondary schools have Internet access; 11% of nursery schools, 25% of primary schools and 59% of secondary schools have their own home page. The number of ISDN connections and local area networks is also growing in these educational institutions. We do not know the situation in university faculties, since there is no institution in Slovenia collecting such data in a planned manner. What we do know however is that the Computer Literacy Project (CLP) described below has provided computer equipment for 14 faculties in both universities.

In the second section we have described the Slovenian media environment. We explained such terms as: media, mass media, new media, and media literacy, and described the Slovenian media policy, which we supplemented with statistical data on individual media.

In Slovenia there are 49 working television channels. 39.5% of Slovenian households have a personal computer, 23.9% of Slovenian citizens have Internet access, 92% of households have a telephone line, 18.7% of the population have a mobile telephone, 8.8% have a fax machine and 98% of households have a television (Mediana 1999, Statistical Yearbook 1999). We made a particular distinction between education with media and education for media. Education with media involves media support for learning and refers to technical equipment in schools, the production of educational software, development in the area of the production and teaching of media-supported learning, education and training of teachers and distribution of educational software, while education for media includes reading and writing, speaking and listening, access to new media technologies, critical view of media contents and the ability to produce one's own media reports.

Education for media and education with media represent a key point of the study below. We have presented it in terms of individual levels of the formal education system, from pre-school education to higher education, including adult participants in education. We have dealt in detail with education for media as an optional subject in the new nine-year primary school, since the inclusion of such a subject marked an important step forward. This year, pupils in year seven of the nine-year primary schools are taking a class in the area of the press which contains the basic characteristics of media and citizens, the history of the press, ethics in journalism, advertising and the production of the press, while over the next two years they will also acquire knowledge and skills in the areas of radio and television. The main difficulties in teaching the subject are the lack of technological equipment in schools and the lack of additional media education of teachers (at present in Slovenia such education is provided only by the Faculty of Social Sciences). The key problem however of the subject of education for media in Slovenia is the fact that the subject is not included in the learning plan of basic subjects, such as Slovenian language, history, understanding of nature and society ... Also not encouraging is the fact that in Slovenia there is no basic undergraduate education for teachers. The situation in non-education faculties is similar, since no curriculum has been prepared for media education. The only exception is the Faculty of Social Sciences, which recently began providing media education to its students; at present these represent the most suitable people to teach media education in the nine-year primary school.

In the case study it was easier to describe education with media than education for media (for which there is still no special law or set of standing orders which would govern the area). Of great assistance was the data on the state of media supported learning produced under the national CLP, one of the key development projects in education in Slovenia in recent times. As part of CLP, the period from 1994 to 1999 saw the planned introduction of information and communications technology in all areas of education: from pre-school education to university education. In addition to data on hardware, the study also provided

information on software and particularly educational software in nursery, primary and secondary schools. The CLP led to the production of handbooks for pupils and teachers, workbooks and other learning materials and a web site for the use of computer and information technology in teaching and learning. Schools select educational software for individual subject areas from the Catalogue of Recommended Software, which is also published on the Internet as part of the Slovenian Educational Network. Over the last five years, more than 15,000 teachers, head teachers and professors have received training in more than 2,000 three-day seminars and other forms of education.

In the study we also wrote extensively about non-formal education, both of adults and of young people. We described a number of instances of good practice from various institutions: distance learning, the children's parliament, the school basketball league and the Educational Institute of the Electricity Industry of Slovenia, as well as projects developed in the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (organised independent learning, knowledge exchange).

The extent to which we are media literate and how we can compare with others is something we will find out in September, when the Unesco Institute for Education and the Japanese National Education Research Institute publish the findings of the qualitative analysis of the case studies of participating countries. On this basis they will prepare for each individual country recommendations for the development of programmes, content and methods of media education.

Melanija Končina, SIAE



Evaluation report on the implementation of the PLYA programme

The evaluation report on the implementation of the *Project learning for young adults (PLYA)* programme in the 1998/99 school year was completed in December 1999. The author of the report is Tanja Možina, while the evaluation instruments and data collection in the field were prepared by Sonja Klemenčič, Tanja V. Klenovšek MA and Natalija Žalec. The basic purpose of the evaluation in the provider organisations TIN Ljubljana and KOR-CIS Slovenj Gradec was to determine whether the educational programme *PLYA* is operating in practice in accordance with the programme basis and whether the goals set at the curriculum level are being achieved.

Analysis of the progress of the *PLYA* programme focussed on the level of implementation of the programme. The authors of the programme were interested in the following points of content of the implementation of the curriculum in practice:



- the goals of implementation set in individual provider organisations and the organisation of work;
- the progress of animation in individual provider organisations (acquisition of participants);
- programme participants: characteristics of target groups, movement of participants, size of groups;
- implementation of the PLYA programme (selection of projects, accompanying activities);
- achieved goals of the PLYA programme and of individual participants in the programme;
- mentors and their role in the PLYA programme;
- self-evaluation of the PLYA programme.

The authors used the following sources for the analysis of the progress of the PLYA project:

- monthly work reports of individual provider organisations,
- annual work reports of individual provider organisations,
- interviews with participants, mentors, management of the provider organisations.

Goals of implementation

From all these sources it appears that the work of the PLYA educational programme at the level of implementation in both provider organisations was planned in accordance with and with respect for the basic goals of the programme and the anticipated forms of work. In planning activities, providers took equal account of all four forms of work foreseen by the PLYA curriculum: optional project work, production project work, individual project learning and interest activities.

The optional project gave equal attention to the majority of goals anticipated in the programme: general educational goals linked to the formation of a vocational identity and goals of the socio-cultural operation and special programme goals. The optional interest activities also involved goals linked to the broadening of general education in different areas.

Animation

The sources show that animation of the programme was conducted in line with the instructions and goals presented to mentors in the PLYA Mentor Education Programme, which form part of the conceptual basis of the PLYA programme.

Providers conclude that in the narrow local environment and in the broader national environment, the PLYA is still fairly unknown, and so they plan to pay particular attention in future to animation. It is likely that in future this part of the implementation of the programme will be easier, since awareness of the project will increase each time it is provided.

The most difficult part was the animation of representatives of the target population, who are not covered by any of the institutionalised systems (Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) social work centres, schools...), and so greater attention will have to be paid to this part of the target group. Equally, more effort will have to be made to encourage the parents of potential candidates.

Animation was also required during the implementation of the programme, since some participants in the programme did not continue until the end of the school year.

Programme participants

Given that the programme is open to young adults aged 15 to 25, participants in both groups were fairly heterogeneously distributed into various age groups. In TIN, most participants were aged 15 to 17 (19 participants), while in KOR-CIS, most were aged 18 to 20 (14 participants).

The data shows that the participants joined the PLYA programme throughout the whole school year. In TIN, most joined at the start of the school year, when the basic group was also formed (18 to 24 participants), while individuals joined throughout the rest of the year. 19 participants left the programme early. There were no figures for the inclusion and drop out of participants in KOR-CIS, but there too a basic group was formed.

In terms of previous education, we can conclude that participants varied widely, as was the case in both groups with regards to age. Most had completed primary school, some had not even enrolled in secondary school while others had done so but had dropped out for various reasons; some participants had not even completed primary school.

If we look at the wishes, interests and expectations of participants on enrolling in the programme, we can see that they are fairly diverse. Most participants stated as their goal the completion of school or examinations, while others had no clearly planned goals when they enrolled in the PLYA, defining them loosely. It is worth mentioning that a number of participants chose personal interest as their goal (acquisition of work habits, self-discipline, self-confidence), which is also an important part of the goals of the PLYA programme.

Implementation of the programme

The essence of the goal planning in the PLYA curriculum is that participants are involved in planning activities. The role of the mentors is to ensure suitable conformity in the determination of goals and in the planning of project contents between the individual goals of participants and the goals set out in the programme.

In both provider organisations, mentors took account of the provisions of the curriculum and from interviews and final reports, we can conclude that the content planning of individual projects at the level of mentor groups progressed in accordance with these provisions. Another indicator of the success of both implementations is the implementation of all planned activities, as well as a number of unplanned activities.

Mentors had difficulties in both provider organisations due to the nature of the target group: low, changeable levels of motivation, great diversity of interests, difficulty in coordinating diverse interests, participant inertia, and a lack of responsibility for completion of work

taken on. Thus in future more time will have to be given over to analysing the characteristics of target populations of PLYA participants in order to find effective incentives for their motivation. It is also very important that mentors are well aware of the special characteristics of the target group of participants attending the programme.

Goals achieved

It appears from the final reports that the majority of goals set in the two provider organisations were achieved. In TIN, the projects *Space* and *Publication* were implemented; the result of the first was the fitting of the PLYA premises, while the result of the second was the publication *Klobase zastonj (Free Sausages)*. The *Film* project was not completed. The result of the projects in KOR-CIS was a publication entitled *Newspaper*, and the project *Wheel* was also presented to the public.

Statements of individual achievements of participants show that during the year they acquired some functional knowledge, general knowledge and knowledge of a variety of professions. Many of them also took examinations and decided to continue their education. The participants themselves also assessed their achievements in the programme very positively, since they acquired useful knowledge, learned practical things, passed examinations or completed their education; they also mentioned achievements in personal development (socialising with their peers, improving self-image, increased self-confidence). From participant responses, we can also conclude that the work methods appealed to them, they were attracted by the work projects and practical skills which they learned by participating in the projects.

Mentors

Both provider organisations had an active mentor group which matched the provisions of the PLYA programme. TIN had four mentors, while KOR-CIS had three, two full-time and one occasionally participating in the programme.

Self-evaluation

Even during the implementation of the programme itself, certain evaluation mechanisms were used. KOR-CIS conducted daily evaluations and kept a daily diary of activities, while TIN organised weekly reflections with participants and regular weekly meetings with the director. Both organisations produced regular monthly reports on their work. At the end they wrote a final report and a final evaluation of the programme with the professional staff of the SIAE.

Conclusion

PLYA is a programme of non-formal education which includes some innovative approaches, procedures and methods which have yet to become firmly established in Slovenian educational

practice (individualisation of work, project learning work, involvement of participants in the planning of activities, production of individual education plans, regular evaluation). Therefore in the future this segment of the programme will require additional attention.

Andreja Dobrovoljc, SIAE



Education of the unemployed

Report on evaluation workshop

On 5th February 2000, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education staged an evaluation workshop with the title *Where and how with less educated unemployed people*, organised by the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. The workshop was attended by 25 advisors of regional units of ESS, four teachers and directors of organisations providing the literacy programme UŽU, and staff of the SIAE working in the area of literacy. The basic purpose of the workshop was discussion - exchange of opinions, experience and conclusions which experts working with the unemployed, either in the area of employment or in the area of education, have reached. Within this problem, special attention was paid to consideration of literacy and literacy education and to presentation of the literacy programme and its renewal, needs and necessary measures foreseen in this area in the National Adult Education Programme.

In the guided discussions, which took place both in small groups and in a plenary session, we set ESS advisors four questions which are exceptionally important for our development work in the area of the preparation of programmes for the unemployed. The discussion which arose concerning these questions was both fruitful and useful. Below I will present the problems we discussed and the opinions provided by advisors.

Which factors and principles do you take into account when you advise unemployed people to participate in education?

In education, advisors give priority to younger people and to people who themselves express an interest in education, taking account of their success in past education. Priority is also given to people who have been unemployed for an extended period, since they feel that education helps them to maintain their psycho-physical abilities. They normally support educational measures for people who have already begun to invest in education - either financially, through independent learning or through the effort they have invested in education. It is important to recognise the interests of the person being advised: not just their professional interests, but others too, such as their hobbies, since it is precisely this area which sometimes shows the way towards planning a professional career.



In the selection of educational programmes, advisors have paid particular attention to whether the programme increases the employment opportunities of the person being advised and how it does so (training for a specific job or improvement of independent job-seeking strategies). In the selection of the programme they also take account of the different references and recommendations which they try to obtain from the programme participants, employers and the description of the programme. For the last of these, they are particularly attentive to the goals of the programme and to the adaptation of the programme to adults. They select those programmes which have concrete defined goals, which are more compact in terms of implementation and which use active teaching methods. An important factor in deciding on participation in a programme is the distance between the participant's home and the place where the education is provided.

When in your opinion is education successful, and what are the factors (both internal and external to the participant) which promote or hinder success in education?

For some people, we can say that education has been successful if they even regularly attend and successfully complete it. Sometimes the most important thing is that people do something for themselves, start to work, become re-involved with people and attempt to achieve the set goals, at the same time being aware of how important their active participation is in improving the situation in which they find themselves.

The factors which contribute to the success of education stem from the motivation of participants for education. They are dependent on whether the education originates from the interests of the individual or whether a given person has participated primarily to increase their employment opportunities. The relationship between the educator and the education participant is important. Success is greater in educational programmes where poorly educated individuals in particular, who usually have more difficulties with learning, are given special, individual attention, than in programmes where participants say that educators treat them very formally. The personalities, habits, viewpoints and values of participants also normally contribute to success of education in the opinion of advisors. Success is usually inevitable with advised persons who value knowledge, who are proud of their participation in education, who are persistent and who have good work habits. In addition to these factors, others are also important, such as family support, the provision of additional learning assistance, openness and the involvement of teachers and an encouraging learning climate, regular monitoring of the progress of education (discussions between advisors and those being advised, including during education), praise and financial support during education. The factors leading to failure in education are the opposite of the ones we have just described.

Do you notice in your work that someone is not very literate? Do these people have any common characteristics?

In their work, advisors have a number of opportunities to notice that someone has problems with literacy. Ordinarily they realise this during their discussions, when people have difficulties

communicating with the advisor or when it appears that they do not understand the questions which the advisor asks. This is particularly evident when advised persons fill in certain forms which they must complete, which may be writing a job application or something similar. In the opinion of advisors, roughly 30 to 40 percent of all unemployed people have this type of difficulty. In their experience, such difficulties are most common among less educated people, people who come from less developed environments, people who have performed the same type of work for many years, people with very limited work experience, and people who studied at schools with adapted programmes; they are also more common among people who came from other republics of the former Yugoslavia and among Roma.

How do you encourage poorly educated people to participate in literacy programmes?

The workshop was too short to allow us to completely illuminate all the opportunities and obstacles for such participation; nevertheless, we obtained some important data and initiatives, both from ESS advisors and from educators. The main concrete difficulties which advisors encounter when they advise on education are linked to a lack of suitable information - appropriate information materials on the literacy programme. As they put it, they in fact do not know how to suitably present the programme to the unemployed. It seems to them that the wishes and needs expressed by those they are advising to a large extent differ greatly from those defined in the goals of the literacy programme. Advisors pointed to the problem of the name of the literacy programme (Training for life succes) which promotes the feeling among potential candidates that at present they are not successful in life; on the other hand there is the fear that the presentation of a programme in which they can receive literacy education would put off potential candidates because of the negative connotations of "illiterate". The representatives of provider organisations and teachers in the literacy programme at this point offered their assistance in encouraging unemployed people to participate in the programme, either by participating at the invitation of advisors in presentations of the programme to large groups of people, or by presenting in greater detail the programme to individuals in discussions following the discussion with the advisor. The proposed forms of cooperation are as follows:

- assistance in encouraging and informing ESS advisors of the literacy programme,
- participation as honorary teachers in the literacy programme,
- participation in the preparation of promotional and informative materials about the literacy programme for the unemployed,
- participation in adapting the content and organisation of the literacy programme for the unemployed.

Natalija Žalec, SIAE





Study circles - how to continue?

Learning in study circles is aimed at enriching the everyday life of members of the circle, as well as at short-term and longer-term impact in changing the quality of life in the local community. Here the organisation, leaders and mentors of study circles, who are responsible for the animation and operation of study circles in their environment, have an important role to play. In monitoring the *Study Circles in Slovenia* project, we conclude that every year more organisations, leaders and mentors participate in the project, resulting in an increased number of study circles and participants. Comparing the figures from the first year of operation of the project (1993/94) with the last school year (1998/99), we find that the number of organisations providing study circles has increased from 16 to 53, the number of study circles from 36 to 152, and the number of participants from 316 to 1.586. To date, 97 organisations have participated in the project, and 359 leaders and mentors of study circles have been trained.

The content and progress of learning in study circles are determined by the participants in conjunction with the mentor. Every year we notice the interest of participants in various contents, which every year are increasingly focused on activities in the area of art or handicrafts, healthy lifestyles, study of the ethnological or historical features of the area in which the circle operates, communication and personal development. Participants are thus interested in themes geared towards personal development and to a lesser extent towards resolving actual problems in the local and wider community.

In future, greater attention must be paid to expanding study circles to new environments, particularly those areas without specially developed educational and cultural infrastructure. Attention it would appear should also be paid to encouraging and further training leaders and mentors of study circles within the context of annual workshops and training programmes, particularly in areas which enable a more active role in the study of local resources, thereby also providing training in the search for opportunities for their resolution (agriculture, forestry, ecology, landscape analysis etc).

The large number of study circles and the extent of work carried out in them are, in addition to the motivation and drive of members of the circle, undoubtedly also linked to objective conditions, one of them being the provision of funding for their implementation. Each year, the project is jointly financed from the budget of the Ministry of Education and Sport. It would make sense to extend the scope of funding to other subjects, particularly local communities (municipal resources, search for various sponsors in the local environment). We will attract other ministries to cooperate by financing study circles dealing with problems in their area (such as the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, etc). We must think along these lines both on the national level and on the level of provider organisations.



Learning in study circles is not intended solely for learning of individuals within the framework of their common interests; it is more than that - it is learning of an interest group which does not stop at realising personal interests, but which is prepared to go beyond that and to join together with common efforts, actively getting to the core of some more or less pressing problems in their local environment. This is also a core which deserves detailed analysis of how non-formal learning, the development of democracy and civil society (which in Slovenia we also link to learning, socialisation and operation of people within the context of study circles) are understood and realised.

Vilma Malečkar, SIAE



Let's read with Manca Košir study circles

The project *Let's read with Manca Košir* has moved on to the second phase. We have trained the first mentors of the reading study circles. Lectures for mentors were held in November 1999. In addition to the personal experiences of mentors of other study circles, we also obtained a precise insight into reading abilities and the process of reading, deepened our own information literacy, mastered media and public communication, learned to formulate journalism articles and to obtain sponsors. Based on the completed evaluation questionnaires, participants were very satisfied with the training, especially with our lecturers, good organisation and the friendly atmosphere in the lecture rooms.

In order to obtain the title of mentor of a reading study circle, participants must prepare a seminar paper, one of the most important parts of the training programme. The papers were professionally reviewed and descriptively assessed. The bulk of papers satisfied the criteria set, while some were returned to the authors to allow them to correct them or to supplement the missing contents. Of the criteria for assessment of seminar papers I will mention only the most important. Mentors must demonstrate: that they know the real conditions in which study circles operate; that they understand the importance and role of socio-cultural animation; that they know what they want, and that they can clearly state this; and that they distinguish the operation of study circles from seminars and courses and from amusements and entertainment. In general future mentors decisively described local projects of economic and socio-cultural development and sources of socio-cultural animation and learning on the local level, and had greater difficulties in stating the educational and action goals of the project.

A quick review of the areas of work chosen and described by mentors in their seminar papers shows that they fall into three main groups. In the first group the study circles will



investigate in detail the places in which they live through literary works. In this way we will come to know Nova Gorica, Maribor, Bled, Novo Mesto and Ljubljana better. The second large group will be devoted to reading fairy tales and youth fiction, thereby ensuring quality reading material for their children and enabling a better selection from among the large range on offer. These mentors will attempt to link parents and children in a joint literary experience. In the last group, circles will deal with a deeper examination of the work of literary creators, specifically Neža Maurer, Aleš Štegar and Desa Muck. The others will pay more attention to investigating either the ethnological (Bloke skiing) or historical (national reading societies) special features of their area or will attempt to contribute to the basic conditions for improving reading culture, such as the opening of libraries every day of the week etc. The first season of reading study circles promises a large number of literary evenings and exhibitions, round tables, publications and brochures of one form or another and a variety of radio and television items.

During the presentation of certificates to mentors, we also prepared a press conference and a brief cultural programme involving, in addition to deputy director of the SIAE Olga Drogenik and the prime mover behind the reading study circles Manca Košir, the poets and essayists Aleš Debeljak and Alojz Ihan were on the show. We also used this opportunity to have a meeting with the overall sponsors of the project and sponsors of individual study circles. All those involved in reading, either as an amateur or professionally, were invited to the presentation of certificates, thereby creating a thoroughly positive atmosphere for the spread of the reading virus.

Darijan Novak, SIAE



What is going on with the Learning Exchange? Well, it works!

On 26th October 1992, we received the first phone call. A middle-aged man was offering his musical knowledge to anybody who was interested - for a very modest fee. Since then, 6.741 persons (as at 31st December 1999) have offered knowledge of all sorts or have been looking for it. Last year, the number of knowledge offers and requests exceeded 10.000, more precisely 10.649 different offers and requests at the end of 1999.

The results obviously show a growing interest in this fairly modest and cost-effective information system, which the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education derived from a similar one in Chicago. Modest in that it does not require much in the way of infrastructure (a telephone, a decent computer, fairly demanding software and a dedicated operator). This



is how we began, with the idea of connecting people who had certain knowledge and who were willing to share it with others and people who were looking for particular knowledge - from a kitchen recipe to highly academic knowledge. When the two are connected (by using the Learning Exchange database), the Learning Exchange staff have done their work. From this point on, it is the users' choice as to how they will organise their learning, where it takes place, how long it lasts and how the learner repays the "teacher's" efforts. Sometimes there is a fee involved, but it is often the case that the knowledge is exchanged for other knowledge. Since everybody knows something, such a system has shown great advantages for those who are not in a position to be able to afford the expensive courses offered by educational institutions. Examples include students, retired persons and the unemployed. It is also a great opportunity for those looking for very specific knowledge which cannot be found elsewhere.

What is different from the Chicago model is that we use over 20 different public media outlets - newspapers, magazines, various radio and TV stations, as well as Teletext and more recently the Internet - to inform people about the current supply and demand. Since it is a non-profit project financed by the Ministry of Education, all media advertising is free of charge.

Users of the Learning Exchange are of all ages, although the majority are aged between 20 and 40 years old, are of both sexes (although there are slightly more women), and their education is considerably above the average education level of the Slovenian population (it is worth mentioning that the data is not consistent across different regions). Users have very different educational backgrounds. As the number of users grows, the demographic structure remains more or less unchanged.

Most users offer language skills and mathematical knowledge, while others offer a considerable variety of knowledge (personal growth, music, computing, physics, all sorts of handicrafts, art, travelling experiences, economics, health, etc.). The greatest demand is for foreign languages (from English to very exotic ones), while the demand for other areas is within the bounds of the available supply.

The first Learning Exchange unit was established in Ljubljana in the SIAE before being subsequently transferred to a public library. The initial idea was to develop a similar unit in every Slovenian region. However due to financial limitations, we have only developed three such units, in Maribor our second largest city, in Novo Mesto in the Dolenjska region and in Izola (Coastal region). We chose these particular locations largely because there were institutions ready and willing to implement the project. Local authorities in some regions later expressed their readiness to support and also fund the Learning Exchange project, basically to cover the needs of their local communities. To date two such local Learning Exchange units have been established, one in Slovenj Gradec in the Koroška region and another in



Murska Sobota in the Prekmurje region. A third is about to open in Škofja Loka (Gorenjska region). The units are hosted either by state or private educational organisations or by public libraries. With the growing number of units, a need for coordination has arisen, and so the unit in Ljubljana has taken on the role of the central Learning Exchange. It thus covers the needs of the local population and coordinates the work of other dispersed units.

About a year ago we upgraded our software and hardware and combined the data from all the units into a common database using the Internet as a communication tool. A home page has also been developed, with Slovenian and English version. Apart from basic data about the project, a selected list of particularly interesting offers and/or requests is available online. So if you need to know how to excavate opals in Australia or where to get information on genetics and molecular biology or perhaps how to breed snails, you are cordially invited to visit The Learning Exchange homepage at <http://www.borzaznanja.mss.edus.si>.

If you don't find anything of interest, you should perhaps call +386 61 1266197, or establish your own national Learning Exchange. Our experience going back over seven years has proven that IT WORKS, more than we could possibly have imagined in the beginning.

We already have some ideas about a European Learning Exchange. If this sounds interesting, do not hesitate to contact us. E-mail: irena.benedik@acs-saec.si

Irena Benedik, SIAE



SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE



The state, caring mother or wicked stepmother of adult education?

Starting points and basis for talks with the minister

At the end of February the Slovenian Adult Education Society organised a public Talk with the minister of education and sport with the intention of promoting the development of adult education in Slovenia. In addition to the minister Dr Pavel Zgaga, we also invited the state secretary for secondary schools and adult education Alojz Pluško, the state secretary for higher education Dr Zdenko Medveš, the head of the adult education



division Jože Miklavc, and representatives of educational companies, folk high schools and institutions concerned with education. "We understand the talks as an initiative for systemic solutions for education as a whole, as well as for adult education, and as one of a series of future debates which will enable the adoption of the National Adult Education Programme," Dr Pavel Zgaga stressed in his speech.

We are publishing the starting points for the discussion as prepared by Dr Zoran Jelenc, member of the society and founder and former director of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. The critical nature of the starting points must be understood in terms of the purpose for which they were formulated.

(The editors)

Encouraging harbingers of development in the first period of independent Slovenia

The independence and creation of the new state of Slovenia saw the formation of a relatively promising policy in relation to adult education, a fact demonstrated by the range of measures adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the development of adult education. In particular these were the special funds in the budget of the Republic of Slovenia for adult education; the establishment of a special division for adult education at the Ministry of Education and Sport and the establishment of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education as a special institution for the promotion of the development of adult education in Slovenia. New legislation began to be prepared on education, including adult education, and a special adult education study programme was approved at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana.

Period of intensive development drive

In the first half of the 90s, the policy adopted and the intense work, particularly in the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, promoted numerous activities marking this period as a time of intensive development. Basic research of the system of adult education in Slovenia began, ending in 1995 and determining the basic elements for the conception of the system and development of adult education in Slovenia. The White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia included a chapter *The Development of Adult Education*, which among other definitions established very promising and progressive principles concerning the development of adult education: adult education and learning as a component of the strategy and concept of lifelong learning; equal and full respect for all needs; systemic linkages of supply; diversity, flexibility of educational opportunities; cohesion and equality of education and learning; partnership in management and financing; innovations with respect for positive traditions; international comparability; development strategy: thorough but gradual realisation of the plan.



On the basis of the White Paper, new laws were adopted in 1996 for education, including the Organisation and Financing of Education Act and the Adult Education Act, determining amongst other things for adult education: enabling education which suits the level of development and lifespan of the individual; promoting lifelong learning; access to education under equal conditions; and preparation of the National Adult Education Programme (Professional basis adopted by the Professional Council for Adult Education in 1998).

Numerous development projects promoted the development of new learning and educational opportunities in Slovenia (especially literacy program UŽU, study circles, independent learning centres, learning exchanges, project learning for young adults, education for the unemployed, new opportunities for determining and certifying knowledge, information-consultation work, distance education etc.). Adult education was included in the project Renewal of Adult Education in Slovenia.

Period of intensive international initiatives and projects

In accordance with the global guidelines under the joint slogan *Lifelong Learning for All*, particularly those of the OECD (ministerial conference 1996) and Unesco (medium-term strategy, 1995; fifth international conference on adult education, 1997), national policies concerning the development and systemic arrangement of all education are gradually changing so that initial education (that is education of children and young people) and further education (that is education of adults) are linked into an overall system of Lifelong Learning (LLL) and a suitable LLL strategy. In the Hamburg declaration on adult learning adopted by the *Fifth Unesco International Conference on Adult Education*, conference delegates adopted a joint recommendation that participating states should formulate LLL development strategies, as well as a range of recommendations as to how to do so. The resolutions adopted at the conference are also binding on Slovenia, which was represented at the conference by an official state delegation under the leadership of the then state secretary and present minister Dr Pavel Zgaga.

In Slovenia we are thoroughly professionally prepared for the adoption of such a strategy, at least as far as adult education is concerned. In addition to the aforementioned professional materials (White Paper, professional basis for the National Adult Education Programme), the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education has also prepared a synthesis of materials *Conception, Strategy and Development of Adult Education in Slovenia* (Dr Zoran Jelenc) which updates the systemic definitions concerning adult education in place until now with the latest initiatives and achievements in the field around the world. We follow international initiatives as far as possible, including in practice. We were thus among the first countries in the world to organise a Lifelong Learning Week, which will this year be held for the fifth time, as a national project.

Signs of a new crisis and stagnation

Despite the success mentioned and the evidence of how we are professionally prepared and could gradually reach the level of the most developed countries in adult education, in recent years signs of stagnation and inconsistent management of state policy towards the development of adult education have appeared. This can be seen from the following findings concerning the present state:

- The principles of the lifelong nature of education, as the basis for the development of adult education, have no appropriate confirmation in the measures of national policy concerning education; the integrity of the strategy of lifelong learning, consisting of two equally important areas, that is initial and further education, which complement each other, is not ensured;
- The systemic arrangements for adult education are lagging behind those for the education of children and young people, with the signs being as follows:
- Adult education is expressly disregarded in terms of *management*: there is no special secretary in the Ministry of Education to manage the area of adult education (or even the implementation of the overall strategy of lifelong learning); the adult education division is the weakest division of the Ministry; there is not enough cooperation between the other divisions of the Ministry and the adult education division; on the local government level, there are no suitable administrative or representative units which could adequately provide for the development of adult education in local communities.
- *Legislation*, which governs either the overall organisation and financing of adult education or of individual areas in which it operates (especially education at individual levels of the school system and further education for the needs of work) governs adult education in comparison to child and youth education only to a minimal extent and does not provide for systemic equality; the preparation of secondary legislation (documentation for the area of adult education, standards, etc.) in the area of adult education is prepared too slowly or is not even prepared.
- The *network* of providers and programmes does not ensure the legally stipulated "access to education under equal conditions" or the "enabling of education which suits the level of development and lifespan of the individual"; it has a number of weaknesses and deficiencies, including the fact that it is unevenly distributed across Slovenia and unequal in terms of quality; in the area of adult education, around 100 programmes have been withdrawn due to (ill-considered) legal changes and have not been replaced.
- The *financing* of adult education is the least systemically organised of all areas of education, and furthermore fails even to meet those needs defined by law (National Programme) as being in the national interest; the adoption of the National Programme has become blocked after the adoption of the professional basis; the proportion of funding allocated by the state to adult education has fallen in relative terms since



1996 (although the level of funding has grown in nominal terms); local communities have only minimal legal obligations, while the role of social partners in providing resources (financial, personnel, spatial) is not systemically defined.

- *The development and research infrastructure* for adult education is markedly inadequate and unsatisfactory, since apart from the SIAE there are no other specialised development centres with appropriate capacities required for the satisfaction of the growing demand in such areas as: vocational education; primary and secondary education; higher education; education in work organisations and for the needs of work and employment; education of older person; education for democracy etc. Even the SIAE is increasingly becoming merely an advisory-development service for the needs of the ministries and is losing the role as an autonomous development-research institution for adult education which it had at the start of its operation; the information base for determining and monitoring activities in adult education (statistics, Ministry of Education information system, others) is either inadequate or non-existent.
- *The education of adult educators*, including the education required by statutory regulations, is not organised so that the candidates can obtain the required education currently; furthermore, youth-adult teacher training programmes are unsuitable for adult educators.
- Various systemic measures, such as for instance the tax policy, do not respect adult education as a factor promoting growth and development.

Dr. Zoran Jelenc



Preliminary national development programme for 2000-2002

What it means for the assessment of the situation and the further development of adult education

The preliminary national development programme for the 2000-2002 period (PNDP) was adopted by the Government of RS in November 1999; by the end of June it will be reformulated into the National Development Programme for 2000-2006.

The PNDP considers as one of the six national priorities the development of human resources, thereby influencing the development of the environment and opportunities to realise the strategy of lifelong learning for all. The development of human resources is also included in the second part of the PNDP, which includes only four of the six national priorities, those to be supported with Phare funds. The PNDP thus represents a strategy which will



guide the investment support of economic and social cohesion from the Phare funds in the period 2000-2001. This is an investment to reduce developmental imbalances and differences between individual regions by promoting economic activity, easing social difficulties and employment problems and developing economic infrastructure.

The basic purpose of the PNDP - achieving progress in the area of economic and social cohesion - should be ensured through the realisation of two goals:

- reduction in the differences between the level of economic and social development in Slovenia and the level in the EU by increasing production at a rate higher than that in the EU countries,
- reducing internal development differences between Slovenian regions by promoting business activities, easing social difficulties and employment problems and the development of economic infrastructure.

The components of the PNDP are adapted to these goals.

The first part shows the plan for the long-term development of Slovenia, external and internal factors which will be the keys to Slovenian economic and social development, development goals and investment priority tasks, institutional framework (legal arrangements, coordination institutions) and financial framework on the basis of national and foreign resources in the period 2000-2002 for economic and social cohesion. It stipulates six development goals and investment priority tasks:

- production capacities of the business sector,
- economic infrastructure,
- human resource development,
- agricultural restructuring and rural development,
- environmental protection,
- regional development.

The second part marks the preparation of a multi-year programme for aid under the Phare programme to Slovenia in the period 2000-2002. The priority tasks of Slovenia include:

- productivity of the business sector,
- economic infrastructure and quality of life,
- human resource development,
- regional development.

In addition it determines and describes selected regions (Pomurje, Savinje, Zasavje) and priority tasks and projects in these regions which will receive assistance from the Phare programme.

Education is included in the first and second parts, which discuss human resources in connection to competitiveness, strengths/weaknesses and opportunities/threats analysis



of Slovenia in comparison to the indicators in the EU and also in terms of some of the general economic and social characteristics of Slovenia. The development of human resources is listed as the third of six priority tasks in the development goals and remains a priority in the second part, and will thus receive aid from the Phare programme in 2000-2002.

Among the factors which reduce our competitiveness, the PNDP includes our lagging behind, which it illustrates with the following indicators:

- the rate of participation of the generation aged 19-24 in higher education: in Slovenia this is below 30 percent, while in the majority of EU member states it is almost or even over 50 percent,
- the 12 percent of the population of Slovenia aged 25 to 64 with a higher education, while in the OECD countries the equivalent figure is on average 21 percent,
- the departure of adults with master's degrees and doctorates to foreign countries (5 percent of all in the nineties)
- the proportion of companies and organisations which have no organised system of education for their employees (fewer than 10 percent of companies have their own education centre). In terms of adult participation in education and training, it states that there are no reliable figures; nevertheless, it estimates that the access to lifelong learning is less than in the majority of EU member states,
- the unsuitable regional distribution of education supply in the areas of youth and adult education: the spatial concentration in the Ljubljana and Maribor regions.

The PNDP lists as our strengths a "well trained workforce with good knowledge of foreign languages".

It includes a number of factors among our weaknesses which are directly linked to the knowledge and training of the workforce, to wit:

- fairly low participation rate in higher education,
- structural unemployment,
- poor management and leadership in non-privatised companies,
- unsatisfactory business culture and social norms,
- problems linked to the quality and effectiveness of public administration.

To this it adds that the human factor has a marked priority in the structure of the Slovenian economy. It stresses that in the past two decades Slovenia has allocated a considerable proportion of funding to the implementation of a renewal of the system of education and training and has thus prepared the basis for the realisation of the strategy of lifelong learning. As a result it must now give priority to the implementation of evaluation of the renewal, and the further development of the system of education and training must be focused in accordance with the results of the evaluation and with demographic trends.

As I have already said, the development of human resources is classified as the third priority task in the development goals and investment priority tasks for the period 2000-2002.

The goals which the PNDP sets for the development of human resources are:

- raising the level of education of the Slovenian population,
- reducing the level of frictional, structural and regional differences,
- increasing the level of employment together with economic growth,
- ensuring the inclusion of the unemployed in measures of the active employment policy,
- ensuring equal opportunities in the labour market and thereby preventing economic and social exclusion of various categories of deprived groups of the population.

The PNDP states as the basis for the determination of these goals: sectoral strategic documents (agriculture, culture, environment) the National Employment Strategy 2000-2006, the National Action Programme for Employment 2000-2001, the White Paper on Education, the Professional Starting Points for the National Programme of Higher Education and the National Programme of Adult Education.

Realisation of these goals will take place in four stages:

1. Increasing the employability of the population. This includes measures in two areas: in the area of youth education and in the area of adult education.
 - For the first area - youth education - the plan is for "considerable investment in all three subsystems: primary and secondary education (ensuring the financial and other conditions), higher education, vocational education and training including the dual system.
 - For the second area - adult education - the global goals are taken from the professional basis for the national programme of adult education (development of general non-formal adult education, raising the level of education at all levels, ensuring a diversity of forms of and opportunities for education and training for all employees and the unemployed). Measures in this area include: increasing the transition between education and work (priority is given to the first transition, that is immediately after completion of schooling); development of mechanisms for determining the actual need for education; improving the mechanisms for determining and recognising knowledge; strengthening the institutions in the system of lifelong learning (including improving access to learning, reviving and modernising schools and other educational institutions, the development of formal and non-formal forms of knowledge acquisition); the development of instruments of financial assistance to young people and adults for learning; the promotion of equal regional development; support for innovation in the system of education and training; internationalisation, strengthening of the information system for supervision and forecasting of education (with priority given to strengthening institutions for successful implementation of measures in the area of the development of human resources).
2. The development of enterprise in three areas: the development of an enterprise culture, improving the conditions for the creation of new jobs and a partnership to ensure the sustainable development of jobs within the framework of local employment initiatives.



3. Adaptability of companies and employees with the following goals: raising the level of management knowledge, raising standards of professional and vocational education of workers, improving the knowledge and professionalism of employees and the unemployed, effective transfer of knowledge to companies (including the introduction of modern methods for managing personnel potential).
4. Equal employment opportunities with the following goals: establishing equal opportunities for men and women, special forms of assistance for the long-term unemployed, invalids and other at-risk groups.

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



Determining and ensuring quality in educational organisations

In February I took part in a study visit on the theme of *Evaluation of educational institutions*, which as part of the ARION educational programme was organised on the island of Tenerife in Spain. 12 delegates attended from nine European countries: the Netherlands, Iceland, Italy, France (2), Poland, Hungary, Germany (3), Lithuania and Slovenia. The delegates came from a variety of institutions, education ministries and educational organisations.

The study visit covered the following content groups:

- Exchange of various practices and experience in the area of evaluation and self-evaluation implemented in different European countries. (To this end each seminar participant presented the education system in their own country, as well as various activities in the area of evaluation, the work of their institution and their work in the area of evaluation).
- Presentation of the work and activities of the host country in the area of different levels of evaluation, with emphasis on the evaluation or self-evaluation of educational centres.
- Review and understanding of the work of various institutions and educational organisations involved in Tenerife with evaluation which already have experience of the introduction of various evaluation models.



